

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

11 March 2015

Attendance:

Councillors:

Hutchison (Chairman) (P)

E Berry	Pines (P)
J Berry (P)	Prowse
Gosling	Sanders(P) (for Items 4-8)
Green (P)	Scott (P)
Hiscock (P)	Tait (P)
Mather (P)	Thompson (P)
Maynard (P)	Tod (P)
Nelmes (P)	Weir (P)
Osborne (P) (for Items 4-5)	

1. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Mather and Tod declared disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of Items 4, 5 & 6 due to their roles as Hampshire County Councillors. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, they remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Standards Committee to participate and vote in all matters which might have a County Council involvement.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes, including the briefing note, attached as an addendum to the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21 January 2015, be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr D Jones (Winchester Bus Travellers Club and Winchester Litter Pickers Group) and Ms K MacIntosh (WinACC) addressed the Forum under Items 6 and 7 respectively, a summary of their comments are contained within the relevant item below.

4. **ROGER BROWN'S MODEL OF VICTORIAN WINCHESTER**

(Report WTF217 refers)

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr Peter Liddiard who provided a presentation on the current situation in relation to Roger Brown's Model of

Victorian Winchester, seeking ideas from the Forum on a permanent place for the model to be displayed and answered Members' questions thereon.

Mr Liddiard advised that the model represented historic Winchester as it was in 1870, the date of the first Ordnance Survey map of Winchester. It was created over a period of nine years by the former Chief Planning Officer of Hampshire County Council, Mr Roger Brown, following his retirement in the 1980s.

Mr Liddiard advised that the model had been displayed in various locations around the City, largely co-ordinated by the City of Winchester Trust, and had previously been a feature for a long period of time at Winchester Science Centre. However, due to the fragility, scale (15ft diameter) and age of the model, a secure and permanent place for the model to be displayed was now sought. It was reported that Hampshire County Council provided storage for the model and had given a commitment to exhibit the model for one month per year at The Great Hall. The concerns with short term displays were that the continued dismantling and assembling of the model would affect the condition of the structure further.

The Forum's views were sought in the consideration of suitable venues for the long term placement of the model. It was suggested that in any future development proposals for the Guildhall this be given due consideration, with the possibility of space to the rear of the Tourist Information Centre being used as an option, thereby allowing the public to view the displayed model when visiting the City. It was noted that as well as a permanent, secure, accessible and weatherproofed location, the model would also require surveillance whilst on display, by staff and/or CCTV.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chairman thanked Mr Liddiard for his presentation.

The Forum gave consideration to the report which provided an overview of the current stewardship of the model and proposed an approach to co-ordinate efforts to establish a long term home for Mr Brown's model.

Officers reported that following media coverage from the most recent display of the model at the Great Hall, the Chairman of the Forum had requested that a meeting be arranged to discuss how to best progress this matter. The outcome of this meeting held in February was positive with those in attendance supportive that the model should be displayed in a permanent venue.

The Forum were asked to consider the formation of the small working group to champion the project and pursue the long term opportunities for the display, together with helping to co-ordinate and support the work undertaken by the City of Winchester Trust and other contributors. The Chairman expressed a view that the working group include members and officers of the City Council and the Winchester Town Forum, Hampshire Cultural Trust, Hampshire County Council and the City of Winchester Trust.

Members commented that the model was an extraordinary and unique asset to the City that deserved to be exhibited permanently and preserved in a City Centre location. Various locations were suggested as ideas for further consideration, if feasible, including museum space at Peninsula Barracks, Winchester Law Courts and the Guildhall.

RESOLVED:

1. That the City of Winchester Trust and Hampshire County Council be thanked for providing regular public access to Roger Brown's Model of Victorian Winchester;
2. That the creation of a working group, as set out within the report, to champion the need for a permanent display site for the model of Victorian Winchester be supported; and
3. That the Chairman of the Winchester Town Forum be delegated authority to convene a working group, as set out above, and report feedback progress to the Forum on an occasional basis.

5. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCESS PLAN UPDATE**
(Report WTF215 refers)

The Forum received an update report on the progress made in relation to the implementation of the Action Plan, as set out in the Winchester Town Access Plan (WTAP).

At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms K MacIntosh addressed the Forum and applauded the aims contained within the WTAP, in particular Aims 2 and 3 and was in agreement with the statement, outlined in the Plan. She sought increased clarity within the monitoring document so that it incorporated information on how well the matters had contributed to the aims and priorities of the Plan to help establish the overall 'bigger picture'. She queried why the WTAP was not included within the Local Plan which could lead to it being overlooked by developers in future. She was also of the opinion that a strongly worded policy was required with enhanced detail on sustainable development. Ms MacIntosh also made reference to the number of daily journeys from the station and the footfall that this created and suggested that this be considered in the work of a study to be undertaken, in relation to Policy W6. The urban design brief for Station Approach and the encouragement of the use of the park and ride, as contained within Local Plan Part 2, was also welcomed.

In response, the Corporate Director addressed the matters raised by Ms MacIntosh during public participation and answered further questions thereon.

The Corporate Director notified the Forum that, following comment with regard to the dovetailing and cross referencing of policies, this would be for Members to further consider when looking at the Local Plan Part 2.

Members expressed concern that several approved projects had been omitted from the Plan. The Corporate Director agreed to feedback these comments to officers and to Hampshire County Council for the content of the plan to be reviewed and, following request from a Member, he would also report back on the Council's enforcement details in relation to parking in the St Paul and St Barnabas Ward.

Members made suggestions on various matters including, the possibility of an evaluation study being carried out to assess car parking to meet economic need following the closure of the city centre car park at Friarsgate; a combined walking, parking and cycling strategy to be incorporated into a single document; the improvement of road surfaces for pedestrians and cyclists and its impact on energy loss.

The Forum considered at length undertaking an evaluation of traffic movements in North Walls to create a one way single lane of traffic which in turn would widen the footways used by pedestrians in this area. This matter would be further considered with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Members were of the opinion that work on the WTAP needed to be progressed in a co-ordinated approach to realise the items contained in the Plan. The officers agreed that to progress matters further, a meeting would need to be arranged to include Hampshire County Councillors and Officers, City Council Officers and the relevant Portfolio Holder to discuss collaboratively all improvements to the Plan and decide how best to proceed.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted, subject to consideration of the matters raised above and those outlined in 1 – 3 below:

1. That the fullest possible analysis of traffic and movement for the station approach development area be carried out to establish how this bears on the City Centre with officers to provide an update on the work commissioned to date for further consideration at a future meeting of the Town Forum;
2. That in light of the new Winchester Walking, Cycling and Transport Strategies, the Winchester Town Access Plan be updated to provide an overview of this, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder; and
3. That further to the closure of the Friarsgate Car Park an impact analysis be undertaken following consideration by the Chairman and the Corporate Director.

6. **WINCHESTER EVENING BUS SERVICE UPDATE**

(Report WTF216 refers)

The Forum gave consideration to the Winchester Evening Bus Service Update report which reminded the Forum that at its meeting on 25 June 2014, support was given to the continuation of the evening bus service beyond September 2014 for a further 2 years period. The report provided an update on the patronage and use of the late evening bus service, linking the City Centre with Badger Farm, Stanmore, Weeke and Harestock (the night bus) during Thursday to Saturday.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr D Jones addressed the Forum in relation to the comments he had made at the last meeting of the Town Forum, held on 21 January 2015.

In summary, Mr Jones spoke in support of mid evening bus services and the need for increased services during this peak period to enable an efficient service to be provided to the bus travelling public in the Town.

The Forum referred to the passenger statistics, as set out in Appendix A of the report, for the night bus service currently supported by the Forum, and expressed concern that the current service was not proving to be commercially viable, necessitating the need for a further review. Comment was made of the need for updated advertisement of bus routes and services at specific locations such as the train station and the university.

