

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM**24 November 2004**Attendance:Councillors:

Pearce (Chairman) (P)

Bennetts (P)
Berry (P)
Beveridge (P)
Davies (P)
de Peyer (P)
Higgins (P)
Hiscock (P)
Love (P)
Mather (P)

Maynard (P)
Mitchell (P)
Nelmes (P)
Nunn (P)
Pines (P)
Rees (P)
Saunders (P)
Tait (P)

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meetings, held on 26 July 2004 and 14 September 2004, be approved and adopted.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no questions asked or statements made.

3. THE WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT BUDGET 2005/06
(Oral Report)

The Director of Finance circulated to Members information on the projected 2004-06 Town Account precept and expenditure items. It was noted that at approximately £140,000, the Town Account's reserves at 31 March 2004 would be approximately £70,000 over the recommended minimum reserve level, which was set at 10% of the total budget.

Councillor Beveridge (as Portfolio Holder for Planning) reported that at its meeting on 17 November 2004, Cabinet had suggested that the Forum should consider making a financial contribution towards Local Area Design Statements (LADs) (report CAB967 refers). Following debate, the Forum acknowledged the benefits of engaging local people in the planning process and as a way to guide developers towards schemes more appropriate to each locality. It was therefore agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the Town Account should make available up to £15,000 for Neighbourhood Design Statements and LADs, for the remainder of the 2004/05 financial year. However the Forum did not recommend support from the Town Account for Developers' Briefs as it considered that this expense should come from the Development Services budget.

With regard to the 2005/06 budget, Members noted that a more detailed report would be presented to their next meeting but advised the Director of Finance that this report should include:

- provision for further expenditure on noticeboards,
- information on the costings of bus shelter maintenance,
- information on the costs of open space maintenance,
- and the possible costs of the Neighbourhood Warden scheme being expanded to other parts of the town.

It was also suggested that this report should include more information on the current expenditure (and any matching funds from other sources) from the Town Account. Members also agreed that the Forum should draft what it considered to be its priorities for the town area which would help to determine future spending from the town account.

In order to better feed into the 2005/06 budgetary process of Cabinet meetings, it was agreed that the next meeting of the Forum be brought forward from 27 January 2004.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet approve up to £15,000 to be made available to assist the development of Neighbourhood Design Statements and Local Area Design Statements in the Winchester Town area from the 2004/05 Town Account.

2. That a detailed report be presented to the next meeting of the Councillors' Forum on the options for the 2005/06 budget, including provision for further expenditure on noticeboards, information on the costs of bus shelter maintenance, information on the costs of open space maintenance, and the possible cost of the Neighbourhood Warden scheme being expanded to other parts of the town.

3. That the next meeting of the Councillors' Forum be brought forward from 27 January 2004 to discuss the 2005/06 budget.

4. **VISION FOR WINCHESTER – THE NEXT STEPS**
(Oral Report)

The Chief Executive suggested that, following the public meeting held on 4 November 2004, the Vision for Winchester document should be open to further consultation during December 2004 from key officers and other parties (such as the City of Winchester Trust). Thereafter, it was anticipated that an amended document would be reported to the Corporate Management Team, the Winchester Town Forum (Councillors' Meeting) and finally to Cabinet prior to its publication in February 2005. Whilst approving this approach, Members also agreed that latest draft of the Vision should be made available to the invitees to the next public meeting of the Forum (to be held on 1 February 2005), with other copies available at the meeting, to provide the public with an opportunity to submit written responses and to update them on the Vision's progress.

The Forum also noted that the editor of the Hampshire Chronicle had indicated that he was willing to promote a debate about the Vision through the newspaper and Members

discussed the possibility of including a leaflet in the newspaper. In addition, Members considered the need for the Vision to include Winchester's suburbs.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

5. **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS PUBLIC MEETING (VISION FOR WINCHESTER, HELD 4 NOVEMBER 2004)**
(Report WTF39 refers)
RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE AT THE MEETING HELD 2 SEPTEMBER 2004
(Report WTF38 refers)

The Forum considered the two reports together. In their review of the meeting, Members agreed that it was well attended and had produced a lively and constructive discussion.

During their consideration of the questionnaire responses, the Forum noted the opportunities to improve future public meetings. Members acknowledged that some members of the public might be reluctant to speak in front of large numbers of people and therefore recommended that future questionnaires should provide an opportunity to submit written responses. Members also agreed that, whilst Councillors should be able to respond to comments raised, they should not attempt to raise new issues during the debates when members of the public were waiting to speak.

To make new members of the public feel more welcome at the public meetings, the Chairman agreed to clarify with speakers who they were and whether they represented an organisation or group.

Councillor Nelmes agreed to consult with the Corporate Communications Manager to improve the promotion of future public meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the reported be noted, along with the above points to improve future public meetings.

6. **CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE SUBJECTS FOR FUTURE PUBLIC MEETINGS**
(Oral Report)

The Forum considered what subjects it could set for future public meetings and discussed the possibility of evenings centred on tourism in Winchester and whether to impose a ban on smoking in public places. Following debate, it was agreed that these subjects, along with any other possible options, should be considered further at the next Councillors' meeting.

In considering agenda items for future Councillors' meetings of the Forum, it was suggested that Members should receive reports on the progress of the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme and the success of zero tolerance and PubWatch schemes. Further to debate on the PubWatch scheme, it was agreed to recommend to Cabinet that Councillor Pines be appointed as the City Council's representative on meetings of this body.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet approve that Councillor Pines be nominated as the City Council's representative on meetings of PubWatch.
2. That the subject matter and timetable for future public meetings be set at the next Councillor meeting of the Forum.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.50pm.

Chairman