

DROXFORD PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - THURSDAY 21st APRIL 2016
Winchester City Council Report - 2015/2016
Cllr Caroline Dibden, Ward Councillor Droxford, Soberton and Hambleton.

**Your administration at
Winchester City Council.**

Councillor Stephen Godfrey
Leader Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Policy; Policy and Projects; Financial Services; Revenues and Benefits;

Councillor Victoria Weston
Deputy Leader Portfolio Holder for Service Delivery: Organisational Development; Legal and Democratic Services; Corporate Communications; Business Management

Councillor James Byrnes
Portfolio Holder for Local Economy: Economy and Arts; Tourism; Parking; Community Grants

Councillor Caroline Horrill
Portfolio Holder for Housing Services: Housing Services; New Homes Delivery

Councillor Steve Miller
Portfolio Holder for Estates: Estates

Councillor Frank Pearson
Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing; Environmental Health, Licensing; Environment Contract; Landscape, Open Spaces; Street Care; Health, Wellbeing; Community Safety, Neighbourhood Services; Traffic Transport, Engineering; Sport

Councillor Michael Read
Portfolio Holder for Built Environment: Development Management; Strategic Planning; Building Control; Historic Environment

Finance

Winchester City Council is doing its utmost to achieve balanced budgets while still maintaining services. Its grant from Government has been reduced by 42%, and so times are tight.

We have about £2 million in general reserves but once these are spent they are gone – it is important to keep money available for when we really need it e.g. if we have another major flooding event. Of course we have specific reserves earmarked for particular projects and this is reviewed each year. There are no reductions to frontline service planned for 2016/17 and Grants to the voluntary sector and Council tax support grants to Parishes have also been maintained at the same level as 2015/16.

The Government has confirmed there will be no Council Tax freeze scheme for 2016/17 and Central Government projections assume that all authorities will increase their precept by the maximum amount. Therefore, the present projections reflect an increase of 3.4% in Council Tax for the District and Winchester Town area. This equates to an increase of £4.38 for a Band D property

The decision to terminate the contract for Silver Hill will have a major impact on the council as this was income that has been budgeted in the future and will no longer be coming in. Instead the council will be faced with more expenditure for demolition and making safe the area until a new plan is forthcoming.

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There are other projects in the pipeline, like Station Approach, that will generate income for the council. But we also have projects that will be a cost to the council, like the replacement or refurbishment of leisure facilities, and providing new offices for the council as the current ones are no longer fit for purpose.

Economy

The City Council is working with a number of organisations to further the prosperity of the area, increasing revenues from tourism and retail in the city and market towns, and encouraging a sustainable rural economy.

We are proposing to transform a former industrial site at Barfield Close into a Creative Enterprise Centre. Working in close collaboration with local universities and creative industries, the Council is designing a workspace that is tailor-made to meet the needs of graduates, business start-ups and other creative organisations.

Hampshire Apprentice Partnership - 7 roles available. Winchester City Council is co-ordinating an exciting new apprentice programme in Hampshire. The Hampshire Apprentice Partnership involves four councils in the county and offers thorough experience in the workplace whilst studying for a professional qualification without any fees or debt. Winchester City Council currently has seven diverse apprenticeship roles available for enthusiastic and motivated young people.

The council continues to facilitate

the Fieldfare funding which is available for different rural projects over the next five years. Farmers, foresters, growers, rural businesses and rural communities can bid for a share of a £1.6million fund across the Fieldfare area.

Housing

The Extra Care Home development scheme is progressing with the closure of the Chesil Street surface car park - which is part of the Council's car parking strategy. The neighbouring Chesil multi-storey car park has capacity to cope with displaced parking from the surface car park. The new scheme will provide 79 new homes with state-of-the-art facilities, these modern spacious flats will provide for all the care and support needs of its residents.

21 New Council Homes have been completed across the district and residents have moved in.

Winchester City Council has been shortlisted in two separate categories for the UK Housing Awards 2016.

WCC have made vacancy management savings of over £245,000 this year in our Housing Revenue Account and made savings in major repairs but still are managing to maintain the improvement and refurbishment program across our council house stock of 5100 homes.

Environment

Winchester has been recognised as a Purple Flag centre offering visitors an entertaining and safe night out,

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for a fifth year. Just as a Blue Flag is an indicator of a good beach, a Purple Flag is an indicator of where to go for a good night out.

Fly-tipping

Cabinet have agreed to a budget of £30,000 be authorised to purchase mobile CCTV cameras to deal with ad hoc anti-social behaviour issues or problems such as fly-tipping.

Transport

The new Park-and-Ride at Pitt in Winchester is now open for business, which adds another 199 spaces to the overall 1650 park and ride parking spaces now available in Winchester City.

The Parking Team has been shortlisted for the 'Partnerships' award category at the 2016 British Parking Awards.

WCC has adopted a Walking Strategy for Winchester, in recognition of the health, economic, air quality, and reduction of congestion benefits of walking. The aim of our "Feet First" initiative is to promote walking as the norm for short journeys, or as part of a longer journey, and create the context for change over a number of years so that people have direct, easy, safe, and pleasant routes encouraging them to want to walk to school, shops, work and public transport as well as for leisure purposes.

As part of our "Feet First" project we will be looking at actions the Council can lead on and implement itself as well as working with key external stakeholders, such as Living Streets, Hampshire County Council, parishes

and major institutions, to facilitate walking in all its forms. We want to make this theme as inclusive as possible and for it to reach out across the District.

Sport

Winchester City Council and partners are delighted to announce that the 2016 Winchester Criterium will include British Cycling's South Regional Circuit Race Championships.

Local Plan

Consultation on the 'Publication' (Pre-Submission) version of the Local Plan Part 2 was undertaken before Christmas. Comments and representations on the Publication Plan were received from 368 people and organisations, covering many aspects of the Plan. All of the comments can be viewed on the [Local Plan Part 2](#) web page.

This affects areas outside the South Downs National Park, who are in the process of preparing their own Local Plan.

Devolution

An initial plan covering the whole of Hampshire involving 19 partners, including the 15 local councils, two Local Enterprise Partnerships and two National Park Authorities from the area, seems to have fallen by the wayside. The government is sticking with its desire for a mayor, and whilst Winchester and other authorities can see a mayor working for big cities such as London or Manchester, they do not see it as the right model for a large, diverse and extensively rural area such as Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. But

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the Solent local authorities seem to be pressing ahead with devolution plans of their own. Watch this space!

Boundary Review

And lastly to say, that because of the boundary review changes, Droxford will become part of the Central Meon Valley ward, and will have 3 Councillors following the election on 5th May. I wish them well, and will ensure that they are fully briefed on all the relevant issues for Droxford.

Contact Details:

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Winchester City Council - Councillor for Droxford, Soberton and Hambledon (until May 5th 2016)

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