

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
CLLR JAMES BATHO
MAY/JUNE 2026

INTRODUCTION

On May 7th I was elected to represent the residents of Winchester Downlands, which includes Hursley, on Hampshire County Council (HCC). I have been a District Councillor for 4 years, representing St Barnabas in the northern area of Winchester and was re-elected to that role in the same elections. At the Council I am a member of the Universal Services Select Committee and Corporate Parenting Board and a Deputy for the Children and Young People Select Committee, Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee and Regulatory Committee.

THANKS

I would like to acknowledge the commitment from my predecessor, Jan Warwick, who has been a well-liked and dedicated Councillor to our residents. I will work hard to ensure that you continue to be supported and have a voice at the County Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR)

The government have confirmed that the Winchester District will form part of the Mid Hants Unitary Council along with East Hampshire, Test Valley and most of the New Forest. There will be three further mainland Unitaries, South West Hampshire (Eastleigh, Southampton, Waterside villages, Totton and some parishes from Test Valley), South East Hampshire (Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport, Fareham and a few parishes from Winchester and East Hampshire) and North Hampshire (Basingstoke, Hart and Rushmoor). The electoral arrangements in terms of Divisions or Wards that will be used to elect members are being finalised.

The timescales for this change are further elections next year (2027) for the Unitary. Elected representatives will take responsibility for forming the structure of the Mid Hants Unitary, which will come into being in April 2028, at which time the current District and County Council will cease to exist. The Unitary Councillors will then serve a further four-year term.

The Conservative Leader of HCC has confirmed that the County Council will pursue a Judicial Review (JR) into the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process that the Government has undertaken. We will have to wait and see how this affects the plan and timescales.

FOCUS AREAS

During the election I presented themes that will be the focus areas in my work. These are:

- Safer Streets
- Keeping our area special
- Listening to you

Details of these areas will be included in my subsequent reports to the Parish Council.

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