

**MINUTES OF THE OTTERBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
17 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 PM IN THE BIANCHI SUITE, VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Smith (C); Stansbury; King; Green; Moody; Gilbert.

In attendance: County and District Cllr J Warwick (to end of Item 5); District Cllr H Williams; Dr Keith Smith; 3 Parishioners; Clerk.

1. **Declaration of Interest:** Cllrs Green and King Item 13 b) i)
Cllrs Green and Moody: Item 12 b) in relation to OT08 site.
2. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Weymes; District Cllr Brian Laming
3. **Minutes of Meeting:** to approve the Minutes of the Meetings:
Finance Committee Meeting 15 November 2022
The Minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read. There being no amendments, they were agreed as a true record for signing.
Parish Council meeting 15 November 2022
The Minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read. There being no amendments, they were agreed as a true record for signing.
4. **Action Points and Matters arising from Minutes**
All items had been actioned or would be reported on in the meeting, except for the following:
13. b) Replanting of the open space area Cranbourne Drive east side of the car park:
About 50 new whips/tree saplings of native species had been planted by Cllrs Smith, Green, Weymes and the Tree Warden David Cox, in order to rejuvenate this area.
5. **County Councillor's Report**
Circulated prior to the meeting and as attached. Particular note was made that i) a new street lamp for the crossing on Main Road at the Nisa store was scheduled to be installed and the new crossing would be undergoing a highways final safety audit; ii) the County Councillors Grant was still open for admissions.
6. **District Councillors' Report**
Circulated prior to the meeting and as attached. Particular note was made that: i) there would be new national identification requirement for voting at the May elections and Cllr Williams agreed to ask about publicity material for the boards and website; ii) Otterbourne required an additional leaf collection to the scheduled collection for Main Road/Poles Lane and Cranbourne Drive and Cllr Williams agreed to forward the request to WCC.
7. **Local Crime Report**
Crimes reported within Otterbourne: 2 x non-dwelling burglaries to businesses on Main Road; 1 x criminal damage; 1 x theft of a delivery parcel; 1 x Dangerous Dog Act; 2 x anti-social behaviour at the village hall and Otterbourne School. Also in locality: theft from a car; theft of a CAT converter; unauthorised 300 car meeting at South Winchester P&R.
8. **Open Session for Parishioners (meeting closed for this item)**
A parishioner attended to highlight the concerns of climate change and how HCC and WCC were addressing this. It was noted that some Parish Councils were also taking action by

approaching landowners to ask about the use of land to install sustainable energy infrastructure such as solar panels and wind turbines. The Parish Council had publicised a vacancy for a new member to take on this role and it would continue to seek a new member for this purpose and to work with other Councils.

9. **Vacancy for a Councillor**

Cllr Natasha Nicpon was welcomed to the Council, however, due to the resignation of Cllr Reed, one seat still remained vacant. As the Statutory Otterbourne Parish Council elections were due in May 2023 it was agreed that this matter would rest upon the election results.

10. **Representatives to Various Bodies**

Otterbourne Village Hall

A replacement directional sign to the village hall was required on Main Road.

To request quotation and take forward	Clerk/Cllr Moody	21 Feb
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Southampton Airport (SIA) – Dr Keith Smith updated the Council.

There is currently a national process called CAP1616 being undertaken by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) involved in ‘the guidance on the regulatory process for changing the notified airspace design and planned and permanent redistribution of air traffic’. This includes various stages that have to be passed by the CAA in order for SIA to progress its airspace changes. Stage 1 determined the Design Principals and Stage 2 Process was underway to transfer the Design Principals into Design Options. A report submitted 13 October 2022 by the Parish Council to the CAA challenged the SIA Stage 2 Process in that it showed significant non-compliance with regards the CAA requirements. SIA had since published its proposal to progress to the ‘Development and Access Gateway’ leading to approval of Stage 2 for progression to Stage 3 and the Design Options being transferred into Routing Options. A further letter with report would be sent to the CAA highlighting the lack of community engagement and transparency as embodied in the CAA process, requesting that the submission from SIA to move to Stage 3 be rejected and Stage 2 repeated. Four routing options had already been proposed by SIA (ahead of the Stage process) and it was not apparent that these were for the benefit of minimising noise over the more densely populated areas of the Winchester communities, but more for the operational benefit of SIA. The process was a once in a lifetime opportunity and a combined response was needed to obtain the best outcome possible.

