



**Winchester**  
City Council

**COUNCIL MEETING – 12 September 2007**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 1**

From: Councillor Evans

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

“Could the Portfolio Holder please assure me that the current 4 months vacancy management proposed for all new posts will not apply in the enforcement section where lack of staff is already being quoted as a hindrance to progressing enforcement work?”

**Reply**

“Vacancy management applies to all teams. There is a part time vacancy in the Enforcement Team which is being held under the vacancy management process and so that the post can be reviewed when another part-time post becomes vacant later in the year.”



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#### QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Mather

To: The Leader

“What benefits will accrue to Winchester City Centre following the successful result of the ballot on the BID?”

#### Reply

“A referendum of local businesses was held in July 2007 which determined that Winchester should have a Business Improvement District (BID). 54% of those who voted were in favour of a BID, and that positive vote represented 63% of the rateable value represented in the vote (there was also a positive result for the Segensworth BID, for which the ballot was held several weeks earlier). It is noteworthy that the successful Winchester BID was the first in Hampshire to involve a town centre.

The Winchester BID proposal was the result of extensive consultation with the business community. This included three open meetings for every ratepayer in the proposed BID area, smaller meetings with local groups of businesses, and one-to-one conversations with ratepayers in the city. This consultation formed the geographical area of the BID, the proposed additional levy of the BID, and the projects which the BID would pay for.

£2m of investment will be seen by the businesses of Winchester following the positive result of the BID ballot. The sustained investment will allow projects to grow over a five year period, supplementing existing services provided by the City and County Councils and the Police Authority. The projects include;

- Street management (total spend £455,000+)
  - Improved waste management initiatives for businesses, diverting more waste to recycling, and away from landfill
  - Deep cleaning of designated streets twice a year
  - Floral display programme
  - Festive decorations
- Community safety (total spend £479,400)
  - Additional Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)
  - Cleaning up graffiti and fly posting
  - Continued SHOPWATCH and PubWatch services
  - Contribution to the diverted giving scheme for charitable organisations working with the disadvantaged

- Promote business (total spend £520,000)
  - Marketing campaigns
  - Winchester Christmas festival
- Broadening participation (total spend £149,700)
  - Networking events
  - Discretionary fund
- Evening economy – work to improve the early evening and night time economy including offer of activities, publicity of activities, transport, safety and an improved environment.
- Improved access – lobbying for improved facilities eg better signage to existing park and ride

The BID will commence delivery of the projects in the BID proposals on 1 April 2008 for a term of five years. Already a successful city centre management initiative in its own right, Winchester City Centre Partnership will take lead responsibility in ensuring that the actions contained within the BID Business Plan Proposal are delivered to the designated BID area.

A process of financial reporting is in place from the BID management company to the City Council. The Leader sits on the management board, so Winchester City Council has an input into the running of the BID. The Council is also a ratepayer in its own right.”

A copy of the full BID business plan can be found at:

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/Business/TownCentreManagement/BIDs/>



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**QUESTION 3**

From: Councillor Ruffell

To: The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

"During the Budget debate last year, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Leader both made reference to a 'fundamental service review' that would take place during this year. Could the Portfolio Holder please give a brief report on the progress of this?"

Reply

"The Leader and I have asked three colleagues from the Conservative Group to lead a small team of Group Members in reviewing services across the Council. Their brief is to consider opportunities for efficiency and service improvement, and to contribute to the debate about the Council's spending priorities. They are as follows:

- Cllr Cooper considering Planning Control and Access & Infrastructure
- Cllr Godfrey considering Environment and Community Safety
- Cllr Worrall considering Strategic Housing, Customer Services, spending on consultancy and the Council's income.

The Groups' conclusions, which will be reported to Cabinet in the next few weeks, will inform the Administration's emerging proposals for the Corporate Strategy and 2008/09 budget over the coming months. Those recommendations which the Administration wish to take forward will be discussed through the Scrutiny Panels in the normal way this autumn, and no doubt be part of future Council debates."



