

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM**30 October 2003**Attendance:Councillors:

Pearce (Chairman) (P)

Bennetts (P)
 Berry
 Beveridge (P)
 Craig
 Davies (P)
 de Peyer
 Hiscock (P)
 Love (P)

Mather (P)
 Maynard (P)
 Mitchell (P)
 Nelmes (P)
 Nunn (P)
 Pines (P)
 Porter (P)
 Rees
 Tait (P)

1. **PUBLIC PARTICPATION**

There were no questions asked or statements made.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were noted from Councillors de Peyer and Rees

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Forum held on 29 July 2003, numbered 308-316, be approved and adopted.

4. **TOWN BUDGET 2004/2005**

(Oral Report)

The Director of Finance explained that the 2004/5 budget process was underway with Cabinet considering the potential growth and savings items brought forward by each of the Departments through the various Performance Improvement Committees.

The Director anticipated that the balance on the Town reserve in April 2004 would be £85,000. He advised that an appropriate level for the reserve would be 10% of the precept (£60,000), which gave the Forum a potential £25,000 for one-off expenditure items, although he advised that the funding of any on-going costs might require an increase in the precept. Members noted that current spending included approximately £67,000 on the maintenance of cemeteries, £450,000 on the maintenance of open spaces, and other items including footway lighting, the Christmas Lights and the administration of the Forum. The Director explained that every £1 raised in the precept would generate an extra £13,000, but that any increase in the precept should be justified through identified spending items.

Members discussed the proposals and expressed their interest in the Community Wardens scheme as set out in the minute below.

Members requested that the Director of Finance investigate other possible areas of expenditure that would be normal jurisdiction of Parish Councils which the Forum could consider, such as commuted maintenance and Open Spaces funding.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Finance be requested to prepare a budget report for the 13 January 2004 meeting of the Councillors' Forum.

5. **PROGRESS ON THE FORUM'S RECOMMENDATIONS**
(Report WTF15 refers)

Members considered a report that set out some of the main recommendations and the progress that had been made during the course of the Forum's first year.

With reference to paragraph 5.5 and the recommended appointment of a dedicated officer for Youth Issues, a Member advised that the Youth Issues Forum had highlighted the need, not necessarily for a dedicated Youth Officer, but for the Council to better facilitate between community groups and service providers.

Members also discussed the post of Open Space Officer and requested that further information be supplied in advance of the next meeting.

With regard to the five-year programme of works for the town's play areas, Members requested that the Forum should consider this before any final decision was made on the strategy.

Members discussed the proposals for Community Wardens at paragraphs 5.17 and 8.1 of the report. It was noted that the proposals were at an early stage but that Cabinet had accepted its potential as a growth bid and that officers were to visit the scheme in operation at Andover. The Forum discussed whether the Wardens could patrol the Cathedral Close and Councillor Hiscock as Portfolio Holder for Housing explained that if the scheme were to be funded in part from the Housing Revenue Account, the Wardens would need to be initially focused on the Council Estates. It was also noted the Registered Social Landlords could be interested in part funding the scheme as a partner. However, Members noted that at this stage, Cabinet had considered proposals in principle for the Wardens to be funded by £30,000 from the General Fund (with a possible contribution from the Town precept) and £30,000 from the Housing Revenue Account.

Members requested to be informed of the progress of this scheme and appointed Councillor Nelmes to monitor and report back to future meetings.

In the absence of the Director of Community Services, Members agreed to defer to its next meeting further consideration of all items in the report that related that Department.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet be recommended to agree that the five-year playground strategy be considered by the next meeting of the Forum in advance of any final decision on the strategy.

2. That the issues relating to the Community Services Department be deferred to the 13 January 2004 meeting of the Councillors' Forum.

3. That Councillor Nelmes be appointed to monitor and report back on any progress in relation to Community Wardens.

4. That the remainder of the report be noted.

6. **PUBLICITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FORUM**

(Report WTF17 refers)

The Forum considered a report that set out the approximate costs of preparing and delivering a leaflet to all of the properties in the unparished area.

Members discussed the need for notice boards in the town area and agreed that the decision to produce a publicity leaflet should be deferred to the 13 January 2004 meeting.

RESOLVED:

That a decision on publicity leaflets be deferred to the 13 January 2004 meeting.

7. **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2003 ON OLDER PEOPLE'S ISSUES**

(Report WTF18 refers)

Members reviewed the public meeting held on Older People's Issues and discussed the need for more low-level buses in the town that made access for people easier.

Councillor Porter presented a guidance leaflet that had been prepared by Wolverhampton City Council that provided practical and easy to read advice concerning the services offered by the local authority and its strategic partners. Although noting the differences between unitary and district councils, the Forum agreed that the production of a similar leaflet that linked in all the service providers would be of great benefit to many residents.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

8. **CONSIDERATION OF THE NEXT PUBLIC MEETING TO BE HELD ON PARKING ISSUES, 17 NOVEMBER 2003**

(Oral Report)

Councillor Beveridge as Portfolio Holder for Transport and Access suggested that the meeting should focus on public parking following the opening of the Bar End Park and Ride extension. He added that as part of this, the meeting should also discuss the impact of the recently announced Air Quality Management Area. It was noted that invitations had been sent to the usual Town Forum distribution database and to all Parish Councils.

Members agreed with the arrangements and further suggested the issue of increased disabled parking bays in the Town could be discussed.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Access and the Vice Chairman of the Forum continue preparations for the meeting.

9. **SUGGESTED CHANGE OF NAME FOR THE FORUM**

(Oral Report)

The City Secretary and Solicitor explained the confusion the name of this Forum had caused other Members, the public and press. It was therefore agreed that to distinguish this meeting from the public, issue based meetings in advertisements and notices, the Forum should be named: "Winchester Town Forum (Councillors' Meeting)."

The issue based, larger public meetings would remain as the "Winchester Town Forum."

RESOLVED:

That the name of this Forum be changed to Winchester Town Forum (Councillors' Meeting).

10. **FLY POSTERS**

(Oral Report)

The Chairman accepted this item onto the agenda as an item requiring urgent consideration in response to a request from Councillor Nunn.

Councillor Nunn commented on the nuisance caused by illegal fly posters in the town area. Whilst it was noted that some of these advertised the type of events that were encouraged at the Youth Issues meeting, Members requested that the City Secretary and Solicitor provide further information on what steps the Council could take.

A Member also commented at the amount of graffiti in the town area and requested information on what measures the Council takes in combating this.

RESOLVED:

1. That the City Secretary and Solicitor be requested to provide further information as to what steps the City Council could take to reduce illegal fly posters.

2. That information be provided to the Forum on the steps the City Council can take to reduce and remove graffiti.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.40pm

Chairman