To send follow-up letter with report to the CAA with cc to WCC, District Councillors, neighbouring parishes and Steve Brine MP.	Clerk	23 Jan
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11. **Community Projects and Events**

i) Tribute to Queen Elizabeth II – to receive update.

The site preparation on Cranbourne Drive west side would take place in February. There were various bench options to consider and the Tree Warden, Dave Cox, would be involved in tree selection and planting. The Otterbourne WI had been in contact to advise 2023 was its Centenary Year and there could be potential for input in recognition that the Queen had been the WI lifetime president.

To explore options with Otterbourne WI, liaise with Dave Cox and apply for the County Councillor Grant towards the bench.	Cllr Green Clerk	23 Jan
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ii) Coronation of HM King Charles III / 80th Anniversary of D Day – to discuss Coronation event: Coronation date 6 May 2023 and additional Public Holiday 8 May. There was potential to combine with Allbrook for a joint event on the common: a National Beacon was not planned and a lower key event to the Platinum Jubilee was anticipated; involvement of Otterbourne Brass and the Allbrook Scout's Spitfire Band would be explored and the Otterbourne WI contacted.

To take forward options	Cllrs Green, King, Smith	21 Feb
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80th Anniversary of D Day: a commemoration event planned for 6 June 2024 with potential to utilise the Beacon again. Details to be considered further.

iii) Otterbourne in Bloom – to receive update.

The three flower beds had been tidied and bulbs planted. The Otterbourne School Gardening Club had agreed to look after the bed by the school footpath. The other two beds were still open for someone to come forward.

To publicise on the village Facebook	Cllr Smith	21 Feb
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12. **Report of the Planning and Highways Committee**

a) Planning Applications, Decisions, Enforcements

Schedule as attached. A progress report from WCC was being requested on an Enforcement Case on Kiln Lane.

b) Strategic – to receive report on Local Plan, update SHELAA sites and Woodlands Park. Local Plan: feedback from WCC on the Regulation 18 consultation was awaited.

SHELAA sites update: (OT03) Land east of Main Road had been put forward in the WCC consultation with option available to propose alternative. (OT08) Barwood Land had put forward its own website consultation for Land west of Cranbourne Drive with feedback unknown. (OT04) Land Promoter, St Phillips, had produced a publication for Land off Kiln Lane at Park Farm that it had put forward to WCC for consideration. A site meeting had been requested with Councillors and would be attended in accordance with the Parish Council's decision to remain informed about all development options. Woodlands Park was within Compton & Shawford parish, but with access off Poles Lane just beyond the M3 underpass. Councillors Smith and Weymes had attended an exhibition for developing the site for flexible office facilities designed for start-up businesses. An exhibition had been planned by the Agents Consulo for Otterbourne Village Hall on 4 February from 9-12 am.

c) Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan Update - consultation to 31 January.

Cllr Weymes had examined the consultation. Two sites on Poles Lane were noted as safeguarded areas: WR018 Waste Transfer Station for non-hazardous material operated by Veolia and WR205 Hazardous Waste Management at Four Dell Farm for Aggregate Recycling. There was nothing noted within the Plan Update for concern and a submission of 'No objections to raise' would be made by the Clerk.

d) Havant Thicket Reservoir Ofwat Cost Adjustment Consultation – to receive submission.

Cllr Green had examined the consultation and submission had been made by 5 Jan. Havant Thicket reservoir had been identified by Portsmouth Water and Southern Water as the preferred option to meet Southern Water's supply demand deficit which had arisen as a result of a sizeable reduction on the amount Southern Water was permitted to abstract from the rivers Test and Itchen. The reservoir was expected to be operational in 2029 enabling Portsmouth Water to make a bulk transfer of water to Southern Water in the dry season.

