

**WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM****21 November 2012****Attendance:****Councillors:**

Collin (Chairman) (P)

E Berry  
J Berry (P)  
Green (P)  
Hiscock (P)  
Hutchison (P)  
Mather (P)  
Maynard (P)  
Nelmes (P)  
Pearce (P)

Pines (P)  
Prowse (P)  
Sanders (P)  
Scott (P)  
Tait (P)  
Tod (P)  
Weir (P)  
Witt (P)

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**1. MINUTES****RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 12 September 2012, be approved and adopted.

**2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no comments made or questions asked during public participation.

**3. PRESENTATION FROM THE WINCHESTER 2020 GROUP  
(Oral Report)**

The Forum welcomed Mr Ash and Mr Bulkeley who were part of the Winchester 2020 Group. The 2020 Group had been formed principally by the City of Winchester Trust and Winchester Action on Climate Change working together for a long term vision for Winchester.

They gave a presentation to the Forum which, in summary, set out the opportunity to create a framework or action plan to maximise the development potential and attract investment to the area around Winchester railway station. They suggested that this plan should not constrain future developers, but instead set out the objectives that the town would want, such as improved pedestrian and cycle access. It was suggested that such a long term plan

was likely to encourage development that would be an asset to the town and maximise the quality of the public realm.

The presentation highlighted the successes of similar action plans at Brighton and Sheffield city centres and that Southampton City Council was currently working on an action plan for their town centre.

The presentation also underlined the importance and opportunities of the station area. These included that half of all the major routes into Winchester passed the station, that it was an opportunity to improve links with bus companies, the effect of major housing development at Barton Farm, there were few landowners to deal with, the electrification of the railway and platform extensions at Waterloo (which were likely to further increase passengers numbers at Winchester) and that almost as many people used the High Street as the station. The Forum also noted the presenters' suggestion that the area was attractive to potential developers as it could accommodate nine storey high buildings with higher densities and the potential for mixed use schemes.

The Forum thanked the 2020 Group for their presentation and, during debate, Members recognised the benefits of an action plan for the station area. In response to questions, the Corporate Director (Operations) concurred, but at this stage it was unclear whether the action plan should be initiated by the Town Forum or Cabinet (as a recognition of its District-wide importance) and when it should be commissioned. He added that the Council was currently discussing options for the area (the Carfax site) with the County Council.

At the conclusion of debate, the Forum endorsed the approach suggested by the 2020 Group and requested that (in consultation with the Chairman) officers discuss with Cabinet the likely timetable and cost of an action plan. The Forum requested that the results of these discussions be reported to a future meeting, so that it could consider whether to make a budgetary commitment. In thanking the 2020 Group for their work, the Forum also invited them to highlight to the Forum any other areas which they considered would benefit from a similar action plan.

#### RESOLVED:

1. That the principle of an action plan to maximise the potential and attract investment to the Winchester railway station area, as suggested by the Winchester 2020 Group, be endorsed.
2. That officers be requested to consider the likely timetable and cost of such an action plan, in consultation with the Chairman and Cabinet.

#### 4. **COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH** (Oral Report)

The Forum welcomed to the meeting Sergeant Holland (Hampshire Constabulary). In summary, he explained that the scheme was now in its eighth year and was an opportunity to enable local communities to address concerns about speeding. He explained that tackling speeding was not a high priority for the police and therefore it was difficult for the Police to dedicate the budget and personnel that some communities expected.

The Community Speed Watch Programme (CSWP) cost approximately £4,000 per scheme and enabled local volunteers, working in groups, to use a laser speed detection device. Speeding drivers' details were checked by the Police and sent a letter advising them that the CSWP had recorded them breaking a speed limit. Drivers caught by the CSWP could not be issued fines or penalties. If the same driver was caught twice in a 12 month period, the second letter was hand delivered by the police. Although there was no official sanction if further letters were sent, Sergeant Holland explained that very few drivers were caught for a third time. Furthermore, the data collected by the CSWP helped the Police identify areas where speeding was a problem and could therefore redirect Police enforcement teams to locations previously monitored by the CSWP.

