

**WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM****7 April 2003**Attendance:Councillors:

Pearce (Chairman) (P)

Atwell  
 Bennetts (P)  
 Beveridge (P)  
 Craig (P)  
 Davies (P)  
 Higgins (P)  
 Hiscock (P)  
 Jones (P)

Love (P)  
 Mather  
 Maynard  
 Mitchell (P)  
 Nelmes (P)  
 Nunn (P)  
 Pines (P)  
 Porter (P)  
 Tait (P)

1. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked or statements made.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Forum held on 4 February 2003, numbered 789-802, be approved and adopted.

3. **NOTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON YOUTH ISSUES, 13 MARCH 2003**

(Report WTF2 refers)

The Forum considered the notes of the public meeting (**attached as Appendix A**) held on 13 March 2003.

Councillor Porter introduced the summary results of the Youth Survey and the Forum agreed that the results should be fully analysed by officers.

The Forum focused on the main points that had emerged from the public meeting and which were within the City Council's power to influence or change.

The poor condition of the play-areas, fields and grounds had emerged as a concern and the Forum recommended that Cabinet should consider improvements to the maintenance contracts of these within the town area.

The Director of Community Services advised that there would be no contractual difficulties in increasing the standard of maintenance provided the costs could be met. Members concluded that it might be possible to vary the frequency that different play areas were cleaned dependent on need. It was also agreed that Cabinet should be requested to consider the erection of signs at the entrance of the play-areas with a contact number at the City Council so that the public could more easily report any

maintenance problems. In addition, Members discussed the possibility of introducing additional lighting into selected play areas and including the more vulnerable sites within the CCTV system.

The Director stated that he was drafting a three to five year work programme for the Winchester Town Open Spaces Fund which would be considered by Members in autumn 2003. He stated that the Fund could include capital projects such as improved lighting, but that the terms of the developers' contributions did not permit the Open Space Fund to be used for revenue spending on items such as improved maintenance.

The Forum noted from the Public Meeting that there were many different organisations which provided services and facilities which were aimed at young people, and Members considered that these would benefit from some form of central co-ordination and promotion. Members therefore agreed to request that Cabinet consider the appointment of a Youth Officer to bring together the existing provision of youth services and facilities in the town area.

Similarly, it was recommended that the City Council should have officer level representation at YPAG (Young People's Agency Group) for its quarterly management meetings.

In response to a Members' comment and at the invitation of the Chairman, County Councillor Peskett reported that the County was aware of the need to improve night-time public transport provision for the town centre.

In conclusion, Members agreed to make the following recommendations to Cabinet and that a progress report on the outcomes of the Youth Issues meeting should be sent those who had attended the public meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That the notes of the Public Meeting held on Youth Issues on 13 March 2003 be received (attached as Appendix A).
2. That Cabinet be recommended to consider the establishment of a Youth Officer whose task would be to bring together the existing numerous and disparate facilities for young people in the town area of Winchester.
3. That Cabinet be recommended to consider improvements to the maintenance schedules for the Winchester Town area play grounds and fields.
4. That officers prepare a programme of investment in the Council's play areas to consider issues such as lighting, signage and CCTV for consideration by a future meeting of the Forum

4. **LITTER PICKING – CATHEDRAL GROUNDS**  
(Report WTF4 refers)

Councillor Beveridge introduced the paper which suggested that the Winchester Town Account should be charged a £1600 one-off cost to purchase four new heritage style litter bins for the Winchester Cathedral Close with an additional annual cost of £1500 to empty these bins. This, he argued, would help better maintain a well used facility.

Members noted that the maintenance of the Cathedral grounds had been considered by Cabinet in 2002, whereby part of the cost was met by the General Fund because of

the economic benefit through tourism the Cathedral brought to the whole District. This had resulted in the installation of larger, but fewer, heritage style bins that were unable to cope with the volume of litter produced on the Close.

Members agreed that Cabinet should be requested to consider extra expenditure on reducing the litter at the Cathedral Close, but the majority concluded that this would be inappropriate use of the Town Account.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet be recommended to consider four additional heritage style litter bins and their associated maintenance costs for the Cathedral Close, but that this should not be funded from the Winchester Town Account.