The budget for the build had been set in 2019 at £124 Million and the cost projection was now £340 Million. Whilst the build was being funded by Portsmouth Water, the terms of the agreement signed in 2021 meant that Southern Water's customers would eventually pay via their water bills which can be expected to increase significantly as a result of this and other major infrastructure projects (see next item). Otterbourne Parish Council had submitted its report to the consultation that the Ofwat information was welcomed to give more certainty to the costs and to build-in cost efficiency challenges. However, concerns were raised about improving transparency and maintaining the trust of Southern Water customers, the level of customer risk contingency being too high, the need for strong governance arrangements to be in place in which customers were fully represented in the project and that Southern Water customers were being treated fairly in their water bills when compared with other water consumers in the South East of England. [Water transfers \(southernwater.co.uk\)](http://southernwater.co.uk)

e) Southern Water – Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project - to report. Part of Southern Water's strategic plan together with the Havant Thicket reservoir to ensure water supplies for its customers and prepare for a 1:500 year drought. Instead of taking and returning water to the environment, ways to treat and recycle wastewater were being explored and new pipelines would be needed to bring the water to areas in need. Southern Water's preferred option was to pump the recycled purified water into the Havant Thicket Reservoir where it would be mixed with spring water before being taken to the Otterbourne Water Supply Works for further treatment to become drinking water. The pipeline route was currently being investigated. [Water recycling \(southernwater.co.uk\)](http://southernwater.co.uk)
The Otterbourne Water Supply Works were currently being improved to comply with requirements made by the Drinking Water Inspectorate. Southern Water had published its Draft Water Resources Management Plan for consultation to 20 February.

To prepare report for consultation submission	Cllr Green	20 Feb
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f) Highways

i) Lengthsman – to receive requests and finalise worksheet for visit on 25 January. The Worksheet had been prepared for submission. HCC had advised that the scheme would continue for 2023/24. However, the increase for the parish input extra to the HCC £1,000 input would be up to £440 if the same number of hours were maintained due to the increase in the contractor's fee. Council agreed the number of hours should be maintained with additional parish input up to £440 and this was available in the 2023/24 budget. A request for the scheme to go out to tender would be made to the administrator plus request for it be increased to a two year contract.

To submit Worksheet and advise Administrator	Clerk	20Jan
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ii) Any other matters arising.

The new village gateway on Otterbourne Road had been installed and the signs were awaited: HCC had advised that there would be a small overlap between the Otterbourne and Compton and Shawford signs in order to accommodate the wording. The white lines on Oakwood Avenue remained outstanding and this would be followed-up. A report of pavement flooding on Poles Lane had been made. HCC was working on the exceptional number of potholes resulting from the bad weather conditions and Councillors and residents were asked to report on the HCC website. The new contractor to clean the village street amenities had done a good job. A dedication request from a resident's family had been received for a bench at the recreation ground and this would be investigated further.

To take forward as needed and for report at next meeting	Cllr King	21 Mar
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13. **Report of the Recreation and Amenities Committee**

a) Oakwood Park Recreation Ground

i) Play and Youth Facilities – to approve the Annual Safety Inspection provider.

Council agreed to instruct the Play Inspection Company via WCC. The end of one of the youth facility seats was missing and as it had not been found a new one would need to be purchased. One of the litter bins had had to be removed due to some dog owner(s) using it for dog waste ignoring notices that the bin is emptied by a volunteer and that the red dog bin by the access road should be utilised as it was emptied by WCC contractors.

The contractor for the play park path, CK Surfacing, had been contacted and a proposal for repair work was awaited to rectify the substantial cracking of the tarmac.

To respond to WCC for Annual Safety Inspection provider	Clerk	21 Feb
To order a new seat end from Kompan	Clerk	21 Feb
To follow-up with Contractor for play park path	Cllr Gilbert	21 Feb

ii) Pavilion – to receive damage report following burst water pipe.

