

CABINET

11 September 2013

PLANNING FRAMEWORKS: STANMORE AND WINNALL

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ECONOMY & COMMUNITIES)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

[WTF177](#) – A Planning Framework for Stanmore, 12 September 2012

[Minutes of Winchester Town Forum, 21 March 2013](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

One year ago, the Council commissioned consultants Broadway Malyan to produce a ten-year Planning Framework for Stanmore. This spatial planning document, now published on the Stanmore Combined website, provides a sound evidence on which to base future investment by the Council and by other agencies working in the Stanmore area, as and when funds are available. It will also inform Local Plan Part 2 and may be a material consideration in planning applications. Although not a document that is 'owned' by the Council, it does provide an overarching assessment of the current and future needs of the neighbourhood which will help to shape the delivery of day to day services for residents of St Luke's Ward, which was named a priority neighbourhood under the current Community Strategy.

This report provides more information about the nature and content of the Framework document. It also seeks Member approval of a formal response to the Framework, so that residents and community organisations know what action they can expect in their neighbourhood in the coming years.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet:

- i) notes the Stanmore Planning Framework, and agrees that it should inform future decisions around community investment in the Stanmore neighbourhood;
- ii) endorses the Vision set out in paragraph 3.2 of this report, and encourages partner organisations to do so too;
- iii) confirms support for the delivery of the three high priority housing schemes identified in paragraph 4.3 of this report;
- iv) commends the principles of the delivery programme set out in the Framework, and requires the relevant Portfolio Holders to give it due regard in shaping Portfolio Plans in future years;
- v) delegates to the Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment authority to determine the scope and methodology of a parallel Planning Framework for Winnall St John's Ward as outlined at section 6 of this report; and
- vi) makes a direction under Contract Procedure Rule 2.4a that the Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) be authorised to negotiate a contract for the delivery of such a study by the same consultants who produced the Stanmore Planning Framework (Broadway Malyan) up to a value of £20,000 + VAT in 2013/14, should the Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) consider that is the most appropriate way forward.

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#### DETAIL:

##### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 A year ago, it was recognised that the production of a spatial planning document to provide a long-term framework would assist with the regeneration and development of the Stanmore area (Report WTF177 – A Planning Framework for Stanmore refers).
- 1.2 The Planning Framework would, it was suggested, provide a mechanism to deliver locally on some of the aspirations of the *Vision for Winchester* produced by the Town Forum, as well as exploring other 'live' issues in Stanmore such as the scope for improved provision of community infrastructure and opportunities for new housing development. It would also inform the Council's emerging Local Plan Part 2.
- 1.3 The project was carried out under the auspices of Stanmore Combined, and supported financially by both Winchester Town Forum and Hampshire County Council. Ward Members have been closely involved since the outset.
- 1.4 The Planning Framework has now been produced by consultants Broadway Malyan and is published on the Stanmore Combined website (see 'background information' at the end of this report). It provides helpful guidance for all agencies and organisations working in the Stanmore neighbourhood.
- 1.5 The Framework is not something for the Council to 'adopt', as such, but it will be an important source of evidence on which to base future decisions. It does, however, require a formal response from the Council so that local people are clear about what they can expect as a result of the project.
- 1.6 This report sets out the Council's proposed response to the Framework, including the key actions which it wishes to take forward.

##### 2 Producing the Planning Framework

- 2.1 The Framework took as its starting point the Stanmore Community Plan, which had been the subject of extensive, recent consultation. The steering group was mindful of the fact that local people are routinely asked for their views across a wide range of subjects. Consequently, they felt that the consultants employed to produce the Framework should focus on identifying

realistic and affordable ways to address such issues, rather than starting the consultation from scratch once again.

2.2 Nevertheless, there were plenty of opportunities throughout the project for local people, council officers and community organisations to engage with the consultants. These included:

- open 'meet the masterplanners' sessions
- a community network lunch
- group meetings with technical officers from the Council
- meetings with a range of groups with local interests (eg Rainbow Club, Allotment Holders' Society, Scouts)
- public exhibitions of emerging options for the Framework
- a meeting of the trio of community organisations based at Somers Close
- regular updates on the Stanmore Combined website, including questionnaires to download and contact details for the consultants, with a dedicated email address.

2.3 The team of consultants from Broadway Malyan also carried out their own research on the ground, starting on the inception day with a walkabout in the company of officers and members of the steering group.

2.4 Whilst there has been some unfortunate media coverage of the project, it has led to interesting and positive developments. For example:

- the Council bought the New Queen's Head site, prompted by a recommendation from Broadway Malyan, which provides an opportunity to build much-needed new homes in Stanmore;
- the County Council has handed back the empty library building on Wavell Way at no cost to the City Council in order to further the objectives set out in the Framework;
- discussions with the 8<sup>th</sup> Stanmore Scouts about their hut in Somers Close have prompted them to consider future needs across the whole Winchester District, and to enter a dialogue with the County's Children's and Adult Services Directorates about co-location (and co-funding) in a number of Wards;
- discussions between The Carroll Centre and the Community Association about the best use of their facilities, and increased integration between the two operations.

