

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

9 June 2005

Attendance:

Councillors:

Rees (Chairman) (P)

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

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

Others in Attendance:

Councillor Collin (Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Inclusive Communities)

81. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Rees be elected Chairman and Councillor Pearce Vice-Chairman for the 2005/06 Municipal Year.

82. TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That the meeting date and times of future meetings of the Councillors' Town Forum, be agreed as 6.00pm on 13 October, 23 November 2005 and 2 February and 24 March 2006.

83. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Berry, Pearce and Saunders.

84. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 March 2005 be approved and adopted.

85. UPDATE ON TREES STRATEGY

(Oral Report)

The Director of Development distributed to the Forum a brief synopsis of progress towards publishing the Council's Tree Strategy. In summary this explained that the publication of the Strategy had been delayed by workload pressures within the Directorate. However it was anticipated that the Strategy would be published by March 2006 and that this would form a framework for service delivery regarding trees.

It was explained that some of the work of the Strategy had already been completed, such as a GIS related database of all the current Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), and that a new Arboricultural Officer was due to begin work within the next few weeks.

In encouraging further progress towards the Strategy, Members commented on the need to prioritise work on trees on Council owned land, trees in a dangerous condition (to people and properties) and (in respect of a grant from the Forum, 6 January 2005 Meeting refers) trees in the town area.

The Forum noted the cross departmental nature of the Strategy, and the Chief Executive explained that the City Council's Environment Team would manage the Tree Strategy in relation to Council owned trees and that the practical work was likely to be undertaken by the Council's contractors.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members requested that a written report be prepared for the next meeting of the Forum, detailing further progress and establishing further details regarding responsibility for the Strategy.

RESOLVED:

That a further written report be presented to the next meeting of the Forum (to be held on 13 October 2005) setting out the progress and responsibilities of the Strategy.

86. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS – PROGRESS REPORT

(Report WTF58 refers)

The Director of Development introduced the report which set out a brief review of the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme since it became operational on 24 February 2005.

Whilst it was noted that it was too soon after the implementation of the Neighbourhood Wardens Scheme to make a meaningful performance assessment, Members were agreed that the Wardens had so far made a valuable and positive contribution to those communities where they had been introduced.

Councillor Collin (as Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Inclusive Communities) commented on the need for the Scheme to be introduced in Stanmore and become fully operational before any firm recommendation could be made to Cabinet to extend the scheme further.

At the invitation of the Chairman, County Councillor Peskett spoke in support of the Wardens and the need to consider at an early stage a possible extension of the Scheme.

Noting these comments, the Forum acknowledged the interest expressed by other groups (such as Badger Farm Parish Council amongst others) and agreed that preliminary investigations should be undertaken to assess future funding options for the Scheme. It was also suggested that to support the business case of extending the Wardens Scheme, the cost of preventing anti-social behaviour should be calculated where possible. During discussion, the Chief Executive added that the City Centre Partnership was considering the creation of a "Business Improvement Area." This would create additional funds through increased Business Rates that would be used to improve the local area and could be used on a scheme akin to the Wardens.

The Forum also discussed the detail of the Warden's drug related work.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Forum notes the good progress of the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme as set out in the report.
2. That a further report be presented to the Forum as soon as an effective evaluation can be undertaken with a view to extend the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme within the consideration for the 2006/07 Budget.
3. That officers be requested to discuss with the appropriate local groups the possible role of the Neighbourhood Wardens Scheme to assess the likely future need.

87. MINOR AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION – WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

(Report WTF57 refers)

The City Secretary and Solicitor explained that following meetings of Cabinet (4 April 2005) and Council (13 April 2005), the Forum had been offered delegated powers to determine grants from the town account within an approved budget ceiling.

Following debate, the Forum agreed to approve the recommended change to its Terms of Reference and the Council's constitution as set out below (the change is marked in italics).

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet and Council be recommended to approve the following addition to the terms of reference:

1. To act as a consultative and advisory body regarding issues affecting the six Winchester Town District Wards which, on occasions, may also include "cross boundary" matters involving adjoining areas (eg Badger Farm, Olivers Battery and Harestock).
2. To forward any recommendations for action principally to Cabinet, but also to one of the Regulatory Committees and/or Council when appropriate.
3. To have delegated powers to incur the following expenditure:

a) ~~That the incurring of expenditure be limited to the cost of meeting facilities, officer time, arranging and attending meetings, plus occasional research work.~~

b) *to authorise grants from the Town Account within the budget approved by Council in February each year.*

4. That no discussions take place about specific applications which fall within the remit of any of the Council's Regulatory Committees.

88. 2005/06 PUBLIC MEETINGS PROGRAMME

(Report WTF56 refers)

The City Secretary and Solicitor introduced the report that set out a number of possible subjects for discussion at the Forum's public meetings.

In discussing the broader purposes of the public meetings, it was agreed that these should relate to the Council's Corporate Strategy and should attempt to attract as wide an audience as possible.

During the discussion, Members suggested the following subjects:

- Shopping (the type of shops in the town area and related to the Silver Hill Development).
- Sporting Facilities.
- The Environment (to include the Tree Strategy, water courses, flooding)
- Facilities for Youth (to include representatives from local schools, colleges and high education establishments).

Although she was unable to attend the meeting, the Forum noted Councillor Berry's support of a future discussion on Tourism, including the need for more hotels and to encourage more festivals.

After considering the possibility of an evening's discussion on the effect of drugs in Winchester, the Forum agreed that due to the sensitivity of the subject, this issue would be better discussed at Member level with the Community Safety Partnership.

The report included the Cittaslow Movement as a possible subject for discussion within the report and Members noted the role of the City of Winchester Trust in promoting the Movement's principles.

RESOLVED:

That, taking into account the above discussion, the Chairman be granted delegated authority to set the subjects and dates for future public meetings of the Forum in consultation with the Chief Executive.

89. NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS PUBLIC MEETING, HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2005, BROADWAY/FRIARSGATE RE-DEVELOPMENT

(WTF50 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

90. **RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE AT THE MEETING HELD 28 FEBRUARY 2005**
(Report WTF53 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

91. **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS PUBLIC MEETING, HELD ON 11 APRIL 2005, HERITAGE SERVICES**
(WTF51 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

92. **RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE AT THE MEETING HELD ON 11 APRIL 2005**
(Report WTF52 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

93. **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS PUBLIC MEETING, HELD ON 11 MAY 2005, THE EVENING ECONOMY**
(WTF55 refers)

The Chief Executive explained that following the meeting, some of the points made were being taken up by the City Centre Manager in negotiations with students at Peter Symonds College and the Universities. The results of these negotiations would be reported to a future Councillors' meeting of the Forum. It was also noted that the progress of the PubWatch Scheme would be incorporated into this report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

94. **RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE AT THE MEETING HELD ON 11 MAY 2005**
(Report WTF54 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.45pm.

Chairman