

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

10 June 2015

Attendance:

Councillors:

Weir (Chairman) (P)

E Berry
J Berry (P)
Burns (P)
Gosling (P)
Green (P)
Hiscock (P)
Hutchison (P)
Mather (P)
Maynard (P)

Osborne (P)
Prowse (P)
Sanders (P)
Scott (P)
Scowen (P)
Tait (P)
Thompson (P)
Tod (P)

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors Byrnes (Portfolio Holder for Local Economy) and Twelftree

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Weir be elected Chairman and Councillor Maynard be elected Vice-Chairman for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

2. **FUTURE MEETINGS**

RESOLVED:

That the meetings of the Forum commence at 6.30pm in accordance with the published timetable of meetings for 2015/16, as set out on the agenda.

3. **MINUTES**

During the consideration of the minutes, the Forum requested an update on the latest position in relation to the Winchester Evening Bus Services and Roger Brown's Model of Victorian Winchester. Officers agreed that both of these matters would be progressed accordingly with updates provided in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 11 March 2015, be approved and adopted.

4. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Mather and Tod declared disclosable pecuniary interests 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.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked/statements made.

6. **WALKING STRATEGY WORKSHOP – 13 JULY 2015**
(Oral Report)

Mr Finch, Assistant Director (Environment) addressed the Forum and outlined details of the Walking Strategy Workshop Event entitled 'Creating a More Walkable Winchester', that was scheduled to take place on 13 July 2015 at 2pm in the Walton Suite, Guildhall. The workshop was formed at the request of the Walking Strategy Group, following the endorsement of the Winchester Walking Strategy, commended by the Winchester Town Forum at its meeting on 19 November 2014. Cabinet, who adopted the Policy document also fully supported its principles at its meeting in December 2014.

The aim of the Walking Strategy Workshop was to focus on practical and deliverable interventions that would contribute to making Winchester more walkable for people of all ages and abilities by:-

- Explaining the benefits of creating walkable towns by showing how this had been achieved in different areas;
- Raising awareness of the Winchester Walking Strategy and the affects its implementation has on many people, as well as the health, economic and environmental benefits, particularly in terms of pollution; and
- Identify ways that progress can be made in making Winchester more walkable.

Councillor Hutchison addressed the Forum in support of the workshop in her capacity as a Member of the Walking Strategy Group to encourage Members to participate on the event on 13 July.

Members wishing to attend the Walking Strategy Workshop were asked to register their interest to Claire Buchanan, Senior Democratic Services Officer by email on cbuchanan@winchester.gov.uk by Friday, 19 June 2015.

RESOLVED:

1. That the details regarding the Walking Strategy Workshop, scheduled to take place on 13 July 2015, be noted ; and
2. That Councillor Hutchison be thanked for her contribution on the Walking Strategy Group prior to becoming an elected Member of the Council.

7. **SPUD CYCLE CAFE UPDATE**
(Oral Report)

The Forum received a presentation from Mrs Appleby, Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) which provided an update on the Cycle Café project started over a year ago by Space, Place-Making and Urban Design Group (SPUD). A youth group was formed in Winchester to provide the opportunity for young designers to develop concepts for creating a new cycle café, to be located along the national cycle route connecting Winchester with the Hockley Viaduct. One design concept was chosen from various potential designs that were submitted, this comprised of a decommissioned train carriage, initially to be placed on top of a disused railway bridge to be transformed into the proposed café.

At Easter, a week-long workshop took place at the Architecture PLB offices in Winchester: this was part-funded by a contribution from the Forum as previously agreed, and involved a team of young people supported by students and lecturers from Portsmouth University and a range of professionals including architects, surveyors and planners, who gave their time for free. .

Following this intensive collaboration, proposals for the cycle café were refined which included a change to the siting of the café, moving its location from the railway bridge and realising the final design as a result. It was reported that the Council remained land owner of the full site location and following the refinement of the project, it was noted that the café had been given a brand, theme and name - 'The Handle Bar Café'. Live updates and newsfeeds on the latest with the project were being posted regularly on social networking sites, via Twitter and Facebook, as part of the continued engagement and consultation with the public

The concept of the cycle café in this location had generated interest from the local community as well as continued support from the Winchester Town Forum. There had been a public exhibition which took place over a two day period, 8 and 9 June, held at the Architecture PLB Offices in Winchester, which showcased all of the design ideas and the processes that had been followed. Members' attention was drawn to several of the models that were exhibited, that had been made available for viewing at the meeting. Councillors J Berry and Hutchison were thanked by Officers for their attendance at the exhibition and support to the project.

The next stages in the development of the plans included the Council looking closely at the feasibility of the project in terms of engineering, together with the viability of the café operation in the proposed location and the submission of planning applications. At the stage of planning permission being obtained, the project would seek to secure a partnership with a 'not for profit' organisations to take it forward. Members noted that the progression of the project would require further consideration by the Town Forum and Cabinet once these necessary stages had been followed.

The Town Forum fully supported the concept of the cycle cafe and were keen to see it develop into a project capable of being realised by ensuring its continued support to nurture its progression, in collaboration with SPUD.

RESOLVED:

1. That the presentation be received and noted; and
2. That the financial study and associated timescales for the project be considered at a future meeting of the Town Forum, subsequent to the determination of planning applications.

8. **SOLAR CITY: OUTCOME OF SCOPING STUDY**

(Report WTF218 refers)

The Forum gave consideration to the report which summarised the findings of the study, previously circulated, and proposed a way forward for Town Forum's aspirations to make Winchester a 'Solar City'.

