

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

24 November 2010

Attendance:

Councillors:

Maynard (Chairman) (P)

Berry (P)

Collin (P)

Fall (P)

Hicks (P)

Higgins (P)

Hiscock (P)

Hutchison (P)

Love (P)

Mather (P)

Mitchell (P)

Nelmes (P)

Pearce (P)

Prowse (P)

Sanders (P)

Tait (P)

Thompson (P)

Witt (P)

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 October 2010, be approved and adopted.

2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No comments were received or comments made.

3. **UPDATE ON STANMORE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

(Oral Report)

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Reverend Mike Gardner, Vicar of St. Luke's, Stanmore with St. Mark's, Oliver's Battery.

Mr Gardner introduced the Stanmore Community Action Plan 2010 – 2015. The Plan contained a collection of views and aspirations of a cross section of the Stanmore community obtained through questionnaires and public meetings. He thanked all those involved in its production.

The comments and views had been crystallised into outcomes, which were supported by action points as set out in the Appendix to the Plan. Meetings of the Stanmore Combined Group would be held quarterly to monitor progress.

Present levels of engagement with the local community would be built upon and voluntary organisations involved through Winchester Area Community

Action (WACA). Local issues to be addressed included houses in multiple occupation and principally their use for students, residents parking and speeding traffic.

The Forum thanked Reverend Gardner for his presentation and noted that an action plan would be produced for Winnall, which had also been identified as one of the Council's priority areas.

4. **HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION – STANMORE**
(Report WTF151 refers)

The Committee noted that this Report had not been notified for inclusion within the statutory deadline. The Chairman agreed to accept this item onto the agenda, as an item requiring urgent consideration, in order that the matter could be progressed as soon as possible.

The Corporate Director (Operations) informed the Forum that the Report would not be submitted to Cabinet at this stage, but the views of the Town Forum were being sought as part of wider consultation on the feasibility of introducing an Additional Licensing Scheme. Cabinet would need sufficient evidence to justify that a mandatory licensing scheme was necessary.

The Assistant Director (Active Communities) stated that the Report also related to the issues identified in the Stanmore Community Action Plan.

Out of the 302 estimated Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Stanmore, approximately 100 were not occupied by students. Noise and parking issues associated with HMOs were the main concern in Stanmore. Initiatives to address these specific issues are planned and it will be important to evaluate their success.

There were two possible routes to address future numbers of HMOs and the quality of management of HMOs respectively. The first would be through the removal of permitted development rights using an Article 4 direction, which it was considered would require more evidence than was currently available to justify. The second would be the introduction of an additional licensing scheme. Some HMOs let to students were already controlled by a voluntary agreement through Winchester University, but the additional licensing scheme would bring the 100 HMOs outside of the voluntary agreement into the City Council's remit, to improve the quality of the management of the properties and to be more proactive.

Members commented that proposed changes in Housing Benefit rules could require more demand for HMOs.

Following debate, the Forum gave its support to the introduction of a mandatory licensing scheme and for its extension to other Town Wards.

The Assistant Director (Active Communities) added that, as a fee would be charged to landlords covered by the mandatory licensing scheme, it may be possible to make the scheme self financing.

RESOLVED

That the Town Forum wishes Cabinet to investigate and progress the suggested licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation throughout the City.

5. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT BUDGET 2011/12** (Report WTF148 refers)

The Forum supported a growth item of £2,000 in the 2011/12 budget to maintain and stock extra Grit Bins. The extra Grit Bins had been provided by the City Council from the £4,000 in the 2010/2011 budget for this purpose. The additional provision was over and above those provided directly by Hampshire County Council that had met their provision criteria.

There was also support for £10,000 to be provided in 2011/2012 to investigate the introduction of 20mph Speed Limits.

It was noted that a report would be submitted to the Town Forum on 26 January 2011 giving additional detail on the options for Open Spaces Play/Sport Capital Expenditure.

In considering other possible items of growth, the Forum supported the investigation of providing lighting to footpaths at North Walls Park, which provided a thoroughfare between the town centre and Abbots Barton/Hyde. In addition, support was also given to investigate the improved maintenance of the perimeter fence at St Faiths' Church Yard. The option of funding these two items from the Open Spaces Play/Sport Capital Expenditure would also be given consideration.

Following debate, the Forum did not support making savings from the Neighbourhood Wardens budget. It was noted that the possible saving related to the synergies that could be obtained from the Wardens undertaking multi-purpose tasks rather than a reduction in their core functions.

The Corporate Director (Operations) clarified that the Forum could choose to allocate additional funding to Community Grants from within the available budget, should it wish to do so. There was also no opportunity for secretarial support to be provided to the Safer Neighbourhood Panels, which remained a Police led function.

It was also agreed that information on the charges and revenue income for allotments be provided to all Forum members.

RESOLVED:

1. That the following budget issues be considered further by the Forum at its meeting on 26 January 2011, in advance of recommending a Town Account Budget to Cabinet:

(i) the investigation of providing lighting to footpaths at North Walls Park, and the improved maintenance of the perimeter fence at St Faiths' Church Yard.

(ii) the option of funding the above two items from the Open Spaces Play/Sport Capital Expenditure also be given consideration.

2. That Cabinet be informed that the Winchester Town Forum supports the growth bids as set out in appendix 2 of Report WTF148, but does not support the possible saving of £20,000 to £60,000 for Neighbourhood Wardens.

6. **UPDATE ON BLUEPRINT CONSULTATION**
(Oral Report)

RESOLVED:

That a special meeting of the Form to engage in the Blueprint consultation exercise be held at 6.30pm on Tuesday 7 December 2010.

7. **UPDATE ON THE WINCHESTER TOWN ACCESS PLAN CONSULTATION, THE SQUARE ENHANCEMENT, PARKING CHARGES REVIEW AND 20MPH ZONES**
(Oral Report)

The Head of Access and Infrastructure provided an update on the following items.

Winchester Town Access Plan Consultation

The consultation period would expire on 29 November 2010 and, to date, in excess of 60 responses had been received. There was support for establishing a Joint Member Steering Group to progress the Plan.

The Square Enhancement

The design proposals would be shared with Ward Members and exhibited on 29 November 2010 at the BID Offices, Parchment Street, Winchester and during December 2010 at the Guildhall, Winchester.

Parking Charges Review

Over 40 replies had been received in response to the review of parking charges advertisement of Order. These would be taken into consideration at the meeting of the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee to be held on 1 December 2010. A review of the resident's parking scheme would also be considered at the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee.

20mph Zones

The introduction of 20mph zones was being re-evaluated following staff changes and a budgetary review at Hampshire County Council. Additional data was being required on speed and casualties and this could be supplied from the Access Plan.

Members stated that there was considerable local support for 20mph zones. Compliments were also expressed to the officers involved in the consultation process that was being undertaken for the enhancements to The Square.

RESOLVED

That the update by the Head of Access and Infrastructure be noted.

8. **EMERGENCY PLANNING INFORMAL SCRITINY GROUP – UPDATE** (Report WTF150 refers)

The Committee noted that this Report had not been notified for inclusion within the statutory deadline. The Chairman agreed to accept this item onto the agenda, as an item requiring urgent consideration, in order that the matter could be progressed as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.50pm

Chairman