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**QUESTION 4**

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation

“Could the Portfolio Holder advise me of the speed limit for vehicles travelling from the Broadway past Sainsbury’s and Marks & Spencer’s up to St George’s Street?”

**Reply**

“The legal speed limit is 30mph by virtue of the street lighting. No other Order has been made to reduce the speed limit for this section of the High Street. There are some 20mph speed limits in the City Centre where particular problems have arisen but no need has been established for this section of the High Street to have a lower limit.”



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**QUESTION 5**

From: Councillor Worrall

To: The Leader

"Will the Leader of the Council update Members on plans to repair the paved areas in Winchester High Street?"

**Reply**

"Following the extensive lobbying by Winchester citizens, myself, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport and the Winchester Town Forum, the County Council has recognised that, as the county town, Winchester deserves a High Street in excellent condition. The County Council has commenced a programme of localised repair, but more importantly has agreed to commit substantial funds to a complete renovation of the High Street to dovetail with the reconstruction of the Broadway, which we have negotiated as part of the Silver Hill scheme. I will recommend that the City Council also commits funds to the project in the spirit of partnership and to achieve a really first class result.

A design brief is currently being drafted for a scheme to refurbish Winchester High Street. Discussions are at an early stage and a meeting set in late October to discuss the scheme objectives, principles and funding. The outcome will be reported to Cabinet and the Town Forum.

Funding for the construction works is likely to be programmed for the financial year 2009/10.

A joint design team will be established to progress the works and to undertake the necessary consultations."



**COUNCIL MEETING – 12 September 2007**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 6**

From: Councillor Maynard

To: The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport

“A number of people from my ward have expressed concern about the proposal to lay netball court markings on two of the RPLC tennis courts where they are presently only marked out for tennis courts. These courts are used by many people and families from across the whole district. Their concerns are based on several considerations:

1. The tennis courts currently available and used at RPLC are affordable and available to all.
2. There is a wide demographic (in terms of age, sex and socio-economic groupings) represented by current users of these tennis courts with demand increasing
3. Making courts unavailable for tennis (by making them available for other uses) would counter the increasing demand which they presently enjoy
4. Current levels of demand would support additional courts
5. The courts presently attract Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) sponsored tournaments. The LTA is not inclined to sponsor tournaments on courts marked for multiple use. With fewer courts available such tournaments may therefore reduce in future
6. The LTA (currently particularly keen to develop tennis) has offered to fund up to 70% of the cost of providing new courts
7. There are presently a number of underused netball courts elsewhere in the immediate vicinity which could and should be promoted if there is demand for netball courts

The net affect of re-marking the courts for multiple use is likely to curtail the expansion in tennis use by limiting availability. This is also likely to jeopardise the business of the tennis coaches at RPLC and whilst their business is not our direct concern, what they do, is. Acting with DC Leisure they effectively promote take up of sport in the district amongst adults and run schools programmes in association with the LTA providing free tennis lessons in our schools.

Therefore, would the Portfolio Holder please arrange to suspend the current proposals to re-mark two of the tennis courts until:

1. Further research has been carried out into demand both for tennis and netball courts?
2. Availability of facilities and levels of usage is considered in the light of that research?
2. Consideration is given to establishment of additional hard courts at RPLC?
3. The LTA's offer of funding for additional courts can be fully assessed?
4. The effect on the viability of tennis coaching at RPLC can be assessed?

### Reply

"There are four tennis courts with floodlighting available for public use at North Walls Recreation Ground. These courts are managed by DC Leisure as part of the leisure centre contract on behalf of Winchester City Council.

Paul Osman Tennis has an agreement with DC Leisure to provide a tennis programme at North Walls, which he has done with great success. Mr Osman currently block books the tennis courts for 92 hours per week. In addition to this, he books courts casually on average 8 hours per week. The tennis courts are available for booking on a casual basis from 9am to 10pm. Paul books the majority of the peak time slots with the rest being available for pay and play usage.