A water pipe in the roof had burst at several points along its length resulting in substantial damage: flooding throughout the building and areas of ceiling coming down. Councillors Stansbury and Smith together with Colden Common Football Club members had swept out the water and the plumber had attended to stop the leaks. Quotes were being obtained from the plumber, electrician and builders for specialist drying out and repair work. An insurance claim had been started and Cllr Smith and the Clerk had met with the Loss Adjuster on site. It was agreed that pavilion was not safe to be used by the Club – see report at iii) below.

To obtain quotations and forward the insurance claim	Cllr Stansbury/Clerk	asap
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iii) CCFC– to discuss and agree rent for 2023 and rent suspension due to ii) above.

The annual rent review for 4 January 2023 had been actioned according to the lease, however the Club had asked that the rent be reconsidered. The Clerk had issued a report on the review which was based on the RPI and a formula with exponential growth. Council considered that the exceptionally high RPI at 14% coupled with the Club's reduced subscriptions from a reduction in the number of its teams would cause undue burden. Council agreed that the rent would remain at the 2022 level until the next review date. Council also agreed that as the pavilion was currently unusable by the Club and it would need to find and cover alternative accommodation for its home League matches, the rent would be suspended from January 2023 on a month-by-month basis until the pavilion was fit for use. A claim under the Council's insurance for Business Interruption had been made.

To issue letter advising outcome of decisions	Clerk	asap
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b) Otterbourne Common

i) Bank and Ditch along short length of gravelled area – to agree the way forward.

Councillors considered the options and determined that the matter of boundary along this length could not be separated from the unlawful parking area on the common and there was concern the outcome could be for a bank and ditch or post line to follow the registered boundary at the pavement edge. This would result in the closure of the gravelled parking area that had been of benefit for the community over the past 60 years to reduce pressure on street parking and it was not the expressed intention of the complainant. With consideration of this outcome, the time that had elapsed since the work in 2018, that historically it had been and remained the view of the Council that access to the common had not been unduly restricted and that there had been no complaint relating to this as an issue, Council decided to act in the best interests of the community and to let the matter stand.

To issue letter advising outcome of decision	Cllr Smith/Clerk	21 Feb
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ii) Boot Sale/Fayre – to discuss proposal.

Council discussed a recent proposal received and agreed that the Byelaws restricting vehicles would prevent a boot sale. The potential for a table top fayre was discussed, however it was agreed that this should not be permitted as it could not be restricted to a local level and with insufficient parking in the area it would impact heavily on local residents.

To advise outcome of decision	Cllr Smith	21 Feb
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14. **Report of the Finance and Administration Committee**

a) Parish Accounts, Payments and Receipts, Quarterly Reconciliation and Budget Analysis Schedule as attached. The Analysis had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting and the budget was on track for year end. A sum of £1,500 remained unspent in the Recreation and Amenities budget and quotations for significant tree work at Cranbourne Drive open space would be obtained, together with options for further improvement of the pavilion pipework.

To obtain quotations and forward	Cllrs Green, Stansbury, Gilbert/Clerk	21 Feb
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b) 2023/24 Budget – to record the new Tax Base and Precept Submission.

WCC had advised the new Tax Base at 715 (up from 705). The Precept had been submitted at £40,121 resulting in £56.05 per hh/annum at Band D (-1% on last year).

c) Committees, Roles and Responsibilities – to update.

Cllr Nicpon had been added to the schedule and Amber Reed removed. WCC had been advised.

15. **Risk Assessment and Management:** no matters arising.

16. **Notification of events and to raise new items for the next meeting.**

Working Party: 21 February – requests to be advised by Councillors to the Chairman.

17. **Date of next Parish Council meeting:** 21 March 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Meeting closed 10.15 pm

