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Draft Council Plan 2020-2025

The challenges we face

The Winchester District faces many challenges and this Plan sets out the core principles which underpin our work and respond to these challenges.

The main challenges:

- The Climate crisis and the need to reduce the Winchester District's very high carbon footprint
- Poor air quality in parts of the District
- Inequality and its effects on mental health and physical wellbeing
- Expensive housing
- A population which is aging while younger people leave the district
- Brexit and its impact on the economy
- Shifting employment patterns and technological change
- Poor provision of services such as public transport in the rural parts of the District
- Maintaining high quality services while balancing the Council budget

Your Council Plan

This Council Plan is a high level document covering the period 2020 to 2025. It sets out what the Council wants to achieve and informs other strategies and plans including the Local Plan and individual team plans.

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

Our priorities are:

Tackling the Climate emergency and creating a greener district

Homes for all

Vibrant local economy

Living well

Your services. Your voice

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Tackling the Climate emergency and creating a greener District

The climate crisis is the biggest challenge all of us face in the coming years and decades. Winchester must play its part in tackling the crisis and hand our district to our children and grandchildren in a better state than it is now.

What we want to achieve.

- A carbon neutral Winchester City Council by 2024
- A carbon neutral Winchester District by 2030
- Reduced levels of waste and increased recycling, exceeding national targets
- An increase in the proportion of journeys taken by walking, cycling and public transport

How will we achieve this?

- Carbon neutrality to be made central to everything we do.
- Have an adopted and up to date Local Plan with positive policies which promote low carbon development and transport while protecting our heritage and natural environment.
- Take a lead with partners and residents to deliver the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan throughout the district.
- Deliver the City of Winchester Movement Strategy and prioritise walking, cycling and public transport throughout the district
- Safeguard our district's extensive natural habitats and precious ecosystems by delivering the actions in our Biodiversity Action Plan.

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Homes for all

Housing in our district is expensive and young people and families are moving out because they can't find suitable accommodation they can afford.

Winchester District needs homes for all – homes that are affordable and built in the right areas for our changing communities.

What we want to achieve.

- More young people and families working and living in the district.
- All homes are energy efficient and affordable to run
- The creation of communities not just homes
- No-one sleeping rough except by choice

How will we achieve this?

- The Council building significantly more homes, both traditional council homes and through the council housing company
- Strengthen our local plan to ensure homes are built for all sectors of our society including young people
- Use the new Winchester Housing Company to deliver a wide range of housing tenures to meet local needs
- Provide support for our homeless and most vulnerable people
- Be innovative in moving the energy efficiency of new and existing homes towards zero carbon
- Work with developers to ensure that they provide affordable housing and homes at fair market value as part of new developments

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Vibrant local economy

Winchester district is home to a host of successful businesses and enterprises with high levels of employment in our urban and rural areas. In the face of tough competition, our high streets, town and business centres must attract new investment in low carbon offices, workspace and transport links.

What we want to achieve.

- Increased opportunities for high-quality, well-paid employment across the district
- New offices and workspace located in areas with sustainable transport links or where they reduce the need to travel to work
- More younger people choosing to live and work here
- Businesses grasping opportunities for green growth
- A compelling and competitive offer attracting visitors to our City, market towns and rural communities across the district

How will we achieve this?

- Working with business, universities and colleges to position Winchester District as a centre for digital, creative, knowledge-intensive networks
- Using Council assets to provide new work, housing and leisure opportunities for younger people.
- Strengthening the Winchester brand and investing in visitor services to promote our unique cultural, heritage and natural environment assets.
- Supporting business in meeting the challenge of carbon neutrality
- Securing support to replace LEADER funding and sustain business development in rural areas.

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Living well

We want all our residents to live healthy and fulfilled lives. We recognise that our residents are living longer and want to ensure the district offers the right mix of facilities for all ages and abilities.

What we want to achieve.

- A reduction in health inequalities
- Greater participation in physical and cultural activities
- An increase in active travel
- Services that work for all, but especially for residents who need more help to live well.
- Attractive and well used green spaces with space for relaxation and play

How will we achieve this?

- Opening of the new Winchester Sport and Leisure Park to offer sustainable, accessible facilities for all to enjoy a wide range of activities
- Supporting communities to extend the range of sports facilities across the District
- Create safe cycleways and pathways to make it safer and more appealing for our residents to cycle and walk to their destination
- Maintain and enhance the open spaces and parks that support good mental and physical health for residents of all ages

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Your Services, Your Voice

We want to have high quality, good value services that are continuously improving to address the changing needs and expectations of residents, tenants, visitors, businesses and non-profit organisations across our district – and are accessible to all, whatever their circumstances.

We want our residents to have the opportunity to make their voice heard and be able to see and understand how the Council makes its decisions.

What we want to achieve.

- An open and transparent Council
- Improved satisfaction for our services
- Good value compared to other similar authorities
- Continuous improvement in cost-effectiveness
- High accessibility and usage
- A balanced budget and stable Council finances

How will we achieve this?

- New processes that:
 - Involve the public and ward councillors earlier and more deeply in the design and decision-making process
 - Effectively respond to and use complaints and feedback to drive service improvement
- New wider set of published measures designed to drive improved satisfaction and performance
- More effective use of technology to make it simpler and easier to deal with the council and its delivery partners while reducing cost
- Strong focus on accessibility standards to ensure our services are usable by all
- Investing in our staff and making the most of their skills and talents