There is currently no development taking place for junior netball in Winchester and there is one adult netball team in the city. The national *Return to Sport* initiative which could be introduced at North Walls encourages those women who have played netball in the past to return to the sport and play regularly again. DC Leisure (DCL) is keen to work with the City Council on the development of netball as there is a current gap in provision. It is quite possible that this work could happen at more than one site. However, the advantage of working in partnership with DCL at the North Walls site is that this would be a jointly funded initiative so costs would be reduced to the City Council. If this work was only offered at Kings' School then DCL would not be a partner and additional finance would be required.

The proposal for netball provision would be for a two hour slot on a Wednesday evening and also weekend use during the winter when there is little demand for tennis. This is all outside the hours traditionally booked by Mr Osman.

Currently there are no Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) sponsored tournaments at North Walls, a fact confirmed at the time of writing by the Tennis Development Manager for Hampshire LTA. If there were to be additional netball markings it would still be possible to stage tournaments for levels 4 to 7. Moreover, the LTA has not made any formal offer of funding and none has been applied for by the Council for the development of courts at this site.

The only other nearby floodlit netball courts available for community use are at Kings' School. These courts are available from 5.30pm on week day evenings, whereas the courts proposed at North Walls would be available immediately after school at 4pm.

It is felt that the marking of the courts for netball would not curtail the expansion of tennis as the netball bookings would be primarily in the winter when tennis is less popular, and they would only take up only two hours during the week which is currently available for casual tennis use outside Mr Osman's usual booking times. Therefore this would not jeopardise the business of the tennis coaches, who are employed by Mr Osman. The proposed netball development work would not encroach on the time allocated to Paul Osman for school tennis development work,

and would not be problematic for the continued success and excellent work of Mr Osman's activities.

Whilst there would be an aesthetic impact through the inclusion of new line markings, in a different colour, to mark out the netball court, this is standard practice at many other public leisure facilities in the county and not considered detrimental to play.

Council officers are currently researching alternative options for the provision of netball at school sites in the city. As previously mentioned there is very little netball development for both juniors and adults in the city. The City Council should be seen to consider all sports on an equal basis in development terms. Sport Hampshire and IOW has identified both tennis and netball as priority sports for development with both adults and juniors.

The development of tennis and netball courts at North Walls will be considered when the built facility aspect for the PPG17 Open Space Study results is available later this year. This study should result – in the longer term – in a Sports Facility Strategy for the whole of the district, including the North Walls site.

A proposal for the development of tennis courts at North Walls will be required prior to any consideration for funding by the LTA. There are no proposals currently being considered by them and they would be subject to the usual considerations in relation to planning policies and resources.

Further research is underway through the PPG17 study, but in the meantime the pitch marking will simply even up the balance between netball and tennis provision in the city without impacting negatively on the latter.”



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**QUESTION 7**

From: Councillor Huxstep

To: The Leader

“Will the Leader of the Council, as this council's representative on the P.U.S.H., please state what impact, if any, the publication last month of the assessment of the examination-in-public of the South East Plan will have on Winchester District?”

**Reply**

“The Report of the Panel that held an Examination in Public into the South East Plan makes recommendations to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how the submitted South East Plan should be changed. The South East Plan is the 'regional spatial strategy' for the South East and the Panel Report will be considered by the Secretary of State in decided what changes she will publish for consultation in late 2007/early 2008.

The key implications for Winchester District are;

- The Panel supports the 'sharper focus' strategy of concentrating most development requirements in the main urban areas and certain sub-regions such as South Hampshire;
- The Panel supports the growth strategy for the South Hampshire (PUSH) area and does not recommend any increase in the housing requirements for the part of Winchester District within PUSH;
- The Panel recommends that the housing requirements for the part of Winchester District outside PUSH should be increased by 1800 dwellings, with the Panel favoring a location on the northern side of the City;
- The housing requirements for the PUSH Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) should continue to be listed separately, not incorporated into District housing requirements, which means that Winchester would not have to provide any shortfalls if there are problems/delays in delivering the SDAs;
- The proposal by Eagle Star/Zurich for a new settlement of 12,500 dwellings at Micheldever Station is rejected for a list of reasons, closely reflecting those suggested in evidence by WCC.