Otterbourne Parish Council Planning Report December 2022 and January 2023

Planning Applications

- Case No. 22/02433/FUL Roselea, Highbridge Road, Highbridge
Variation of condition 2 and 5 on application 21/01431/FUL.
Condition 2 - to relocate the Stable Block 10 metres to the north and 3.9m to the east . Condition 5 – relocation of the Manure Store. **No comment**
- Case No. 22/02634/TPO Oakwood House, Oakwood Close, Otterbourne
To carry out works as per the arboriculturist survey.
Comment: Neutral. Otterbourne Parish Council is unable to comment due to the degree of access required for the site in order to examine the works which are substantial and not possible to view from the highway, however we are pleased to note that an arborist has been contracted to assess the work.
- Case No. 22/02504/HOU Highways, Main Road, Otterbourne
Proposed alterations and extensions to an existing bungalow into a two storey dwelling with a replacement garage building with home office (both single storey)
Comment: Neutral. Otterbourne Parish Council notes that the design for proposed building alterations has been adjusted following pre-application feedback provided by WCC in October 2021, in particular the lowering of the roof line and removal of the existing window overlooking Wood Sorrel. Although such evidence has been provided in the application it will be for WCC to assure themselves that the amenity of neighbouring properties is sufficiently preserved in the revised designs.
- Case No. 23/00006/TPO Woodcutters, Poles Lane, Otterbourne
T1 Oak. Fell to ground level and replant with size and species agreed.
Comment: Request for: i) replanting in same location or 2-3 m away from original location; ii) two replacement Oak saplings are planted to offer some safety/betterment; iii) TPO to be implemented straight away for protection.

Decisions

- Case No. 22/02253/LDP 8 Richmond Park, Otterbourne
Single storey rear extension. **Application permitted.**
- Case No. 22/02001/HOU Wood Sorrel, Main Road, Otterbourne
Two-storey side extension, part two-storey and part single-storey rear extension, front bay window and porch canopy, elevational alterations, detached garage/garden room with wood-burner flue, following demolition of existing building. **Application permitted.**

Appeals

- Case No. 21/02594/HOU Otterbourne Manor, Kiln Lane, Otterbourne
Appeal Ref: APP/L1765/D/22/3302348
Addition of a roof canopy and gable window to a rear extension under applications 20/01485/HOU and 20/01486/LIS
Comment: Otterbourne Parish Council would not wish to ignore the recommendations of the WCC Officer Report, however having considered all Appeal documentation including that of the RMA Heritage Statement we believe that the case for approval of the Planning Appeal is balanced and look to the Planning Inspector to determine the proposal appropriately.

Statement of Parish Accounts and Payments December 2022 and January 2023

Bank Statements at 31/12/22

Lloyds Treasurer's account	£20,066.30
6 month fixed term account to 23 June at 2.7%	£30,000.00
32 day notice account to 24 January at 1.4%	<u>£16,940.00</u>
	£67,006.30

Payments from Lloyds Treasurer's Account December 2022

OB Mrs J Ayre – salary and office allowance Nov	£ 1,038.33
OB NEST – pension employer and employee	£ 71.16
OB Mrs J Ayre – 1/4ly expenses travel, broadband, telephone	£ 74.40
OB HMRC – 1/4ly tax and NI for employer and employee	£ 141.80
OB Dek Graphics – copying and Newsletter	£ 134.20
OB Ark Glass – Bus shelter Otterbourne Hill (2 nd replacement)	£ 294.00
OB Cllr D Green – reimbursement of travel exps to Havant	£ 27.90
OB Melon Engineering – Speed sign movement	<u>£ 141.67</u>
	£ 1,923.46

Payments from Treasurer's Account for December Charge Card

Feedwind – website annual payment	£ 7.96
Cartridge Shop – black printing inks	£ 34.07
Post Office – Street Amenities Contract to Martin Farmer	£ 1.05
Information Commissioner – Data Protection annual registration	£ 40.00
Annual fee for charge card	<u>£ 32.00</u>
	£ 115.08
<u>Total payments December</u>	<u>£ 2,038.54</u>

Payments from Lloyds Treasurer's Account January 2023

OB Mrs J Ayre – salary and office allowance Dec	£ 1,038.53
OB NEST – pension employer and employee	£ 71.16
OB Premlex – emergency callout for pavilion alarm shutdown	£ 120.00
OB PHS – recreation ground maintenance contract December	£ 98.99
OB Otterbourne Conservation Group – Old Churchyard maintenance	£ 500.00
OB PCC – S137 contribution towards 'Otterbourne Life'	£ 120.00
OB PCC – contribution for St Matthew's Churchyard maintenance	£ 500.00
OB Martin Farmer – street amenities cleaning January	£ 90.00
OB Melon Engineering – Speed sign movement	£ 141.67
OB SF Facilities Ltd – pavilion water leak pipework repair	£ 1,440.00
OB Business Stream – pavilion standpipes	£ 8.63
OB Business Stream – allotments	£ 232.46
OB Tony Taylor – recreation ground bin	£ 65.00
OB Cllr Gilbert – reimbursement of expenses for padlock	<u>£ 8.00</u>
	£ 4,434.44

