

Winchester City Councillor Report

January 2022

1. Roads update

For those concerned about motorbike noise and speeding, especially near the A32 and the A272, there is to be a parish update on Teams at 1pm on Friday 14th January. Attendees will include the PCC Donna Jones, local MPs Flick Drummond and Damian Hinds as well as HCC Councillor Russell Oppenheimer, who is responsible for roads at HCC. Details have been circulated to parishes, do let us know if you don't have them and we will send these over.

Statistics have been published by Hampshire Highways for Winchester District for last November. In that month 49 emergencies were attended, 4,440 gullies and other drainage were cleared and 766 potholes were fixed. In addition, they also coped with Storms Arwen and Barra, keeping the roads clear of fallen trees and other vegetation, debris and excess water.

General road problems should be reported online at <http://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems>. Emergency issues on the highway can be reported outside of office hours by calling 101. In any emergency where there is a danger to life, call 999.

Highway operations are continuing as normal during the Plan B restrictions. Parishes are advised to check their blue grit bins are all full in case of freezing temperatures and to contact Hampshire County Council if any need replenishing. This can be done either online at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance> or by emailing roads@hants.gov.uk.

Going forward, Hampshire County Council has agreed to put extra "recurring" funding into highway maintenance, equating to about £7 million per year, from April this year.

2. Trains update

South Western Railways have confirmed that the onset of the Omicron variant is causing a shortage of staff across its business, leading to short term cancellations.

As a result they will be introducing a new, consolidated timetable from **Monday 17 January 2022**. They say that their *"focus is on producing a timetable that is deliverable so that we improve reliability for our customers, and caters for key workers, school pupils and those who cannot work from home. We will be publishing further details on our new timetable online as soon as we can in the new year"*

Given the risk of short notice cancellations or alterations, passengers are advised to [check to see if your planned train is running](#) as close to your time of travel as possible.

3. Central Winchester projects

We previously reported that Winchester City Council was looking to lease the site of the former River Park Leisure Centre to the University of Southampton. Due to procedural

irregularities, the decision to do this will have to be rescinded and the proposal advertised. This is likely to occur at the end of January.

Separately, the council's cabinet has approved plans to commence a process to find a development partner for the Central Winchester Regeneration site (formerly known as Silver Hill). This is subject to formal approval by Council on 12th January.

4. Grants for businesses

The government has provided additional support for businesses in the hospitality and leisure sector by way of the new Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant. This is being distributed on its behalf by Winchester City Council. Eligible businesses can apply at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/business/business-rates/important-information-on-business-rates>.

Winchester City Council will also shortly be launching a grant to allocate the remainder of the discretionary grant support money it received from the government to help businesses impacted by the pandemic. This will be open to new applicants as well as those who have received grants before. Eligibility criteria will need to be met. It is likely that the application window will be relatively short so businesses are advised to respond promptly.

5. Garden waste collection

Collection of garden waste was suspended by Winchester City Council over the Christmas period to enable crews to be redeployed to assist the core refuse service. It will recommence in the weeks commencing 10th and 17th January (generally the second of those weeks for our area).

Christmas tree collection will also take place on that recommencement date, on the same day as the scheduled garden waste collection, the trees should be left out with the refuse bins. Large trees over five feet tall will need to be cut into smaller pieces to enable them to fit into the collection vehicle.

Residents using the garden waste collection service will need to renew for a further year from March. Residents can now sign up until the end of February 2023 at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/waste-recycling/garden-waste-collection-sign-up>

Best wishes the New Year from us both.

Laurence Ruffell Hugh Lumby