

TICHBORNE PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk Mr Brendan Gibbs**

**Mr Steve Tilbury,
Director of Operations,
Winchester City Council
Colebrook Street
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10th December 2010

Winchester City Council “Blueprint” consultation response

Dear Mr Tilbury,

Please accept this letter as the official response from Tichborne Parish Council to the Blueprint consultation that was recently undertaken by Winchester City Council. Working to a very tight deadline, the members of Tichborne Parish Council have been diligent in consulting with villagers in order to generate and record their response.

Tichborne is a civil parish that is large in area but small in population. It is a village that is dominated by a landowning estate (known as the Tichborne Estate) that controls a significant amount of land in the civil parish and is highly influential locally. Currently, the Tichborne Estate is seeking to develop a parcel of land within the civil parish that is at the appeal stage of the planning process. Our comments on this proposal are well known and in the public domain and therefore do not need repeating here.

At this moment in time we have no other statement to make on the provision of housing locally other than to say that we continue to support the WCC Core Strategy Preferred Options published in May 2009. Contained within this strategy there is a section entitled “Policy MTRA 2 Market Towns and Rural Area Settlement Hierarchy” that makes specific reference to Tichborne as a “Level Four” settlement within this hierarchy.

Moving on to the Blueprint consultation Tichborne Parish Council has carefully considered responses received from our villagers. We now present their thoughts on how they think Tichborne should develop over the next 20 years or so.

No scale of importance or priority has been allocated to any of these aspirations listed below.

Road improvements to Riverside Lane. For as long as can be remembered the main road through the village has been poorly maintained and is prone to flooding whenever a moderate fall of rain is recorded. Significant improvements in drainage, surfacing and camber are urgently required.

Although we note that Winchester City Council is not the highway authority we none the less wish these comments to be recorded as part of the Blueprint consultation.

Improved broadband. Whilst we note the recent comments by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sports that he is keen to see next generation super fast Broadband rolled out across the country by 2015 we remain sceptical as to how this will be achieved in a climate of cost cutting. Improvements to this area of the local infrastructure are central to our vision for the future “Shape” of Tichborne and we would like to see improvements to the current offerings.

Improved public transport. Tichborne Parish Council would like to say that public transport links to and from Winchester and New Alresford could be vastly improved. We would like to see more services routed through the village on a regular basis. This may be especially welcome if the previously requested improvements to Riverside Lane are put in place. We would also welcome improvements to the current service that would enable our younger population to take advantage of after-school activities in both New Alresford and Winchester without having to rely on private motor vehicles for transportation.

Schools and after-school activity. Despite its small population it should be noted that there is a significant number of children of school age living in the village. Tichborne Parish Council therefore supports the retention and improvement of schools in the New Alresford area. After-School activities in Tichborne are almost non-existent at the moment so any provision here will be welcomed. Please also note our comments above regarding provision of better public transport in conjunction with these activities.

Having said all this we note that the responsibility for Children Services does not currently lie with Winchester City Council.

Improved mobile phone coverage. Quite often in rural areas such as Tichborne it is a fact that mobile phone reception can be poor. Whilst we do not advocate covering the countryside in vast quantities of unsightly telecommunication beacons we would like to see some improvement to services that are currently available. We feel that this can be achieved using existing equipment and infrastructure. Failing this, we would like to see the restoration of a full payphone service (including coin operated mechanism) at the current payphone location within the village.

Protection of the River Itchen. In the past this council has led objections against attempts to discharge treated effluent into the River Itchen. Most notably an application was made in 2007 to gain an Environment Agency licence for this purpose. We would like to record that for environmental and bio-diversity reasons we would never want to see any such initiative revived in the future.

Within New Alresford itself we would not want to see a situation where business activity is stifled due to access issues and congestion. Whilst we re-iterate that improvements to public transport offer a better longer-term resolution to such problems we would like to see some improvements now to the way car parking in New Alresford is managed and organised.

We hope that these comments will be incorporated within any outcomes that are generated as a result of the “Blueprint” consultation.

I trust this is in order.

Many thanks,

**Brendan Gibbs
Clerk to the Parish Council of Tichborne**