

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM**23 January 2013****Attendance:****Councillors:**

Collin (Chairman) (P)

E Berry (P)

J Berry (P)

Green

Hiscock (P)

Hutchison (P)

Mather (P)

Maynard (P)

Nelmes (P)

Pearce

Pines (P)

Prowse (P)

Sanders (P)

Scott (P)

Tait (P)

Tod (P)

Weir (P)

Witt (P)

1. MINUTES

During the discussion on the Community Speed Watch Programme held at the previous meeting (minute 4 refers), it had been suggested that the equipment could be shared with Hursley Parish Council. However, it had subsequently become clear that this would not be possible.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 23 November 2011, be approved and adopted.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Grant addressed the Forum regarding Report WTF185 as summarised below.

3. WINCHESTER STATION APPROACH - UPDATE

(Oral Report)

The Corporate Director (Operations) explained that some issues regarding the area around Winchester station would need to be resolved in advance of the work on the Local Plan Part 2. Cabinet had yet to determine what priority should be given to this work and the Chairman reconfirmed that he was due to meet with the Leader to discuss this matter.

The Corporate Director also explained that an informal meeting of Cabinet was due to receive a presentation from the Winchester 2020 Group. A

Members' Training session which had focused on the Local Plan had been held immediately prior to this meeting.

Following the presentation by the 2020 Group at the previous Forum meeting, it was noted that the Chairman had met with the relevant County and City Council officers who were currently investigating the viability of the proposals. Whilst no decision on these proposals had yet been made, an immediate outcome of that meeting was an agreement from officers to review the finger post signs and notice board maps as part of their 'wayfinding' project, with a view to directing pedestrians along the most appropriate route depending upon their desired destination.

The Head of Access and Infrastructure added that, beside this initiative, the County Council was also looking at formulating a railway station access plan which would include possible enhancements to pedestrian routes to and from the station, and that this may be an opportunity to look at the ideas raised by the 2020 Group.

During debate, several Members voiced their concerns that the ambitious proposals of the 2020 Group could be delayed indefinitely, along with a proposed pedestrian crossing near the junction of Upper High Street and Romsey Road.

Other Members commented on the importance of pedestrian routes across the town centre. During this discussion, the Forum agreed that a future meeting should review which pedestrian paths were gritted.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Forum notes the update and welcome Cabinet's involvement in the issues surrounding the Winchester station area, which the Forum considered important to the future of the town.
2. That a future meeting of the Forum receive a report on footpath gritting.

4. **GREAT MINSTER STREET ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS**
(Report WTF185 refers)

This item was requested by Councillor Tait in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 36.

The Head of Access and Infrastructure explained that, in conjunction with the County Council, works on Great Minster Street were scheduled to start in March 2013 and would take 8-10 weeks to complete. The highway improvement works would utilise the same materials and design as recently used in The Square. The traffic management measures, which were implemented as part of the refurbishment of The Square, were the introduction of a 20mph speed limit and a Prohibition of Driving restriction for all motor vehicles except for access.

The Head of Access and Infrastructure explained that, whilst surveys had shown that the traffic levels had fallen, around three quarters of those vehicles still passing through the area were doing so illegally. The Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee will consider possible further traffic management measures for the area at its meeting to be held on 25 February 2013 and the Forum were invited to forward its comments to that meeting.

During public participation, Mr Grant (Chairman of Symonds and Swinthuns Street Residents' Association) requested that the Council introduce a physical barrier at Great Minister Street to prevent traffic using the area. In summary, he highlighted the problem caused to residents by traffic (particularly lorries) using the ancient and narrow streets of the area. He also suggested that, in comparison with local traders, residents had not been adequately consulted on traffic management issues. He added that the 20mph speed limit was widely ignored and that the prohibition order had only reduced traffic by 25% (from 1700 to 1300 vehicles per day). Finally, he made a comparison to the pedestrianisation of the High Street in the 1970s and suggested that the area around The Square should be similarly treated.

The Corporate Director (Operations) explained that the current traffic prohibition was a compromise, following consultation, which met the local traders' need to receive deliveries and maintain the convenience of their customers and the majority of local residents' desire to reduce the level of traffic in the area. It was not possible to maintain this compromise and install the physical barriers.

During discussion, the Head of Access and Infrastructure confirmed that it was only the Police that could enforce moving traffic offences and that the Police had limited resources to enforce such restrictions.

In response to a question, the Head of Access and Infrastructure explained the traffic management measures which were being considered to deter further the level of through traffic. This included HGV access, highway improvement works along Great Minister Street to reduce the available road width, removing the access only exception for the width restriction at the Great Minister Street/ Symonds Street junction and making Market Lane two-way. This last measure would allow HGV access from the southern end thus removing the need for large HGVs to access The Square from Symonds Street. This could also make the area less attractive to people using it as a through route, as it was likely that they would be held up by delivery vehicles.

In summary, the Forum welcomed these initiatives to make the area less attractive to through traffic and, during debate, concerns were raised that access should be maintained for disabled people. Members also commented on the need to encourage pedestrian spaces and it was suggested that the area could be closed to traffic between 10am-4pm.

Members also suggested that the traffic flow through the area might reduce traffic numbers if the one-way system was reversed (however, Councillors

Mather and Sanders wished it be recorded that they did not agree with this suggestion). In response, although he explained that the effects of any reversal would be difficult to predict, the Head of Access and Infrastructure agreed to consider this proposal.

Members also suggested that the traffic management of area should not be considered in isolation and instead needed to be considered in the context of movement across the town as a whole, as part of the County Council's ongoing Traffic Management Study.