Payments from Treasurer's Account for January Charge Card

Weebly – website domain for two years	£ 180.20
<u>Total payments January</u>	<u>£ 4,614.64</u>

Update from Hampshire County Councillor Jan Warwick - January 2023

Highways Update

You will no doubt be aware that the weather we are currently experiencing is having a significant impact on frontline highway operations and road repairs at the moment. Rainfall through the Autumn, followed by the prolonged cold snap in December, followed by more heavy rain has resulted in the joint challenges of localised flooding and a significant increase in the number of reported potholes. Flooding issues have been worsened by the late leaf-fall creating blockages in gullies and drains that the team had previously cleared.

Technical staff from the Engineering and Operation Resilience teams are temporarily being deployed to assist on the frontline, to help ensure we are responding as quickly as we can but at times demand is still outstripping our capacity to respond. The Hampshire situation is not unique and that other highway authorities are seeing similar challenges. Seasonal staff sickness is also having an impact.

In some locations, and primarily to ensure the road network remains safe, you will see temporary infill repairs to potholes. These are, deliberately, quick fixes and it is recognised that they may not last with some potentially needing to be repaired again. Where possible the highways team will endeavour to do permanent repairs, but this will depend on service demand at the time. The priority continues to be safety. Inevitably though, operating in this way will create a tail in the work programme so it may be many weeks before highways can return to business-as-usual operations, and I would therefore ask for your patience while we remain in emergency conditions.

Reporting issues on the Highways Portal remains the best way to alert the team to any issues. The various links are at the bottom of this note. Please do not worry about reporting duplicate issues, better we know about things twice than not at all, and particularly where a repair breaks down.

Links to report road issues are here:

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

Tree/hedge: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/flooding>

Pavement problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/paving>

Rights of way: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

Elections and voting

You will need to prove your identity at polling stations at all future elections, starting with the local elections in May 2023. Voters must show photographic identification before they can vote. This Photo ID can be a passport (including an out-of-date document), photo driving licence, immigration document, PASS card, concessionary travel card (not railcards), MOD Form 90 or the new Voter Authority Certificate (VAC). Photocopies, work IDs and student IDs will not be accepted. Verification of postal voters will not change until 2024.

Sofas, seats and armchairs.....

The larger Hampshire waste recycling centres will now provide separate containers for upholstered seating. Items such as dining chairs, armchairs and sofas are likely to contain pollutants which stay intact and do not break down, so authorities are required by law to ensure these items are diverted from landfill, separated from other waste and disposed of carefully at one of our energy recovery facilities. Ideally residents will first consider offering suitable items for reuse by donating to charity or selling privately before disposal. The range of upholstered seating items which now need to be segregated includes sofas, sofa beds, armchairs, kitchen and dining room chairs, stools and upholstered foot stools, home office chairs, futons, bean bags, floor and sofa cushions. Many local district councils also offer, for a fee, a bulky waste collection service which residents can use as an alternative to taking items themselves to a household waste recycling centre.

District Councillor Report January 2023 from Cllr Laming, Warwick and Williams

Jobs and Opportunities Fair to Match Winchester Employers with Local Career Seekers

Winchester City Council is inviting employers and those seeking new careers in the Winchester district to the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park on **Friday 24 February** from **10am to 1pm** to join its Jobs and Opportunities Fair. The event, which is being run in partnership with Winchester Jobcentre, will support employers across a range of sectors with filling vacancies.

Organisations will be able to meet with local residents looking for new employment – whether its people wanting a change of career, individuals returning to work after a break, or people looking to advance their employment situations.