- 2.5 In fact, the publication of the Framework marks the beginning rather than the end of the business of making improvements in the neighbourhood over the longer term.

### 3 What the Framework Says

- 3.1 The Framework is composed of three distinct parts. These are:

- a) a Baseline Statement, which provides a thorough and accurate assessment of Stanmore as it currently is;
- b) a Vision for the Future, which is explored under four separate themes;
- c) a Delivery Programme, which highlights the key projects which the consultants felt to be significant in taking forward the vision and objectives.

- 3.2 The Vision, which has formed part of the consultation, runs as follows:

*Stanmore will be a thriving and safe neighbourhood where all residents are proud to live. It will be a place that has seen the benefits of housing growth captured locally, with desirable homes that provide for the existing community and attract new residents.*

*There will be a strong sense of community spirit, effective partnership working, a wide range of well-run community facilities and high quality, and well maintained green spaces.*

*It will have strong connections within the neighbourhood and to nearby areas with training and learning programmes on offer for those who require further support*

- 3.3 Members are asked to endorse this Vision, and to encourage other partner organisations to do so too.

- 3.4 The Vision is explored under four separate themes as follows:

- Delivering housing growth and renewing the built environment
- Community and community facilities
- Public realm and open space
- Connections, transport and parking

- 3.5 The delivery programme provides a menu of possible actions for the Council and other partners to consider. This takes fully into account the increasing constraints on public funding and aims to identify existing or alternative resources which may support the delivery of these actions.

- 3.6 Some time has passed since the consultants completed their work in the spring this year, and during this time the dialogue with partner organisations working in Stanmore has continued. As a result, some of the proposed actions are now more relevant than others. For example, there are opportunities to progress work on highways and open spaces proposals as part of planned programmes funded from within existing budgets. On the other hand, the suggested construction of a brand new community 'hub' building on the site of the New Queen's Head has been superseded by a more recent decision on the part of the trustees of The Carroll Centre to remain in their current location and will not now be pursued as originally proposed.
- 3.7 At a political level, the Framework has reflected the genuine wish by the Council to support Stanmore as one of its two named priority neighbourhoods. It now has a strong evidence base on which to base future decisions when opportunities to invest in the area arise, funding permitting.
- 3.8 The project has also enhanced the Council's role as a facilitator, creating links and catalysing developments which will benefit residents over the coming decade.

#### 4 The Council's Response to the Framework

- 4.1 The Planning Framework was never intended to be a Council-owned document. It was modelled on the principles of neighbourhood planning in order to articulate the vision and aspirations of Stanmore people, and to translate these into a set of long term goals.
- 4.2 However, it is important for partner organisations and local residents alike to understand how the City Council will build on the energy and interest that have been generated by the Stanmore Planning Framework.
- 4.3 Whilst the Framework is the beginning of a ten year journey for many of the organisations that are named in it, the Council is understandably keen to make an immediate and concrete response. To this end, Members are asked to confirm support for the three high priority projects identified by the consultants under the 'housing' theme. These are, in summary:
- a) The redevelopment of the New Queen's Head site, with associated community benefits in line with existing planning policy;
  - b) New homes at the top of The Valley (Wilberforce Close), enabling investment in local green infrastructure;
  - c) Infill housing on garage sites.
- 4.4 These schemes will deliver much-needed affordable housing in the neighbourhood, which was reaffirmed as a priority through the public consultation process. They can be funded from the Housing Revenue Account and delivered by the New Homes Delivery Team, although there is

clearly further technical and design work before the schemes can be fully defined and costed.

4.5 In the meantime, there is already considerable investment of staff time and financial resource by the Council in the St Luke's Ward each year. This includes but is not limited to:

- housing and estate improvements
- traffic management initiatives
- the provision of training for Council tenants
- support for community activities from the Neighbourhood Wardens
- the leasing of commercial properties and garages
- grants to voluntary organisations
- maintenance of open spaces
- sports and wellbeing projects

4.5 On an operational level, officers have welcomed the Planning Framework as a way of providing a shared understanding of the issues and opportunities in Stanmore. They have provided valuable professional insights and have, in turn, commented favourably on the quality of the consultants' work. For them, the Framework has brought about a joint approach to working in Stanmore which could usefully be mirrored in other neighbourhoods. It should enable 'smarter working' through a more integrated approach – one of the goals of the Council's transformation agenda.

4.6 Overall, Members are asked to note the Framework and to ensure that it is a consideration in future decisions around community investment in the Stanmore neighbourhood.