The Panel Report covers the whole range of spatial planning policies in the South East Plan including, for example, affordable housing, infrastructure, sustainable development, etc. The City Council's future planning policies will have to follow the requirements of the South East Plan in relation to these matters, as well as in terms of housing numbers.”



## COUNCIL MEETING – 12 September 2007

### Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

#### QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Bell

To: The Chairman of Licensing and Regulation Committee

“Currently Councillors are not allowed to make representations on licensing or gambling applications in their own wards. Could the Chairman please inform us whether there are any changes proposed in the future to allow Councillors to represent their constituents as they can in the planning system?”

#### Reply

“National legislation, rather than City Council policy, governs who may make representations on licensing and gambling applications. Both sets of legislation use the term “Interested Party” to specify those persons entitled to make representations.

Under the Licensing Act 2003, only residents/businesses who live/work “in the vicinity” of the premises constitute “Interested Parties” who can make a representation. Ward Councillors can only make representations if they live close enough to the premises to fall within the definition of Interested Party, although the latest revision to the statutory Guidance issued under the Licensing Act indicates that Ward Councillors could make representations *on behalf of* an Interested Party provided that party had specifically asked them to do so. They cannot, however, make representations in their own name reflecting what they perceive to be the general local view.

Under the Gambling legislation, the definition of “Interested Party” is wider, covering both residents and businesses who are “sufficiently close to the premises to be affected by them, and also *persons representing [such residents/businesses]*”. This means that Ward Councillors of residents living close to the premises **are** Interested Parties in their own right, and can therefore make representations on the application in their own name.

In either case, Ward Councillors can appear at a hearing to represent an Interested Party (i.e. a local resident or business who has made a representation on the application), provided that Interested Party has asked them to do this.

Members need also to remember the requirements of the Code of Conduct and the need to declare interests. Members who live in the vicinity of premises will usually have a personal and prejudicial interest in the application. However, the Code of Conduct adopted in June 2007 now allows participation even in these circumstances, but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business (and provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose).

It remains to be seen whether the Licensing Act will be amended in the future to bring it into line with the Gambling Act on Ward Councillor representation, although the revised Guidance will now mean that when Ward Councillors are asked by a local resident to act on their behalf, the Councillor can make written representations on behalf of that resident. The revised Licensing Protocol which is due to be produced in the Autumn will reflect this and the recent changes to the Code of Conduct.”



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**QUESTION 9**

From: Councillor Lipscomb

To: The Leader

“Will the Leader of the Council agree to liaise with the Mayor and other Hampshire Civic and Political Leaders to ensure the proper recognition in this year's Annual Hampshire Service of Remembrance of those members of the armed services who have fallen in Iraq and Afghanistan, some of whom were residents of this District and many of whom will have passed through the Army Training Regiment in Winchester?”

**Reply**

“I am pleased to inform Cllr Lipscomb that the Cathedral authorities were already mindful of this matter and appropriate references will indeed be made at the Remembrance Service on Sunday 11 November 2007.”



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**QUESTION 10**

From: Councillor Fitzgerald

To: The Portfolio Holder for Holder for Environment, Health and Safety

“Could the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety inform me whether the reduced Environment, Health and Safety budget for proactive consultations related to large events, such as the recent Wickham Festival, has led to any concerns regarding public safety?”

**Reply**

“Changes introduced by the Government two years ago means the fees paid to the Council for licensing some major events such as those at Matterley Bowl and the Wickham Festival have greatly reduced because we can no longer set the fees locally. They are now determined by statute and are now only intended to cover the administration of the licensing function and not the work of the environmental health function. The Council used to set a fee which helped to meet the cost of necessary consultations, communications and on site presence. This is no longer possible although the Council has allocated £10,000 as a budget item for 2007/08 and 2008/09 to help manage the changeover.

Although the former income is not now available, the Council has tried not to materially diminish the service provided. However, as our costs have to be contained within lower budgets, this can place restrictions on what can be achieved over and above that which is necessary to discharge our statutory responsibilities.