#### 5. **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

Members considered a proposal to change the name of this Committee to Winchester Town Area Committee to better distinguish between it and the single issue Public Meetings and to avoid public confusion in advertisements. However, Members concluded that this was unnecessary.

The Chairman read a letter from Age Concern, Hampshire to the Forum and it was agreed that a Public Meeting should be held on Older People's Issues in the next Municipal Year, but no date was set at this stage.

RESOLVED:

1. That the following dates be agreed for the 2003/04 Municipal Year:

6.30pm Tuesday 20 May 2003

This date was later changed to 6.30pm 19 May 2003, Walton Room, Guildhall, Winchester

6.30pm Tuesday 29 July 2003, Walton Room, Guildhall Winchester

6.30pm Thursday 30 October 2003 Walton Room, Guildhall Winchester

6.30pm Tuesday 13 January 2004 Walton Room, Guildhall Winchester

6.30pm Thursday 26 February 2004 Walton Room, Guildhall Winchester

2. That the first meeting of the Public Meeting of the Winchester Town Forum be held on Housing Issues at 7.00pm on Thursday 12 June 2003 in the Walton Room, Guildhall, Winchester.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and concluded at 6.40 pm

R. Pearce  
Chairman

**WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM**  
**PUBLIC MEETING ON YOUTH ISSUES**

**13 March 2003**

**1. Chairman's Introduction**

The Chairman welcomed approximately sixty members of the public to the meeting. He explained that the purpose of the evening was to try and achieve a better understanding of what it is like to be a young person living, studying or working in the town area.

**2. Presentation from Andy Hider, YMCA**

The Forum heard from Mr Andy Hider, a Youth Worker with the YMCA and the Vineyard Church. Mr Hider introduced three young people who told the Forum what the good and the bad points were of growing up in Winchester.

In summary of the positive points: there was good access from Twyford into the town, and the countryside and the fields at St Giles Hill were mentioned as one of the town's assets.

However, as negatives, the young people were concerned about the violence particularly at Highcliffe, the misuse of the St Catherines recreation grounds and the few alternatives to the pub culture.

By way of a solution, they suggested increased leisure and recreational facilities to give the young something to do, lighting the Highcliffe recreation fields to improve its use, and a new youth club at Highcliffe.

Mr Hider concluded that whatever the Council sought to do to improve the lives of young people in Winchester, the young should have somewhere to go where they felt wanted, understood and safe.

**3. Presentation from Councillor Jackie Porter**

Councillor Porter presented the results of a survey that had been distributed to most of the school pupils in Winchester. The survey had received 2,500 responses.

The results of the survey can be found at [www.winchester.gov.uk/town\\_forum](http://www.winchester.gov.uk/town_forum), but in summary they showed:

- How young people spent their free time and what the constraints were.
- Their views on safety, transport and health issues, part time work, money, voting, smoking and drinking.
- The survey also asked how young people found out what was going on and what facilities were available to them.

In response to questions as to why students had not been consulted as part of the survey, Councillor Porter explained that many of the questions would have appeared inappropriate as they were specifically targeted at 13-16 age range.

#### 4. Presentation from Julie Lawrence: Hampshire County Youth Service

Ms Lawrence explained that the Hampshire County Youth Service provided a service to young people through direct service delivery (through organisations such as Face to Face) and through the support of voluntary groups and organisations by a system of grants and partnership working. She further explained that the Youth Service had provided £195,000 in grants this financial year across the County, and are working in partnership with groups such as the Carroll Youth Centre and Connexions.

The priority areas of the Youth Service are to improve personal and social skills, to involve young people in democracy and the decision making process, social inclusion, to offer new and challenging experiences, and to support the work of the Youth Health Council.

Quoting the year 2000 survey of the users of the Youth Service, Ms Lawrence summarised that the key issues which faced young people were:

- Nothing to do
- Lack of meeting places
- Police hassle
- Cost of things to do
- Employment
- Affordable housing and accommodation
- Mental and sexual health issues.

