

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

9 June 2005

MINOR AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION – WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

REPORT OF CITY SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR

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RECENT REFERENCES:

PS167 - Review of Decision Making Structures and Member Services - 29 March 2005 and Cabinet 4 April 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The 13 April 2005 meeting of Council agreed the recommended minute from Cabinet's 4 April 2005 meeting. Amongst other things, this proposed that the Winchester Town Forum should be offered delegated powers to determine grants from the town account within an approved budget ceiling.

Current practice is that the Director of Communities recommends to the Forum grant awards for applications made from organisations that operate in the Winchester town area (report WTF42 refers). The Forum's recommendations are then referred to Cabinet to make a final decision.

The proposed change to the Constitution, via the Town Forum's terms of reference, will allow the Forum to act as if it were a Parish Council and determine grant applications from the town account. As the Town Forum is constituted as an area committee, it is legally possible to give it delegated powers of this nature.

The Director of Communities and the Director of Finance have recommended that the grants should be made from within the budget provision approved as part of the Council Tax report by Council at the meeting in February next year.

The Town Forum's Terms of Reference are currently included in the Overview and Scrutiny Sections of the Procedure Rules (Part 4 e (c) refers). As it is now proposed to grant delegated powers, the terms of reference should be included in Part 3, Section 4, together with the other, non-executive decision-making committees.

The terms of reference, with the proposed changes shown in tracking and italics are set out in Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATION (TO CABINET AND COUNCIL):

That the following addition to terms of reference be approved as set out in Appendix 1.

7 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

7.1 To be more open and democratic.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 As set out in the report

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Proposed addition to the Constitution

APPENDIX 1WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

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.