We will always address issues of public safety where it is the Council’s duty to do so through pre-planning, negotiation and on site. It is for event organisers to ensure that they comply with our requirements and with their general duties under relevant legislation.”



## COUNCIL MEETING – 12 September 2007

### Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

#### QUESTION 11

From: Councillor Cooper

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation

"As we approach the mid point of this financial year, can the Portfolio Holder report on any achieved improvements in the Planning Department and outline his priorities for the second half of 2007/08?"

#### Reply

"The administration has made the achievement of a better planning control service a priority for this year. We have had two primary objectives; to meet the performance standards for the speed of determining applications set by Government by the end of September 2007 and to improve the accuracy and efficiency of our administrative processes. We have had to do this against a background of constant change in planning legislation and the introduction of a major change in the way in which applications are made – which the Government has not handled well and which it has now had to delay.

The performance of the team is monitored and reported to me weekly and officers look at the progress of applications on a daily basis. I am pleased to report that the figures for the processing of applications between 1 April and 10 September are as follows:

Major applications: 55.60% (CLG target 60%)

Minor applications: 70.39% (CLG target 65%)

Other applications: 83.63% (CLG target 80%)

On the basis of information currently available we believe that we will hit all of the performance targets (including Majors) by the end of September which would be the first time this has ever been achieved over a sustained period. The Planning Control Management Team and everyone working within the service deserve to be congratulated on this improvement which has been the result of their sustained efforts.

The improvement has also been seen in the improved efficiency of planning administration and in preparation for the introduction of the national single planning application form and electronic application process on which Winchester has been joint-lead in Hampshire.

The Government has yet to announce whether or not it will continue with the additional funding provided to local planning authorities through the planning delivery grant or some form of replacement. This may have an effect on whether the Council can continue to provide the level of service currently being achieved."



**COUNCIL MEETING – 12 September 2007**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 12**

From: Councillor Evans

To: The Portfolio Holder for Performance and Communications

“Could the Portfolio Holder inform me whether any research has been undertaken as to the percentage of our residents across the District who have the ability to access Council internet services on-line?”

Reply

“The City Council has been asking questions about computer access and internet availability since 1997 in the Citizens Panel, and questions have been asked in the Mori survey since 1995. The last time the questions were asked was in 2004 and these will be repeated in the next Citizens Panel. It is expected that the upward trend of access will continue.

The headline results from the 2004 Citizen’s Panel can be seen below; the full report is available on request.”

Do you have a personal computer at home?

Yes	No
75.1%	24.9%

Is one or more of these personal computers connected to the internet?

Yes	No
91.1%	8.9%

How do you connect to the internet?

Broadband	Modem	Via Phone line	Not Sure
41.5%	57.0%		1.5%



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 13**

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities

“Could the Portfolio Holder give me some background to the history of the apartment in the Mons Block of Peninsula Barracks, which is currently on the market with Pearsons for £279,500 and when this property lost its "affordable" status?

**Reply**

“In response to Councillor Tait’s question, I can confirm that the Mons Block was given planning permission in June 1995 as part of the Peninsula Barracks redevelopment. The Mons Block was originally developed for affordable housing on the basis of shared equity, applicants purchased a fixed share of 75% of the open market value on a Leasehold arrangement with Winchester Housing Association (WHA), the remaining 25% share is held by WHA in perpetuity. The S106 Agreement was varied in 2005 (committee reference PDC 530) to allow the sale of the 75% share on the open market (previously restricted to local residents) and to allow the final 25% to be purchased but at the full market value. This final 25% would go to WHA and re-invested to provide additional local affordable housing. The principal reasons for the variation were that the restrictive nature of the conditions meant that purchasers found it very difficult to find mortgages and prices had risen significantly so reducing the pool of potential local purchasers.