Further information on the Hampshire Youth Service can be found at [www.youth.hants.gov.uk/district/winchdis](http://www.youth.hants.gov.uk/district/winchdis)

#### 5. Presentation from Steve Tilbury, City Council's Director of Community Services

Mr Tilbury, the City Council's Director of Community Services, explained that the meeting should be viewed as a starting point for looking at better ways of engaging young people in the decision making process in Winchester and as an opportunity to highlight to Councillors the main issues affecting the young in Winchester.

In response to comments on youth funding, Mr Tilbury explained that there was no separate budget for the youth issues in the same way that the Council had no separate budgets for other age groups. Instead he suggested that the opinions of the young should be heard just as loudly as other groups in the community to ensure that their concerns were catered for through practical issues, such as the re-development of Broadway/Friarsgate.

#### 6. General Debate

The Chairman handed over the facilitation of the evening to Councillor Pines. He, in turn, invited the public, Councillors and the approximately 30 young people in attendance to consider the issues raised during the presentations together in small groups.

However, at the start of the process, Mr Calver representative of the Carroll Youth Centre stated that the Forum would have been better held where young people go, rather than the Guildhall which he suggested young people viewed as intimidating. His views were echoed by Ms Williamson of Peter Symond's College who also invited Members to consult with the students.

From the notes made at the each of the tables and general comments made to the whole Forum, the following issues emerged:

**Better Communication:**

- a) More information on what's available through schools, posters at bus shelters
- b) Need more awareness of groups such as Face to Face, Young Carers and what the City Council does
- c) Interaction in decision- making (eg. Broadway/Friarsgate) with ongoing feedback
- d) Youth Council – based on trust, open to all, with students initiating policies
- e) Dedicated officer responsible for Youth Issues – there was a recognition that in some aspects the town was rich in resources and people, but that communication between different groups and agencies could be improved
- f) City Councillors ought to undertake more school visits
- g) The City Council should keep its promises and take on temporary staff if necessary to solve practical problems
- h) Consider learning good practices from other Local Authorities who had better-integrated youth policies
- i) Mark Oaten clinics

**Better Facilities:**

- a) What's the alternative to the pub culture?
- b) Help for homeless people/drug users
- c) More facilities for young in city centre (eg Hotshots in Southampton)
- d) places where to go where it was not necessary to spend money
- e) Very few shops for the young in Winchester – particularly for clothes
- f) A Youth Club in Highcliffe
- g) Drop in centres for activities (eg. in Australia you can stay overnight where qualified youth workers are available)
- h) Drop in creches
  
- i) Playing Fields should be better maintained, cleaned and graffiti cleared
- j) Need all weather and lit pitches
- k) Graffiti wall by skate-park
- l) New play equipment in King George V playing field
- m) Bigger skate-parks open to all
- n) Cycle tracks
- o) BMX tracks, tracks for Quad bikes
  
- p) Should be band rehearsal rooms and venues for live music in Winchester
- q) Theatre Royal to do unplugged, acoustic events?

- r) The Screen Cinema's films are not aimed at young people, its expensive and small and should have more films on during the day and at weekends.

1 Safety

- a) Is a large heroin problem in Winchester
- b) Drug dealers and the homeless imitating young people
- c) City Centre not safe Friday and Saturday nights
- d) Extend CCTV
- e) Consider identity cards to prevent underage drinking
- f) Better lighting – ought to be white rather than orange bulbs
- g) Undesirable persons hanging around the stake-park
- h) Child Protection Issues

2 Housing

- a) Need for affordable housing – places like City Road, the Old Post Office, Millbrook House
- b) Need tighter controls at Nightshelters

3 Transport

- a) More buses linking the town to surrounding areas
- b) As Winchester is a small town, consider setting up better transport links to areas with more facilities
- c) Loss of the pubic transport passes to sixth formers
- d) Need more secure bike parking

4 Financial

- a) Debt problems

## 7. Conclusion

At the conclusion of the debate, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and stated that the next meeting of the Forum was due to discuss the Broadway/Friarsgate Re-development on Monday 7 April at 7pm.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and concluded at 9.00pm

R Pearce  
Chairman