

LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL

29 January 2007

Attendance:

Councillors:

Cooper (Chairman) (P)

Anthony (P)
Goodall (P)
Godfrey (P)
Love (P)
Macmillan (P)
Maynard (P)

Pearce (P)
Rees (P)
Spender (P)
Stephens
Verney (P)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Beckett (Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economy and Tourism)
Councillor Stallard (Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport)

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Learney

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Stephens.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 18 October and 28 November 2006 be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked or statements made.

4. **FOCUS ON SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY REPORT**

(Report LE38 Refers)

Mr Barlow, the Head of Sport and Outdoor Education at Sparsholt College, gave a presentation to the Panel, outlining the history and current work of the Winchester District Sports and Physical Activity Alliance (SPAA). He explained that the group had been working towards several key actions since the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for the Winchester District was formally approved by Cabinet in April 2006. Sport England, it was reported, saw local SPAA's as service deliverers at local levels.

Mr Barlow continued that it was important that the work of the SPAA was not just focused on sport, but physical activity as a whole. Although only 26% of the adult population of the District were regularly active, this still placed Winchester in the top quartile of districts in the country. He added that more volunteers and coaches, as well as facilities, were needed to increase participation in physical activities across all age ranges. Working towards the 2012 Olympics was a main target for the SPAA and it was hoped that this would then lead to the correct support and funding required, to ensure that these activities remained sustainable for the future.

In response to Members' questions, Mr Barlow advised that the SPAA's work would not just focus on 'majority' sports, although in these early stages they had to concentrate on those sports that approached the group, such as football, rugby, etc. He added that it was hoped that the success of the SPAA would also support the development of minority sports. He continued that it was important to the SPAA to encourage and develop their volunteer bank, including youth volunteers. Other projects were also being developed, such as ongoing discussions with the Forestry Commission to work towards improving areas for walking, cycling and dog walking.

Responding to questions, the Director of Communities updated the Panel on the proposal for a new Active Lifestyles Co-ordinator who would establish a process for setting up an improved GP referral scheme in the District, where patients would be prescribed exercise for certain health conditions.

The Chairman thanked Mr Barlow for an interesting and informative presentation.

RESOLVED:

1. That the positive progress being made towards the delivery of objectives in the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy be noted.
2. That the SPAA provides an annual update to the Scrutiny Panel on its work.

5. **CULTURE, HERITAGE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO – THIRD QUARTER 2006/07 PERFORMANCE MONITORING**
(Report LE41 refers)

During discussions, the Panel commented on the annual report of the Theatre Royal. The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport reported that the Theatre had made a small surplus for the first time and that these funds would be invested back into the maintenance of the building. She added that the current financial year was the last year the theatre would receive Arts Council core funding and that it would have to apply for project funding in the future. The Panel congratulated the Theatre on its successes.

Members raised concerns over limited links between the theatre and education. The Director of Development confirmed that the theatre worked with the limited resources it had and that a lack of space to run workshops was the main issue with this. He reported that the theatre was investigating other spaces in the town centre that they could acquire, which would greatly increase the service they could provide.

In response to Members' questions, the Director of Development confirmed that delays to the construction of the new Discovery Centre had been due to issues arising from the conservation of historic features on the original building, but that the new build was on target. He added that although there had been delays, no extra

costs would be passed onto the City Council, as it had made a finite contribution to the project. Councillor Stallard stated that an all-Member briefing on the new Centre had been arranged for 21 March 2007.

The Panel noted that the Museums Forward Plan had been further delayed due to delays in the schedule for the Citizens Panel. The Director of Development confirmed that this should move forward shortly as the results had now been received. In response to questions, the Director continued that the dispersals operation at the Hyde Resources Centre was going to plan and had been carried out according to the principles outlined in CAB1323 (October 2006). Investigations into a new site for the collection were still ongoing. Due to the additional workload generated by the planned move from the Hyde Resources Centre, museums website developments had been deferred.

The Director commented on the decreasing numbers of customers using the personal training facilities at River Park Leisure Centre and explained that membership numbers fell as a result of the refurbishment of the centre in 2006. He added that this also reflected a national trend in falling numbers for personal training and that the Leisure Centre was working towards encouraging membership once again.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet note the success of the Theatre Royal over the past year.

2. That Cabinet note the Panel's concerns over the delay in receiving information from the Citizen's Panel Survey, which resulted in progress being delayed on the internal Museums Review.

6. **ECONOMY AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO – THIRD QUARTER 2006/07**
PERFORMANCE MONITORING
 (Report LE40 refers)

The Panel commended the officers on their work in increasing tourism to the Winchester District, along with the progress towards developing the Business Improvement District (BID) proposal for Winchester town centre. Cllr Beckett stated that it was important to encourage businesses to support this proposal and that he would be bringing an update report to the Panel in the next 12 months.

It was agreed unanimously that the temporary ice rink in the Cathedral Close had been a huge success and that it was important to build on this success as soon as possible. Councillor Beckett confirmed that there would be other events held in The Close during 2007 and that these should assist the Tourism Team in encouraging more visitors to the area.

In response to questions, Councillor Beckett confirmed that the part time Rural Towns Development Officer had commenced employment with the Council in November 2006. The officer had already made substantial progress through working with the four market towns in the District and was helping them to carry out a Market Towns Health Check. The post had been funded from Local Authority Business Growth Initiatives (LABGI) money for one year and Councillor Beckett agreed that his narrative report to the next meeting of the Panel would update Members on this progress.

The Director of Development responded to questions from the Panel in relation to the Parchment Street artistic feature and explained that this had been delayed due to a lack of viable submissions received for the artwork, during the first round of submissions last summer. This would go out for re-tender but at a national level, rather than just in Hampshire.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet note the Panel is pleased with the progress of the BID process.

2. That further information is brought to the next meeting of the Panel regarding what factors are contributing to Winchester's economic success.

3. That feedback on the Market Town Health Check be brought to the next meeting.

BI-ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WINCHESTER ARCHIVIST

(Report LE39 refers)

Members discussed access to the archives at the Hampshire Records Office and the Director of Development agreed to include background information on the numbers of artefacts held at the site in future reports.

The Panel also commended the Hampshire Records Office in achieving designated status.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.

2. That Cabinet formally approve the set of performance indicators as set out in Appendix Two of the report for use in future reports by the Winchester Archivist to this Panel.

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

(Report PS265 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Work Programme, as set out on the reverse of the agenda, and as extracted from Report PS265, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.30pm

Chairman