

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

Wednesday, 12 September 2018

Attendance:

Councillors

Weir (Chairman)

Scott
Ashton
Berry
Green
Hiscock
Hutchison

Learney
Mather
Murphy
Thompson
Tod

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

None

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

None

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Becker and Burns

1. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

Councillor Ashton declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item 5 - KGV Consultation Event, due to his wife's association with the charity "Allegra's Ambition"

Councillors Tod and Hiscock also declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item 5 - KGV Consultation Event, due to them being County Councillors as the County Council had had provided a grant to the Boxing Club which was located within the site.

Councillors Tod and Hiscock declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item 7 - Winchester Town Area Traffic Study due to them being County Councillors. Councillor Tod was also a member of the County Council Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee.

2. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair made the following announcements:

Winchester District Local Plan Part 2. The Chairman encouraged all members to attend a briefing on Monday 24 September regarding the Local Plan process which would also allow a date to be agreed for a Town Forum focused event on the process to take place in either October or November 2018.

Night Bus. The Chairman advised that new timetables had been published by Stagecoach for the No 1 and No 5 routes. The Town Forum will no longer fund the Night Bus on these routes as they have been brought into Stagecoach's viable routes, however, the Forum will continue to fund the No 3 route on specified evenings.

3. **MINUTES**

Regarding the minutes of the previous meeting held on the Wednesday 13 June 2018, ref Item 4 (iii), the Chairman wished to correct the minute. The Chairman hadn't attended the presentation referred to in the minute but she had written to the University but, to date, had not received a response.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the amendment above, the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 13 June 2018 be approved and adopted.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Patrick Davies addressed the Forum regarding Agenda Item 7 - Winchester Town Area Traffic Study. (Report WTF264 refers). Mr Davies raised a number of points essentially concerned with the timing, linkage and inter-dependencies of this study to major developments and projects in the town area, for example, at Station Approach, Central Winchester Regeneration and the new Leisure Centre. He felt that these projects were dependant on the outcome of the study and therefore rational decisions could not be made until that time.

Mr Ian Tait raised a number of points for the Forum's consideration. In particular, he wished to raise the following points: He was concerned that he felt the Disabled Toilet in the Brookes Centre had been out of use for some time and wished to see it reopened as soon as possible. Mr Tait felt that the Holger Lönze statue was poorly signed and asked if this could be reviewed. Regarding the Casson block, he felt that the improvements made here had been a success and urged members to examine what else could be done in this area. Finally he looked forward to seeing the proposals regarding St Maurice's Covert and wished to record the efforts of Andrew Murphy (Neighbourhood Services Officer) for his ongoing involvement in the project. Finally, he urged the Forum to address the issues of affordable and inclusive housing in the City.

The Chair thanked both public speakers for their contributions.

5. **KGV CONSULTATION EVENT**

The Forum received a presentation from the Head of Landscape & Open Spaces and the Recreational Spaces Officer, regarding the Consultation Event that had taken place on Tuesday 17 July 2018. (A copy of the presentation is available on the Council's website).

Members welcomed the presentation and thanked officers for their work to date on the project. A number of questions and comments were made and were responded to as set out below:

There was a concern over the amount of dog mess on the site, particularly near the entrance. In response, it was clarified that there are a number of bins on site however the siting of them near the entrance would be reviewed.

Clarification was requested regarding the proposal for 20 parking spaces, whether that number had been finalised and what was the response to that figure at the consultation event. Additional comments were made that a safe and manageable number of spaces was important. Officers advised that the allocation of 20 spaces has been part of the engagement event and the aim was to formalise existing parking arrangements by allowing 20 spaces to be formalised. This was considered to be an appropriate number as it allowed users such as the Girls football club, sufficient spaces for essential parking, whilst restricting wider parking. A recent event had shown that it worked extremely well, for example when managed by the Girls football club.

Officers were asked whether the Access Arrangements piece of work identified for Phase 3, could be brought forward to complement the earlier changes to parking. In addition, it was suggested that moving the green waste bins could help with access. Officers responded that they would be happy to look for any opportunities or quick wins in this area.

Some members of the Forum, whilst welcoming the proposals, expressed some concern that they felt improvements could be made through a more joined-up master planning approach with the Leisure Centre project and asked questions regarding the integration and linkages between the two projects. Officers reassured members that they have been working closely with colleagues in the Leisure Centre (Project) Team and felt that a joined-up approach is being achieved. Members were also advised that the Leisure Centre Design Framework did encompass this area.

A number of questions were asked regarding the requirement for a Pavilion, the budget for the Pavilion Architects and whether it was inevitable that there was to be a recurring charge made to the Town Forum, for example, for a proper management plan. Officers advised that there was a clear need for a pavilion stated by users and residents and agreed to report back at a future meeting of the Forum.

A general question was asked regarding the Council's approach to commercial organisations using open spaces for free.

