

# WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

## ALL CHANGE AT BUS STATION

After years of discussion and dither, WCC has now purchased the bus station, and passengers will notice the new routes in the city centre this September.

**Leader Cllr Caroline Horrill says;** "The £4m purchase from Stagecoach ensures the future of bus operations in the city centre. The site has been in poor repair for a number of years and has given the City the opportunity to improve the facilities.

"The improvements to the site change the flow of buses through the town, enhance the passenger experience with new seating and shelters, and provide an improved ticketing area. It also improves pedestrian safety on the High Street, and will complement the wider regeneration strategy.

## CITY CENTRE REGENERATION

Local Conservatives running the City Council have outlined ambitious plans to regenerate the city centre – the area known as Silver Hill - after years of wrangling.

Over 1500 local people took part in a community planning process this year which has provided the outline for a new plan.

As well as local residents, a range of other organisations have taken part, including the City of Winchester Trust, and Winchester BID, as well as the creative industry sector and young people.

The vision includes a mix of retail, commercial and housing, with plans for an attractive design based on the principle of "Winchesterness".

**Cllr Caroline Horrill says;** "The new plan, known as a Supplementary Planning Document, will be completed in the New Year following further public consultation and a financial and viability plan."

The Conservative led Council has set the Central Winchester Regeneration project as one of its top priorities to work for everyone across the community and provide a city we can all be proud of.



## NEW BROOM AT CITY COUNCIL

A new team is in charge at Winchester City Council - led by Cllr Caroline Horrill – and it has an exciting vision for the future of the District.

The focus is on transport, the regeneration of Winchester city centre, tackling the affordable housing crisis and supporting our business community.

Caroline told *InTouch*; "This is a challenging but exciting time for the city and the wider district. We've really hit the ground running as an administration with a number of major projects already underway.

"The new Cabinet is young with a diverse range of backgrounds and skills. We are all 100% focussed on moving our City forward."



*Winchester City Council Cabinet (Pictured L-R)*

*Cllrs Stephen Godfrey, Steve Miller, Guy Ashton, Caroline Brook, Lisa Griffiths, Caroline Horrill (Leader), Rob Humby, Jan Warwick*

## BUSINESS RATE RELIEF

WCC has listened to the concerns of local business about the impact of increased Business Rates and consulted widely how to distribute £900,000 via a Government backed rate relief scheme.

**Cllr Caroline Horrill says;** "Local businesses have seen a variety of changes to their rateable values as a result of the recent revaluation. Whilst some businesses' rates have decreased or stayed the same, other businesses are facing more substantial increases in their rates bills. The government's new scheme, which our own MP Steve Brine lobbied the Chancellor to establish, aims to help businesses cope with these changes.

"We have now identified over 600 ratepayers who are eligible for Business Rate Relief according to these criteria and will be actively ensuring that local companies are helped as effectively as possible."



*Steve Brine MP with Catherine Turness from Winchester BID*

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Winchester may have been voted one of the best places to live in the country but accessing good quality housing for everyone is difficult.

Winchester City Council is one of the few local authorities with a substantial building programme to tackle the affordable housing crisis.

The Conservative group, which runs the council, have rewritten the housing strategy, looking to deliver homes by setting up a Housing Company and working with a range of providers and agencies. In addition, it has established its own shared ownership scheme to promote the development of rural housing, while looking to help the elderly with a new Extra Care scheme.

**Cllr Caroline Horrill says;** "We already provide over 5000 homes with high levels of satisfaction expressed by residents and we're well ahead of schedule to build 300 new homes right across the District between 2017 and 2020. Quality Housing is a crucial strand of our strategy and key to supporting the economic growth in our District."

# STRONG AND COMPETENT LEADERSHIP IN OUR COMMUNITY