With the general increase in property prices since the 1995 and the premium attracted by the nature of the Peninsula Barracks scheme the 75% equity stake has increased dramatically. The offer price of Mons Court referred to by Councillor Tait represents the full market value of the property so a potential purchaser would be actually paying 75% of this figure to the vendor (with the option to purchase the final 25% from WHA). Additionally the property has been on the market for 6 weeks with the current estate agent and was previously marketed (without success) by another agent, it may be concluded that it is over-valued at its current figure.

Since the development of the Mons Block in the mid 1990’s (when it was one of the Council’s 1<sup>st</sup> affordable housing schemes negotiated as part of a private development) the Council’s affordable housing policies have been refined significantly. The recently published Affordable Housing Development Guidelines set out what the Council expects to be provided by developers in relation to affordable housing, on sites such as the Mons Block we would expect to see a mix of rented and shared ownership (intermediate tenures) provided with the expectation that they remained affordable as long as the housing need existed.”



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**COUNCIL MEETING – 12 September 2007**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 14**

From: Councillor Lipscomb

To: The Leader

“Will the Leader of the Council brief Members on the Council's responses to date and proposed in response to the Post Office's Network Change Programme, under which some 2,500 Sub-Post Offices are expected to be closed nationally, with some 500 outreach services provided in their place where appropriate? Will he agree with me that a viable local Sub-Post Office network is vital to the continuing sustainability of our rural communities, in many of which the only shop and the Sub-Post Office are inter-dependent?”

**Reply**

“The Council has been consulted by the Post Office on its Network Change Programme which follows a review by the DTI which recommended up to 2,500 closures with guidelines on minimum access requirements. The Council has responded to the consultation pointing out particular concerns over rural communities, new community developments and the declining public transport infrastructure all of which could affect people accessing post office services in the Winchester district. The proposal to move the branch in Middle Brook Street to a retail outlet in the High Street has also been responded to with similar degrees of concern, as the commercial imperatives seem to have overridden the community needs.

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight local authority chief executive group has also considered a report on the broad proposals and will be responding to reinforce the concerns that local communities are expressing. The Post Office is considering the specific issues for the South East Region currently and will be starting public consultation in October on their more local findings but, as Cllr Lipscomb is aware and other members also need to know, this consultation will consider only the proposed replacement arrangements where closures are recommended; it will not accept any comments on the merits of any closure decision.

This is clearly an unsatisfactory state of affairs which could have significant impacts on the most vulnerable people in our communities. The lack of detailed local information on specific closure proposals makes it very difficult to challenge and if that is only to be released after the period for the receipt of complaint has ended then that again is totally unsatisfactory.”



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**QUESTION 15**

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety

“Is the Portfolio Holder aware of the number of windows which were smashed in the previous weekend in Winchester Town Centre and whether there is any useful CCTV coverage which will assist the Police in arresting the criminals? As a more general question is the Portfolio Holder able to tell me how convictions have been secured by Hampshire Police in the Winchester area by the use of CCTV, over the last two years?”

**Reply**

“Although it is too soon to give any more than a brief reply to the first part of the question, I am aware that CCTV staff tracked a rowdy group of young people in the Town at the week-end. I understand one of the group threw a wheeled bin into a shop front causing the window to smash. The group fled but the CCTV images/evidence allowed the Police to continue the investigation and I believe one man has been arrested.

On the more general point Cabinet considered the question of CCTV performance and benefits to the community in January this year (CAB1383 refers). In the Appendix to that report a snapshot review of the number of arrests made by the police in the Town centre in September 2006 were considered

In total there were 58 arrests made in that month that either originated with CCTV operators identifying an incident in progress or from external organisations such as the police identifying an incident and then using CCTV to help obtain an arrest.

It is not possible to provide in time for Council more detailed or up-to-date information but if the members would wish to see the data I will arrange for it to be circulated.”



## COUNCIL MEETING – 12 September 2007

### Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

#### QUESTION 16

From: Councillor Evans

To: The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport

“All councillors received a communication this week from Winchester Art Club which stated they had been encouraged to apply for a Community Chest Grant which was not granted. Could the Portfolio Holder confirm these details please?”