Officers were advised that some residents had reported to members that the survey letter had been received without a return envelope included. Officers apologised and confirmed the alternatives were available such as email or telephone.

The forum congratulated officers on the work undertaken to date and the ambition of the future plans whilst acknowledging the challenge of increasing the use of the site, whilst also improving the environmental and biodiversity elements of the site.

6. **ST MAURICE'S COVERT**

(Cllr Ashton left the meeting during this item)

The Forum received a presentation from the Project Leader at ScottWhitby Studio which provided an update to the St Maurice's Covert Enhancement Strategy.

The following comments and questions from members of the Forum were made and responded to.

Following a question regarding historic gravestones within the site, it was confirmed that there were no human remains on the site.

The Forum was advised that in relation to previous concerns from Hampshire Police, the revised scheme did now have Hampshire Police support.

Comments were raised regarding the impact to the Covert area from Debenhams and the Mercure Hotel and whether these organisations were fully engaged with the project. It was confirmed that both organisations were.

The Chair on behalf of the Forum thanked the Project Leader at ScottWhitby Studio for the presentation and looked forward to further developments. She believed the project had the full support of the Forum.

7. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PLANNING 2019/20**

(WTF263)

The Finance Manager (Strategic Finance) provided the Forum with an update of the current financial position of the Winchester Town Account and financial projections over the medium and long-term. The key points covered in the update included; Council Tax referendum limits, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts and Community Grants.

Members discussed the issue and processes concerned with the Community Infrastructure Levy. Comments were made that the existing process could be improved. Particular issues identified were in specifying project costs, implementation of suggestions and general knowledge of the scheme, it was also suggested whether a “guidelines of costs” document could be produced. Officers advised that a report was being prepared for a future Cabinet meeting with regard to a specific resource being allocated to manage the CIL process.

Members asked for a further update on CIL following the Cabinet meeting.

Resolved:

1. That the Town Forum notes the financial projections in Appendix A and agrees the budget timetable for 2019/20.

8. **PROGRESS ON THE WINCHESTER TOWN AREA TRAFFIC AND MOVEMENT STUDY**

(WTF264)

The Corporate Head of Regulatory and Sam Clark, Transport Officer at Hampshire County Council provided the Forum with an update on the progress on the City of Winchester Movement Strategy and outlined the timetable for further work leading to the adoption of a strategy in early 2019.

Members were advised that the Strategy has been subject to consultation including a public consultation which attracted more than 1300 responses, a phone survey of residents, stakeholder workshops, and member seminar. Further consultation on a draft Strategy was planned in the autumn and would include a Member and parish councils briefing. Once the modelling was completed, a draft strategy with proposed high-level options was to be produced and an open consultation would be held in the autumn. A briefing for Members beforehand was to be provided and officers were also planning to organise a drop-in session for parish councils. The Strategy was intended to improve the way Winchester worked in transport terms which would provide an opportunity for a range of environmental benefits including the city’s public realm and air quality.

Members made a number of comments relating to future growth and existing strategic projects and whether these were built into the modelling work. Officers advised that the modelling was looking to 2031 in order to encompass future growth. With regards to large strategic projects such as Central Winchester Regeneration, the Forum was advised that County and City Council officers were working together collaboratively and that information coming forward through the major projects was informing the development of the Movement Strategy and vice-versa.

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

Resolved

1. That the Town Forum notes the contents of the report

9. **EXEMPT BUSINESS: TO CONSIDER WHETHER IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CASE THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN MAINTAINING THE EXEMPTION OUTWEIGHS THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN DISCLOSING THE INFORMATION.**

10. **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CONTRACT DECISION MAKING (EXEMPT REPORT)**

(CAB3044)

The report was introduced by the Strategic Director. The report sought a decision from Cabinet on the procurement of services for the collection of household waste, recycling collections, maintenance of grounds, litter collection and associated services from 1 October 2019. The Strategic Director gave a summary of the report and advised Members that the issue had already been discussed at the recent meeting of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and was planned to go to Cabinet later this month.

Members raised a variety of local issues including weed spraying, the upkeep of roundabouts and reservations, street cleaning (specifically gulley cleaning), the cleaning of the High St and general points around the reporting of issues for resolution.

The Strategic Director responded to the points from Members. Whilst acknowledging the points Members raised, contracts of this nature contained many variables that could be difficult to plan for, for example, extremes in weather. It is vital that any operational issues continued to be reported to the Client team, who were keen to make improvements to their own monitoring systems.

Regarding Members' comments concerning proposals for changes to the contract specification and specific issues with identified streets, the Strategic Director advised that Members have the opportunity to put these forward as part of the current decision-making process.

Members then discussed how the Forum could be involved in developing the contract specification. Members agreed to form a small working party which will meet once before Christmas 2018 and once more before the end of the municipal year. The Chair would coordinate the setting up of this group and will invite the Strategic Director to attend.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.55 pm

Chairman