## 5 Lessons Learnt

5.1 This was the first Planning Framework which the Council has produced, and there have inevitably been lessons to learn. Key among these is the management of consultation with residents about new housing proposals. Officers and Members have agreed that a personalised approach – such as individual visits to affected households - leads to a largely sympathetic response from householders who are better able to understand the benefits of new schemes, and are less fearful of the perceived threats.

5.2 The Framework was conceived largely a spatial planning exercise, but it generated so many interesting conversations that it became unwieldy for the steering group to manage. It would, with hindsight, have benefited from a full Project Management approach. This is already being applied to the New

Queen's Head scheme, which is the first project to emerge from the Framework.

- 5.3 What has been made clear during the Project is that residents of Stanmore are not generally aware of the range and quantity of work carried out by the Council in their neighbourhood. They feel that their views go unheard and little action is taken in response to the many surveys in which they are asked to participate. The steering group will aim to address this through a communications programme based on the Community Association's regular newsletter.

## 6 A Planning Framework for Winnall

- 6.1 In view of the many positive aspects of the Stanmore project, the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment is proposing a parallel study for the Winnall St John's Ward. The exact scope has yet to be determined, but any such project would build on lessons learnt over the past year and therefore the end result may take a different format and/or methodology to the Stanmore version. Key features of this would be the future of the industrial estate; the growing parking and traffic management issues and the fitness for purpose of community facilities. Although the potential for new homes is likely to be less, it nevertheless makes sense to consider this because of the Council's commitment to the delivery of additional affordable housing.
- 6.2 Again, the Framework would feed in to Local Plan Part 2. It would clearly benefit from the lessons learnt over the past year, although no long term planning process of this kind will be completely shielded from media speculation and rumour.
- 6.3 Hampshire County Council and Winchester Town Forum have already identified financial contributions for a Winnall Planning Framework project.
- 6.4 Based on the quality of the work of the team from Broadway Malyan and their shared experience of the Stanmore project, officers believe it may be appropriate to invite them to carry out any parallel study for Winnall. The consultancy team may need to draw on specialist support to tackle the issues around the industrial estate, but this is not uncommon practice – and Broadway Malyan is, in any case, a large, multi-disciplinary consultancy. This would ensure consistency of approach across the two priority neighbourhoods, and speed of delivery based on an existing working relationship.
- 6.5 The Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) will determine the best approach to the scope and methodology for commissioning any such study, based on consultation with other officers and the Portfolio Holder. However, in the event that Broadway Malyan is then considered by the Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) to be appropriate the study, a direction is sought under Contract Procedure Rule 2.4a for authorisation to negotiate with one supplier only for the delivery of a Winnall study.



## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

### 7 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 7.1 The Planning Framework directly supports the Active Communities outcome of the Community strategy, and sets out a number of opportunities to make positive changes to the priority neighbourhood of Stanmore.

### 8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 There are a number of implications for Council resources:

- a) New housing schemes: Members are recommended to commit to the delivery of three housing schemes. The New Queen's Head site is already part of the Development Programme ([CAB2486\(HD\)](#) – 22 May 2013 refers) and has a set aside budget provision to develop. Architects have been appointed and are developing a proposal for the site. The other two sites are not currently part of the new homes programme and would be developed as funding becomes available. At this early stage it is not possible to specify the value of these schemes. However, they will be prioritised for development when money becomes available. A comprehensive update on the financial implications and development options for the new homes programme will be available for Members to consider at Cabinet (Housing) on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013 as part of the Housing Revenue Account Budget Setting report;
- b) Projects that may be funded through existing revenue budgets: Portfolio Holders will consider these when they are planning work programmes for the year ahead to see what may reasonably be accommodated. Portfolio Plans would be subject to an open approval process in the usual way.
- c) Funding for a Winnall Planning Framework, once the scope of any such study has been agreed. A maximum budget of £20,000 is proposed for this work. As for the Stanmore Planning Framework, this would be funded in the following way:

Winchester Town Forum	£ 5,000 (allocated in 2013/14 budget)
Hampshire County Council	£ 5,000 (allocated in 2013/14 budget)
New Homes Delivery budget	£ 5,000
Economic Prosperity	
commissioning budget	<u>£ 5,000</u>
	<u>£20,000</u>

## 9 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 9.1 The main risk for the Council arising from the Planning Framework is a reputational one, arising from raised public expectation and a perceived failure by the Council to deliver. By confirming its response to the Framework in this transparent way and committing to a programme of local communications about this and other ongoing service delivery in the neighbourhood, this risk can be managed. Early progress on the New Queen's Head site will serve to increase local confidence.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Stanmore Planning Framework – the consultants' report and all associated project documentation is available on the Stanmore Combined website at [www.stanmorecombined.org.uk/stanmore\\_planning\\_framework/](http://www.stanmorecombined.org.uk/stanmore_planning_framework/)

### APPENDICES:

None