

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

9 October 2008

Attendance:

Councillors:

Nelmes (Chairman) (P)

Barratt	Mitchell (P)
Berry (P)	Pearce (P)
Fall	Pines (P)
Hicks (P)	Sanders (P)
Higgins (P)	Stephens
Hiscock (P)	Tait (P)
Love (P)	Thompson (P)
Mather (P)	Worrall (P)
Maynard (P)	

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Beckett (Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economy and Tourism)
Councillor Humby

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held 18 June 2008, be approved and adopted.

2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Weeks commented on traffic speed and noise in the town centre.

In response, the Forum discussed the lack of progress on proposals for a 20mph speed limit in parts of Winchester; the speed of buses and general traffic in the part-pedestrianised High Street (outside Debenhams); and that the Winchester and Access Plan would be discussed at the next meeting of the Forum.

Mr Merrett (Chairman of Winnall Forum) and Mr de Peyer (Chairman of Highcliffe Community Action Group) spoke in relation to the Neighbourhood Wardens report (Report WTF120 refers) and their comments are set out under this item within these Minutes.

3. **WINCHESTER ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE – PRESENTATION**
(Oral Report)

Councillor Love declared a personal (but not prejudicial interest) in respect of this item as he was a member of Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC). He spoke and voted thereon.

The Forum welcomed to the meeting Mr Hutchison and Professor Whitmarsh from (WinACC).

Mr Hutchison gave the Forum a brief introduction to the work of WinACC. He explained that WinACC had been in operation for a year and was currently applying for charitable status. WinACC worked to promote sustainable development and Mr Hutchison outlined their three top priorities to be:

- Training and supporting low carbon champions
- Encouraging major organisations, such as the City Council, to lead by example
- To save energy through promoting better insulation.

Professor Whitmarsh gave a Forum a presentation (available electronically [here](#)). In summary, this outlined WinACC's proposals for an aerial thermal imaging survey of Winchester to be undertaken in winter 2008. This survey would produce a map which would clearly illustrate how well individual buildings were insulated and, as a result, encourage more businesses and homeowners to invest in better insulation. Professor Whitmarsh added that there was currently an unprecedented level of subsidy available from Government to encourage better insulation and that the emphasis of this funding was focused on benefit claimants and older people.

Following discussion, the Forum agreed that it supported WinACC's aerial thermal imaging survey in principle, but regretted that it was unable to fund the predicted £25,000 cost from the Town Account. However, the Forum noted the other possible sources of financing for the survey (such as other WinACC partners, the affected Parish Councils and the Council's grants) and requested that the Chairman investigate these further with the Leader.

RESOLVED:

1. That, whilst the Forum supports the proposed aerial thermal imaging survey in principle, it regrets it was unable to support the survey from the Town Account.
2. That the Chairman investigates with the Leader potential alternative sources of funding for the survey.

4. **EMMAUS - PRESENTATION**
(Oral Report)

The Forum welcomed Ms Thompson, the Project Manager of Emmaus Hampshire.

Ms Thompson gave the Forum a presentation which is available electronically [here](#).

In summary, this explained the history and background of Emmaus Hampshire. It was hoped that the site, currently in construction next to the Bar End Household Waste Recycling Site, would open in spring 2009 with an open day on 3 March 2009. The project was designed to provide a safe environment for up to 50 homeless people per year. Like other Emmaus Projects in the UK, the Companions (as the residents would be known) would recycle and refurbish second hand goods, which would then be sold at affordable prices. It was hoped that within two to three years, the Companions would be financially self sufficient.

In response to questions, Ms Thompson explained that Companions would be referred to Emmaus from anywhere in Hampshire using a referrals policy similar to other UK Emmaus communities.

At the conclusion of debate, the Forum congratulated Ms Thompson on what they considered to be an excellent project and commented on the wide support it had received from the local community.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

5. **UPDATE ON NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS**
[\(Report WTF 120 refers\)](#)

Mr Merrett (Chairman of Winnall Forum) expressed his concern regarding recent changes to the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme. Whilst he congratulated the Wardens on the excellent work they had undertaken since their introduction, he was concerned that their new enforcement powers would endanger the trust they had built up with young people in the community. He regretted the lack of consultation that had taken place concerning the changes, the reduced patrols and that there had been reports of them working in Whiteley.

Mr de Peyer (Chairman of Highcliffe Community Action Group) echoed these concerns and reminded the Forum that, when the Wardens were established on the Southampton model, Members were advised not to ask Wardens to become involved in enforcement duties as it would affect their relationship with the community.

In response, the Head of Environment explained that he had taken the opportunity to review the work of the Wardens when the team was transferred to his responsibility following reorganisation of the Council in 2007. From this review, it was decided that it was no longer necessary for the Wardens to always patrol in pairs (which better reflected practices in similar Council jobs) and, as a consequence, this freed some spare capacity in the scheme. This review had enabled the scheme to be extended to Weeke. Furthermore, the service had also benefited from the availability of an additional vehicle.