Members further suggested that collaborative work be undertaken with Parish Councils in the surrounding suburbs of the Town to look at jointly funding a bus service between the hours of 19.00-21.00, from the Town centre to neighbouring villages, by means of reviewing the subsidy provided by the Town Forum.

RESOLVED:

1. That a joint meeting be arranged with Parish Councils in the immediate vicinity of the Town to consider a collaborative approach for the provision of a two hour mid evening bus service to operate from the City centre to all neighbouring parishes.

7. **PLAY AREA REFURBISHMENT PLAN 2015-2020**

(Report CAB2666 (revised) refers)

Members noted that the revised Report had not been made available for publication within the statutory deadline. The Chairman agreed to accept the item onto the agenda as a matter requiring urgent consideration, to enable discussion prior to its consideration by Cabinet on 18 March 2015.

The Head of Landscapes and Open Spaces advised of one additional amendment to the revised report, as set out in Paragraph 7.1: figure to read £456,000, instead of £146,000, as stated.

The Forum considered the Report which proposed a five year plan for the refurbishment of the play areas in the Winchester Town area and sought approval for the expenditure spend in Year One of the plan and suggestions for future refurbishment funding.

Members' attention was drawn to Appendix 1 to the Report, and Officers advised that there were no further funds available in the Open Space Fund for play. However, there were currently sufficient funds within the Open Space Fund for sports which had not been allocated. As a result it was proposed that year one of the refurbishment plan would be funded with £120,000 of the available Sports Open Space Funding. This was to ensure that the Somers Close Recreation Ground Skate Park was replaced due its current state of disrepair and the risk implications associated with this, together with a proposed outdoor gym totalling £100,000 and the remaining £20,000 for refurbishment works at the North Walls Bowling Green.

Officers reported that a risk assessment would need to be carried out at Stanmore Recreation Ground to look at damage which may prevent future use. This was because the works scheduled to take place in year one of the refurbishment plan to replace surfacing at the area could not be progressed.

It was reported that funding for year two of the refurbishment plan onwards would need to be reviewed and identified from other sources for future projects as Open Space Play Funding was currently fully committed.

The Forum discussed the changes to children's play over the years and were keen that children should continue to be involved in the decision making process of choosing equipment and what schemes should be introduced, with children's safety remaining the utmost importance in the process.

Members' gave consideration to alternative funding sources for future years and suggested funding streams be sought via existing budgets groups. In addition, that a full review of all existing play areas in the city centre and surrounding areas be undertaken to consider need, location, community views and aspirations and usage statistics. There was suggestion that the opportunity be used to also to look at how Parish Councils were funding play areas in the same position. Reference was made to the use of the skate park in Somers Close in comparison to that of the new facilities at North Walls skate park. It was noted that a consultation would be carried out regarding the Somers Close facility in due course.

Members also made reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and raised concern that this should be split accordingly to the Town Forum via the same method it would be for the Parish Councils, with the allocation process to be for the Forum to consider. However, Officers highlighted that these payments would be significantly less than open space payments previously received.

In light of the changes to Open Space Funding provision, Members' requested that the terms of reference for the Town Forum in relation to Open Spaces be updated accordingly.

In conclusion, comment was made that Officers should advise in due course on other possible funding streams. This could include working in collaboration with the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups, in the promotion of health and wellbeing and contributing to one of the NHS visions and objectives to reduce childhood obesity, which could be achieved by outdoor activity and play or by giving consideration to business sponsorship programmes.

RESOLVED:

That it be recommended to Cabinet:

1. that the Capital Expenditure budget growth proposals totalling £120,000 for year one (2015/16) of the refurbishment plan be approved; and

2. that in giving consideration to the future funding requirements in relation to play expenditure for years one to five of the plan, regard be had to the comments of the Winchester Town Forum, as outlined above.

8. VOTE OF THANKS

This being the last meeting of the Municipal Year, the Committee passed a vote of thanks to its Chairman, Councillor Hutchison.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 9.15pm

Chairman