Additionally, employers will have the chance to reach out to those who have recently settled in the Winchester district, including Ukrainian guests - and the Winchester Job Centre will also be on hand to connect jobseekers with new career opportunities.

Speaking about the event, Cabinet Member for Business and Culture Cllr Lucille Thompson said:

“Our Jobs and Opportunities Fair with Winchester Jobcentre this February is a brilliant opportunity for employers in Winchester to connect with local jobseekers – I’d encourage any organisations looking to fill vacancies to come along.

“Events like these reflect our commitment to supporting a vibrant economy and we are very proud to have such a range of organisations across our district.”

Additional funding for Citizens Advice to help residents most in need.

Winchester City Council is providing an additional £60,000 of funding to Winchester district’s Citizens Advice service as part of its cost of living intervention measures to ensure local residents are able to quickly access the advice and support they may need.

The money, which is in addition to funding already in place from the city council, is intended to allow for additional resource for Citizen’s Advice to meet the rise in demand for their service during the cost of living crisis and specifically, it will allow them to do more outreach work across the district.

Citizens Advice service offers advice and support for a number of issues that people may be worried about, including managing money, debt, housing and benefits. They are a key partner for Winchester City Council and already refer people to the council’s support services when they need extra help, but the council recognises more support is needed now.

Citizens Advice Winchester District has reported supporting more people with crisis support, energy problems and not having enough money to make ends meet than ever before. The cost-of-living crisis will impact everyone, but Citizens Advice data suggests that certain groups are more severely affected and in need of support than others, for example, disabled people, those with long-term health conditions and older residents.

Winchester City Council announced a Cost of Living Intervention in September, launched by Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Community and Housing, Cllr Paula Ferguson. The Intervention listed a series of measures the council would undertake to maximise support for residents during this exceptional time.

Since then, Winchester City Council has organised a Cost of Living Summit – a meeting of over 40 support organisations from across the district, working together to coordinate and maximise the support available to residents and also to identify any gaps in provision that could be resolved. The council has also launched an emergency Cost of Living Support Grant for not-for-profit and community organisations that offer support for local residents, whether that is by offering a warmer homes hub, providing access to food, or other measures. The council has also created a number of dedicated pages on its website where people can easily access information about the help and support that's available: www.winchester.gov.uk/cost-of-living

Cllr Ferguson, Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Community and Housing, says:

"We're very pleased to have been able to provide this additional funding for Citizens Advice. We know that they offer a vital service in our community acting not only as a reassuring advice centre, but also a gateway to help residents access wider support from organisations across our district. We know the need is now, so supporting organisations to meet rising demand is one of the ways to ensure people get help as quickly as possible."

A spokesperson for Winchester's Citizen's Advice added:

"Recently we've seen triple the number of people in financial crisis than during the same period last year. This funding will help us to deliver crucial advice and support to people in the Winchester district who are finding themselves in desperate situations and having to make difficult choices, such as deciding between eating and heating their homes."

Citizens Advice can be contacted on [0808 278 7861](tel:08082787861) and www.citizensadvice.org.uk

More information on cost of living support can be found at www.winchester.gov.uk/cost-of-living.

Grant funding is also available for other supporting organisations via the council's cost of living grant fund: [Cost of Living Grant Scheme - Winchester City Council](#)

DOWNLOAD OUR UPDATED APP

We've made some improvements to the Your Winchester app, making it clearer and easier to use, with more services available on it too.

The new app also allows you to report issues for services which Hampshire County Council manage in our area too (such as pot holes or street lighting.)

You can download the Your Winchester app on [Google Play store](#) or [Apple's App Store](#).

ENERGY SAVING TIPS

The way we use appliances in our homes can reduce our energy consumption and make a difference to our bills. It can help to act greener to cut costs this winter and stay warm.

Practical steps, such as ensuring your washing machine has a full load, not over-filling your kettle or taking less time in the shower are easy to do and can reduce the amount of energy you're using on a daily basis.

To find handy tips on how you can keep your bills down and be more energy efficient this winter, visit our [energy efficiency webpage](#).