The Forum noted that the CSWP had been adopted by Selbourne, Clanfield, Twyford and Hursley villages (although it was suggested that the Hursley system was currently underused). Sergeant Holland explained that a successful CSWP required a large group of committed volunteers and that the only recurring cost was a nominal annual recalibration of the equipment.

It was suggested that, if volunteers could be found, the programme could be funded from the Town Account by money set aside for mobile speed advisory signs. In response to a concern regarding the benefits of mobile speed signs (MSS) and the CSWP, Sergeant Holland explained that the CSWP highlighted the offence with a personal letter, was easier to move from site to site and was better able to record data to identify speeding hotspots. Sergeant Holland advised that the effect of MSSs on driving behaviour usually lasted only a week.

During discussion, concerns were raised regarding the long term effectiveness of the programme and the potential for hostility towards the volunteers from drivers. A Member also raised concerns regarding the lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness of the CSWP.

Members also highlighted the need to get further advice on public liability insurance for the volunteers and the Corporate Director (Operations) underlined that the City Council did not have sufficient capacity to administer the scheme on behalf of the Forum.

At the conclusion of debate, the Forum endorsed the principle of the CSWP programme and that it would be timely if it could be introduced in conjunction with the new 20mph zones. The Forum therefore agreed that Ward Members should seek out volunteers for the scheme and liaise with Sergeant Holland. If sufficient volunteers could be found, the Forum delegated authority to officers to allocate any necessary funds from the Town Account (the money reserved for the MSSs) up to £4,000. However, the Forum noted that there could be a potential to share the equipment from a neighbouring Parish Council (in particular, Hursley). If insufficient volunteers were found, the Forum agreed that the funds should remain for the use of MSSs.

Councillor Tait requested that it be minuted that he did not agree with Forum's conclusion. He did not consider it appropriate that the Forum should spend public money without a fully reasoned report. He added that his greater concern was not the speed of traffic through Winchester, but the dangers posed to pedestrians and cyclists by its narrow pavements.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the principle of the Community Speed Watch Programme be endorsed.
2. That Town Forum Members be encouraged to seek out volunteers for the Scheme and liaise with the Police to move the scheme forward.
3. That, if necessary (following investigations regarding the possibility of sharing equipment with neighbouring authorities on perhaps a trial basis) officers be authorised to release £4,000 from the Town Account reserved for Mobile Speeding Signs to purchase the Community Speed Watch Equipment.

5. **HILLIER WAY STREET LIGHTING**  
(Report WTF182 refers)

Councillor Hiscock declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest as an officer of the Winchester Rugby Club which was affected by the scheme. He spoke and voted thereon.

**RESOLVED:**

That approval be given for the release of the funds under Financial Procedure Rule 6.4.

6. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT BUDGET 2013/14**  
(Report WTF181 refers)

During discussion, it was agreed that the Winchester Town Forum (Town Account) Informal Group be asked to consider how the Town Account could finance the action plan for the Winchester station area (as considered above).

In response to a question, the Corporate Director (Operations) explained that this work was not currently within the scope of the Head of Estates narrower role to maximise the Council's own assets, but could be led by other officers.

The Forum also received an oral update from Councillor Tait as Chairman of the Winchester Town Forum (St Maurices Covert) Informal Group and its likely draw on the Town Account to improve that area. The Corporate Director (Governance) agreed to distribute to the Forum the minutes of this informal group's first meeting.

The Forum also discussed the likely costs of the ash tree disease and agreed that a future meeting of the Forum should receive a report on the refurbishment of the town's sports pavilions which could be financed from the Open Space Fund.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Report be noted and that the only additional possible expenditure item identified by the Forum (in addition to those set out in the Report) related to the Action Plan for the Winchester station area.

7. **TOWN FORUM SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME**  
(Report WTF183 refers)

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the proposed detail of the Town Forum Small Grants Programme as set out in Section 2 of the Report be agreed.

2. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director (Active Communities) to determine and award small grants to applicants for the Town Forum Small Grants Programme, in consultation with the Town Account Grants Informal Group, as of the start of the 2013/14 financial year subject to approval of the Small Grants budget as part of the Town Forum's wider budget planning process.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 9.30pm.

Chairman