At the conclusion of debate, the Forum agreed that the traffic management of the area was likely to be an evolving process. However, the majority of Members did not wish to introduce a physical barrier (as advocated by Mr Grant), but did agree that the traffic management of the area, including further HGV management, should be considered alongside access across the whole town. Therefore, the Forum agreed that the issues raised above should be noted by the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee and revisited by the Forum when it is consulted on the County Council's Traffic Management Plan.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) note the above comments of the Forum.
2. That, in considering the Winchester Access Plan at a future meeting, Members have regard to the above debate.

5. **PROPOSED GRANT ALLOCATIONS FOR 2013/14**
(Report CAB2432 refers)

Councillor E Berry declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a volunteer on Streetreach and left the room during the consideration of that item and took no part in the debate or vote thereon.

Councillor J Berry declared a personal and prejudicial interest as an employee of the Winnall Community Association. She left the room during the consideration of that item and took no part in the debate or vote thereon.

Councillor Collin declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of Home Start (Winchester and District), Winchester Young Carers, and Winchester Street Dance Academy as he had co-funded these groups using his County Councillor grant. He also declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest as the County Councillor observer on the Winnall Junior Youth Club. He spoke and voted on all of the above applications.

Councillor Hiscock had declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a Director of Keystone Housing and left the room during the consideration of that item and took no part in the debate or vote thereon.

Councillor Hutchison declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest as a member of WinACC and spoke and voted thereon.

Councillor Mather declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest as an advisory committee member on the Trinity Centre and spoke and voted thereon. Councillor Mather also declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of the Winchester Festival, which had regularly employed her son. She left the room during the consideration of that item and took no part in the debate or vote thereon.

Councillor Pines declared a personal and prejudicial interest as the nominal secretary of the Winnall Rock School and he left the room during the consideration of that item and took no part in the debate or vote thereon. Councillor Pines also declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest as a Holding Trustee for the community centre that was the base for KAYAC (Youth Options), Winnall Junior Youth Club, and the Activ8 Holiday Club. He spoke and voted thereon.

Councillor Tait declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in relation to Trinity and the Carroll Centre as the Council's nominated observer in both groups. Councillor Tait spoke and voted thereon.

Councillor Tod declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in relation to Trinity (as he was a regular donor) and WinACC (as a member) and he spoke and voted thereon.

In response to questions, the Assistant Director (Economic Prosperity) explained that a review of the Council's Community Strategy in spring 2013 would lead to a review of the current list of Partner Organisations. Once the review was completed, the Winchester Town Forum (Town Account Grants) Informal Group would be asked to consider its approach to future contributions to both Partner and non-Partner Organisations.

Following debate, in addition to agreeing the proposed grants set out in the Report, the Forum agreed to create a one-off £2,000 emergency grants budget for 2013/14 as a contingency to cover any special hardship caused for the non-Partner Organisations which would not receive a contribution to their core grant from the Town Forum in 2013/14 for the first time. The Forum delegated authority to Assistant Director (Economic Prosperity) to distribute this budget in consultation with the Winchester Town Forum (Town Account Grants) Informal Group.

RESOLVED:

1. That, as part of the approval of the total City Council Grants, Cabinet be recommended to endorse the grant allocations set out in Appendix 1 of Report CAB2432, to be made to organisations in the Town area (funded by a release from the Winchester town reserve) and subject to the Council's approval of the Budget and Council Tax for 2013/14.

2. That the Assistant Director (Economic Prosperity) be delegated authority to distribute a one-off budget of £2,000 from the Town Account, in consultation with the Winchester Town Forum (Town Account Grants) Informal Group, as a contingency to cover any special hardship caused to non-Partner Organisations in the Town as a result of the approved 2013/14 grants allocations.

6. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT BUDGET 2013/14**
(Report WTF184 refers)

The Forum noted that Line 5 of Appendix 2 referred to a new bus shelter in Worthy Road, and not Worthy Lane as printed.

During debate, it was explained that the two Planning Framework commissions referred to in the Report would cost in the order of £20,000 each. It was anticipated that the Forum's contribution of £5,000 for each one would be supplemented by other funding. The Stanmore Planning Framework had benefited from £5,000 in funding from Hampshire County Council and £10,000 from the New Homes Delivery budget.

A Member expressed a concern that the money which had been set aside for mobile flashing speed signs had been transferred to the Community Speed Watch Programme. In response, the Forum noted that 8-10 volunteers for the scheme, including a co-ordinator, had contacted the Police and therefore agreed its budget as set out in the Report.

The Forum also discussed the capital programme item for the Changing Pavilions. In summary, it was explained that further details regarding this project would be reported to a future meeting. Following a debate, the Forum agreed to retain the capital programme as set out in the Report, to ensure that the scheme could be progressed but acknowledged and hoped that it might be possible partly fund the project through Open Space Funds, which the Forum controlled.

In response to questions, the Corporate Director (Operations) explained that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was set to replace Open Space Funds as the developer's contribution in 2014. He added that the City Council had yet to determine how CIL should be spent in the non-parished town area and the Forum requested that this be decided as soon as practicable.

RESOLVED:

That the following be recommended to Cabinet:

1. **That the detailed budget for 2013/14 and the indicative projections for the strategy period be noted.**
2. **That a freeze in Council Tax for the town area be approved, should it be eligible for the 2013/14 freeze funding**

(unless Council resolves to increase the Winchester City Council Tax in which case the same increase should be applied for the Town area in order to maintain its funding position).

3. That the budget for the Winchester Town area, as set out in Appendices of Report WTF184 be approved, subject to a one-off budget contingency of £2,000 from the Town Account to cover any special hardship caused to non-Partner Organisations in the Town, as a result of the approved 2013/14 grants allocations

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 9.00pm

Chairman