

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

6 June 2007

Attendance:

Councillors:

Hiscock (Chairman) (P)

Barratt (P)
Berry (P)
Beveridge (P)
Fall (P)
Hicks (P)
Higgins (P)
Love (P)
Mather (P)
Maynard (P)

Nelmes (P)
Nunn (P)
Pearce
Pines (P)
Saunders (P)
Stephens
Tait (P)
Worrall (P)

Others in attendance who did not address the Meeting

Councillor Wood (Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Pearce.

2. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Hiscock be appointed as Chairman and Councillor Love as Vice Chairman of the Forum for the 2007/08 Municipal Year.

3. **TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

RESOLVED:

That the dates and times of future meetings of the Forum be agreed as set out on the agenda (6.30pm on 11 October and 21 November 2007 and 15 January and 20 March 2008) with an additional meeting to be held at 6.30pm on 18 July 2007.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 March 2007 be approved and adopted

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Rutter suggested a number of issues which the Forum may wish to consider during the new Municipal Year. In summary, he welcomed the Vision for Winchester Document and suggested 14 recommendations to improve life for Winchester's residents and visitors. The detail of these recommendations had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting and they included an enhanced pedestrian link around the town emanating from the Cathedral, the need to better preserve historical buildings and improvements to the planning service.

In response, the Chairman thanked Mr Rutter for his contribution to the debate.

Mr Weeks spoke as a representative of the Winchester City Residents' Association. In summary, he asked for further detail on the measurements of the air quality in the town, given its designation as an Area Quality Management Area. He also asked that the Forum investigate the County Council's Highways Contributions Account that arose from new developments in the town.

During discussion, the Forum agreed on the need for progress regarding the recommendations of the Air Quality Management Action Plan and that the County should be asked for information regarding highways contributions. In response, the Corporate Director (Operations) explained that a report on highways contributions would be presented to a future meeting of Cabinet, but the current arrangements meant that contributions could only be used for the original purpose stated to the developer. Therefore, contributions could not be re-diverted to another project, such as the repaving of the High Street. Nevertheless, in a separate move, the Director confirmed that the City Council was currently in discussions with the County Council to seek improvements to the surfacing of the High Street.

Ms Young spoke on the failure of both the applicants for the Silver Hill site to provide alternative accommodation for the current occupants of the Antiques Market. She explained that the shops provided an attraction to tourists and she suggested that the Antiques Market building itself should be preserved.

The Forum noted her comment and thanked Ms Young for her contribution to the debate.

6. **2007/08 WORK PROGRAMME** (Report WTF93)

The Report set out a number of proposed subjects for the Forum to consider during the new Municipal Year.

Members had distinguished between those subjects that were already being developed by the Council (but would require the Forum's input as the voice for Winchester) and those subjects initiated by the Forum.

Therefore, the issues which were likely to be considered by the City Council but may require an input from the Forum included:

- Winchester Access Plan (to include the possibility of speed restrictions)
- Consultation on the Local Development Framework at appropriate stages (The Forum also considered the shortage of public open spaces in and around Winchester)
- The Business Improvement District

Town Forum initiatives included:

- The 2008/09 Town Account Budget
- Investment programme into playgrounds, sports facilities and open spaces
- Post Office re-location
- The future of the commercial wellbeing of the High Street following the Silver Hill development
- Street scene matters such as litter from fast-food outlets and graffiti – the use of neighbourhood wardens, ACSOs and PCSOs. Any discussion on this subject should have regard to the recent Street Scene Review undertaken by the Environment Scrutiny Panel and the possible inclusion of surrounding parish councils in the debate.
- Fair Trade Town – to help overcome delays in progressing this and to investigate the possibility of twinning Winchester with a community from a developing country.
- Review grants to voluntary bodies
- Winchester from the point of view of teenagers
- Winchester from the point of view of disabled people
- Festivals
- Pedestrian/cycle links around the town

The Forum agreed that the format for considering these issues could vary between the usual Councillors' Meetings, stakeholder meetings (where relevant representatives would be invited to give evidence to the Forum in a semi-scrutiny role) and public meetings. Whilst the Forum delegated to the Chairman to propose which sort of meeting would best serve each of the subjects, it was generally agreed that a meeting to consider the future of the Post Office in Winchester should be held as a public meeting. The Forum also noted the success of taking its meetings away from the Guildhall during 2006/07 and it was suggested that this should happen as much as possible in the future.

In considering these subjects, the Forum discussed the possibility of duplication with the work of the Scrutiny Panels. However, it was agreed that the Forum generally presented a better opportunity for public involvement and that many of the representatives that the Forum may ask to attend meetings would be familiar with the multi-layered nature of larger organisations.

In noting that its next Councillors' Meeting was not until 11 October 2007, the Forum agreed to hold an additional meeting at 6.30pm on Wednesday 18 July 2007. If possible, this meeting would consider the role of neighbourhood wardens, ACSOs and PCSOs; the Winchester Access Plan and the programme of work relating to the Local Development Framework.

Following debate, the Forum agreed to delegate to the Chairman, in consultation with officers, authority to draft the work programme from the subjects listed above. This draft would be circulated to the Forum for further comment before officers finalised the detailed arrangements.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairman draft a work programme for 2007/08 in light of the above discussion and circulate this draft to Members before finalising detailed arrangements.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.00pm

Chairman