He explained that the new enforcement duties were an attempt to catch offenders of repeated fly tipping and graffiti and it was hoped that this would be an effective extension of the previous arrangement, whereby Wardens were continually clearing fly tipping.

He also clarified that the Wardens had been called to Whiteley as a one-off and immediate response to deal with some particularly obscene graffiti and that they would remain mainly focused on Winnall, Stanmore, Highcliffe and, more recently, Weeke. He also clarified that the Wardens were likely to continue their work with young people in the community.

Following the recent resignation of three Wardens (for personal reasons, unrelated to the changes in the scheme), new staff had been appointed and were likely to be fully operational within five weeks.

Several Members regretted the change of the Wardens' uniform as they considered that this could make it more difficult for the public to identify them and because the local communities had been involved in the design of the original uniforms. In response, the Head of Environment stated that the change was purely because the older uniforms had become worn out and the change in colour from red to blue reflected the slight change in their duties.

The Forum also discussed the potential for confusion between the role of the Wardens and the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and the Accredited Community Support Officers (ACSOs). However, it was explained that there were frequent meetings between the three groups to share information, set priorities and avoid duplication of services.

During debate, Members were concerned about the number of abandoned shopping trolleys in Winchester. The Head of Environment explained that whilst Sainsburys and Iceland had contracts with a private company to collect their trolleys, there was no such arrangement in place at Tesco's. In response to concerns, he explained that the basis on which Wardens returned stray Tesco's trolleys was in the process of review.

At the conclusion of debate, the Forum agreed that the Wardens should continue to act as supporters of the local community and that any enforcement role they undertook should be secondary to this.

The Forum also considered the proposed service plan for the Wardens and agreed that this should include dealing with abandoned shopping trolleys and continuing their work with local communities.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Forum notes the progress and improvements to the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme following its last review in 2006.
2. That the Warden's proposed Service Plan include dealing with abandoned shopping trolleys and continuing their work with local communities.

6. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2009/10 TO 2013/14**

[\(Report WTF118 refers\)](#)

The Head of Finance introduced the Report and explained that it was based on the previous year's work of the Town Account Budget Informal Group.

Members discussed the potential of increasing income from the allotments but it was clarified that there was little scope for manoeuvre, given that they were a statutory requirement and the length of existing contracts.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Winchester Town Account Financial Strategy for 2009/10 – 2013/14 be approved.
2. That the 2007/08 outturn on the Winchester Town Account be noted.

7. **URBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS**

[\(Report WTF115 refers\)](#)

The Corporate Director (Policy) introduced the Report and highlighted that the Forum may wish to consider supporting Neighbourhood Plans from the 2009/10 Town Account. He clarified that this was in addition to the grant application (which came from the General Fund) considered in the following report (WTF117 refers).

During debate, the Forum noted the importance of providing continued support for Neighbourhood Plans, following on from their discussion

about the Winchester Neighbourhood Initiative. It was noted that, although this initiative had achieved a lot of good work, it had relied on the community worker to deliver results instead of building the capacity of residents to do more for themselves.

RESOLVED:

1. That progress to date on the Neighbourhood Plans for Stanmore and Winnall be noted.
2. That for the reasons set out in the report, Weeke be the next area that officers target for community planning in the town area.
3. That, when setting its budget for 2009/10, the Town Forum considers setting aside a sum for those neighbourhoods that are undertaking (or planning to undertake) a community plan.

8. **PROGRESS FOR TOWN FORUM ENDORSEMENT OF APPLICATIONS TO THE BIODIVERSITY, CARBON REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING SMALL GRANT STREAMS**
[\(Report WTF117 refers\)](#)

Councillors Higgins declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a member of the Winnall Community Plan Steering Group. Councillor Higgins left the room during the consideration of this item and neither spoke nor voted thereon.

Councillor Hicks declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in this item as a member of Winnall Forum and voted thereon.

Councillor Pines declared a personal (but not prejudicial interest) in this item as he was a personal trustee of the Winnall Community Centre at which the Winnall Community Plan Steering Group met. He spoke and voted thereon.

In supporting the recommendations as set out, the Forum also agreed that any grants given should be informally reported back to the Forum by the Chairman.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Forum supports the applications for a Community Planning small grant from the community planning steering groups in Stanmore and Winnall.
2. That the Head of Partnerships and Communications, in consultation with the Chairman of the Winchester Town Forum, be given delegated authority to sign a

declaration of support for community groups in the town area of Winchester wishing to bid for a Biodiversity, Carbon reduction or Community Planning Grant from the City Council and that these be informally reported back to the Forum by the Chairman.

9. **SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL – MINUTES OF LAST MEETING HELD 3 SEPTEMBER 2008**
[\(Report WTF119 refers\)](#)

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

10. **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN**
[\(Report PS 345 refers\)](#)

In considering their future work programme, the Forum noted that it was hoped that there would be a public meeting of the Forum, held in the Cathedral, to discuss the Winchester Cathedral Masterplan and that a representative of an allotment society would make a presentation to the next meeting, to be held 26 November 2008.

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 9.00pm

Chairman