Members were reminded that during the course of the previous municipal year, the Forum had agreed to commission a short study scoping the potential for solar energy in the Town area. It was noted that this study had now been completed and that £7,500 had been allocated in the Winchester Town Forum Budget for 2015/16 to take this work forward.

During discussion reference was made to similar work that had been undertaken by Edinburgh City Council whereby sources of funding provision were available, making it a 'free of charge' service from the Council's point of view. It was suggested that officers contact experts in this field to explore this as an option.

Members were in support of reducing carbon emissions and recognised the benefits experienced in other areas, such as Eastleigh, where significant financial benefits had been generated with the use of solar panels on Council buildings, although it was noted that a dedicated officer resource had been made available to generate projects to obtain this result.

The Forum considered that the best way to progress the matter of Solar PV would be to look at commissioning the work to explore all options, to assess

cost and all opportunities available in taking this forward with minimal cost to the Council

RESOLVED:-

1. That the preliminary study carried out by Horizon Power and Energy be received and noted;
2. That the Town Forum confirms its commitment to progressing the Solar City initiative in the 2015/16 financial year; and
3. That the next steps, as set out in section 4 of the report be approved, with delegated responsibility given to the Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) to take this matter forward, noting the comments of the Town Forum, outlined above.

9. **ST MAURICE'S COVERT – ENVIROMENTAL ENHANCEMENT UPDATE**
(Report WTF219 refers)

The Forum gave consideration to the report which provided an update on the progress of the St Maurice's Covert project and the issues identified throughout the Town Centre. Officers requested that the St Maurice's Covert Informal Group be reconvened to progress the brief and consider the next steps forward.

It was reported that since the Forum had financially supported the Historic Environment Team, enabling them to increase their staff resource, significant progress had been made to improve various environmental aspects in the Town Centre including repairs to properties located in the Pentice, pigeon control (Mayor's balcony and St Lawrence's Church pilot schemes) and cleaning and waxing King Alfred's statue. Plans were also being finalised in liaison with Heritage England for the Buttercross which required attention and renovation. It was noted that quotes had been sought and money had been allocated in the Council's budgets to carryout the works required hopefully later in the year. The Historic Environment Team had also been involved in policy work which would benefit the Winchester. When asked about the current position regarding the temporary post funded by the Forum (now vacant), Mr Finch explained that officers are looking at how best to use the remaining funds. .

Several Members expressed concern regarding the ongoing issue of refuse bins being left on the public highway, particularly in Hammonds Passage. Mr Finch reported that the Public Realm Officer Team met regularly to deal with issues relating to waste etc in the City Centre.

It was suggested that the St Maurice's Covert Informal Group meet on a quarterly basis which would include Council Officers and a representative from Winchester Business Improvement District (BID).

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress made to date be noted; and
2. That the St Maurice's Covert Informal Group be reconvened to consider the draft brief and strategy to take the project forward and report back to the Town Forum at a future meeting.

10. **WORK PROGRAMME AND APPOINTMENTS – 2015/16**
(Report WTF220 refers)

The Forum gave consideration to the report which set out the draft work programme for the Forum for the new Municipal Year 2015/16 and asked Members to consider its appointments to the Informal Groups established during the previous Municipal Year. The report outlined the previous membership and terms of reference of these Groups.

The Forum agreed that, the terms of reference of the Town Forum be reviewed to ensure provision for community engagement moving forward. Officers advised that this would be a matter for consideration by the Vision for Winchester Informal Group.

Councillor Hiscock made reference to the formation of a new Informal Group for 2015/16 to look at Play Areas in the Town Centre and the Corporate Director advised that this Group could be supported by the Landscape Team.

Members suggested possible subjects for future meetings to consider (set out in no particular order):

- Public Transport - Bus Services in North and West Winchester (SALT Group)
- Solar City – Progress Update
- Roger Brown's Model of Victorian Winchester – Progress Update
- Promotion of community engagement; noticeboards and literature.
- The provision of Affordable Housing in Winchester.
- To consider Council Policy in relation to memorial trees and street furniture

The Forum delegated authority to the Corporate Director (in consultation with the Chairman) to draw up the 2015/16 work programme, incorporating the above suggestions.

The Forum agreed that the Chairman consult with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Policy, in relation to Major Projects of the Council being taken to the Town Forum for consideration at future meetings.

The Report also requested that Members re-appoint various informal groups of the Forum and these were agreed as set out below, together with appointments to the newly established Town Centre Play Area Informal Group, as suggested above.

RESOLVED:

1. That the detailed work programme for the Forum for the 2015/16 Municipal Year be agreed by the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Chairman, having regard to the discussion outlined above; and

2. That the following Informal Groups be appointed for 2015/16 with membership as outlined below:

- (i) Winchester Town Forum (Account Informal) Group:
Councillors: Weir (Chairman), J Berry, Hutchison, and Sanders.
NOTE: to accommodate working Members, it was agreed that this meeting would continue to commence at 6.30pm.
- (ii) Winchester Town Forum (Town Account Grants) Informal Group:
Councillors Scott (Chairman) Gosling, Hiscock and Tait.
- (iii) Winchester Town Forum (Vision for Winchester) Informal Group:
Councillors J Berry, Burns, Hutchison, Maynard, Tait and Weir.
- (iv) Winchester Town Forum (St Maurice's Covert) Informal Group:
Councillors Hutchison, Mather and Tod – NOTE: It was agreed that Catherine Turness, Winchester Business Improvement District (BID) be invited to future meetings.
- (v) Walking Strategy Group: Councillor Hiscock.
- (vi) Winchester Town Forum (Play Areas) Informal Group:
Councillors E Berry, J Berry, Hiscock, Maynard, Osborne and Scott.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.40pm

Chairman