#### Reply

“Winchester City Council has given substantial support in kind over many years to the Art Club through free use of the Guildhall Gallery, and will continue to do so in the Jewry Street Discovery Centre from 2008. The Art Club chose not to take up the City Council's offer of free use of an alternative room (either the Walton Room or the Saxon Suite) in the Guildhall in 2007 when the gallery was not available for their use. Officers then assisted the club in seeking alternative accommodation at an affordable price for their 2007 exhibition.

The suggestion of applying for Community Chest funds was made during discussions relating to their relocation to an external venue whilst awaiting the opening of the City Space at the Discovery Centre at the end of this year. They - like all voluntary organisations in the district - would have been told to look carefully at the grants criteria on our website and to discuss any intended application with the City Council's Partnership and External Funding Officer. It is regrettable that no discussion of this kind took place.

An application was received from this group for a Community Chest grant of £500 towards the cost of hiring and transporting display screens to support an art exhibition being held in St. John's House, Winchester.

An assessment of the application demonstrated that the Winchester Art Club is eligible to receive a Community Chest grant, but the activity for which they applied for grant did not meet any of the project specific criteria under this grant stream.

There are six funding areas within Community Chest and this group chose to apply under the theme specific criteria of 'Arts', which states that the activity should meet one of the following criteria:

1. Projects involving mainly young people aged up to 24 years.
2. Projects for people living in the following town areas – Highcliffe, Stanmore, Winnall, or Weeke
3. Projects involving mainly people living in rural communities
4. Projects which will promote social inclusion through art, including work with the elderly, disabled groups, or ethnic minorities.

There was no evidence within the application to demonstrate that the activity focused on any of the above criteria and neither did it fall within the remit for the five other funding areas. This was the reason that the grant was refused.

This group is eligible to apply for a Community Chest grant in the future but they must ensure that it is for an appropriate activity.”



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**QUESTION 17**

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Leader

“Could the Leader advise/explain why the powers of the Town Forum have been amended and what impact he feels this will have?”

**Reply**

“At its meeting held on 22 March 2007, the Winchester Town Forum recommended changes to its terms of reference. This recommendation was later agreed by Cabinet and then adopted by Council on 18 April 2007(WTF90 refers).

Cabinet had supported the aim of giving the Forum wider powers to make decisions in its own right, without having to submit requests to Cabinet, or have officers exercise delegated powers. This change also reflected the Local Government White Paper, ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’, which encouraged councils to develop methods to enhance community involvement.

Arising from this, the Forum assumed a general power of expenditure, but within the limitations set by the Council’s policy and budget framework. Using their new powers, the Forum is exercising a much greater involvement in the drafting of next year’s Town Account and deciding how that money (including grants) will be spent. An informal group of Members are currently working with officers towards drafting the budget and this will be regularly reported to the Forum throughout autumn, with a final recommendation being passed to Cabinet in January, and then on to Council in February 2008.

Another significant change in the way the Forum will work this year is its increased consultative role. The Forum had previously acted as the voice of the unparished Town area on developing the Vision for Winchester and it will, within the next few months, take on an important role in expressing the Town’s view on the emerging Local Development Framework. The Forum is also planning to hold public meetings on the proposed relocation of the central Post Office to WH Smiths and the Future of the High Street (in relation to the effect of the Silver Hill development). In addition to this, it’s planned that the Forum will also consider in this municipal year:

- Litter
- Update on the BID process
- Fair Trade
- Twinning with an area in a developing country
- Sports provision in Winchester
- Events and Festivals in Winchester (eg the Hyde 900)
- How Winchester meets the Disability Discrimination Act
- Update on the Discovery Centre
- Review of the Vision for Winchester

In order to reach as broader audience as possible, it's hoped that these meetings can be held at a number of venues in the town, including the Rugby Club, the Discovery Centre, and the Unity Church in addition to the Guildhall.

In summary, the Forum continues to evolve and provide a key platform for Town issues to be discussed by Town residents and their elected representatives, together with an appropriate degree of autonomy. Cabinet welcomes these recent changes which are consistent with both this evolutionary process and the Government's current policy to increase engagement with local communities."