

## **WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM**

**Thursday, 17 January 2019**

Attendance:

Councillors

Weir (Chairman)

Scott  
Becker  
Burns  
Hiscock  
Hutchison

Learney  
Mather  
Murphy  
Thompson  
Tod

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Ashton, Berry and Green

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### 1. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Learney and Weir declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in relation to report WTF267 (Town Account Budget 2019/20). This was due to them being members of the Weeke Social Club and related to the application for CIL funding by the Weeke Community Centre referenced in Appendix C of the report.

Councillors Hiscock and Tod declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in relation to report WTF267 (Town Account Budget 2019/20) due to their role as a Hampshire County Councillor.

### 2. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman updated the Forum regarding the River Park Leisure Centre Informal Policy Group (IPG). She advised that she was in contact with Officers and an update would be provided to the Forum in due course.

### 3. **MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 14 November 2018 be approved and adopted.

### 4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Keith Leaman, John Beveridge and John Hearn, on behalf of the City of Winchester Trust (CWT) addressed the Forum in respect of their document “A Vision for the Future of Winchester”.

In summary, the three representatives gave a detailed presentation covering a range of issues including housing and parking; retail sector; changing nature of the workplace and the role of heritage and its contribution to the economy. The intention of the document was to guide the planning process and to act as a reference document to any future development proposals within the Winchester town area.

Members asked a number of questions on issues raised within the presentation which were responded to where appropriate. Several Members believed that it would be of value if the Vision document could be brought back to the Forum at a later date which the chair agreed to consider.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of the City Of Winchester Trust for their presentation and for their responses.

Ian Tait raised a number of points for the Forum’s consideration. In particular, he wished to raise the following: He was concerned that the Disabled Toilet in the Brookes Centre continued to be out of use. Mr Tait also felt that the Holger Lönze statue was poorly signed and overlooked and asked if this could be reviewed. Finally, he raised the issue regarding broken “A” Boards in St Thomas St, Little Minster St and Parchment St. He urged the Council to work with the BID to have these repaired as quickly as possible and also to do more to support businesses in “secondary locations”.

The Chairman thanked Mr Tait for his comments and confirmed that these were points that could be looked into.

## 5. **TOWN ACCOUNT BUDGET FOR 2019/20**

The Forum gave consideration to the report of the Finance Manager (Strategic Finance) which updated Members with the current financial projections for the Town Account for the period 2018/19 to 2026/27 and financial sensitivities. The report was the last stage of the consultation process in developing a final budget. Members’ attention was drawn to the following:

- the overall budget recommendations as shown in Appendix A.
- that the Town precept for 2019/20 (Band D) was forecast to be £69.19, a 3% increase on 2018/19.
- that Appendix C contained an update on three CIL Funding Applications, one, relating to road widening works at Weeke Community Centre, was recommended for approval in principle.
- that the Town Forum income was assumed to increase by an inflationary level of 2.4%.

- that Officers planned to undertake a review of sports hire and cemetery charges in 2019/20 with proposals coming forward in due course.
- that in relation to the grants budget and following the recent grants process review, it was proposed to reduce this budget item from £60,000 per annum to £27,000 per annum.
- that a review of all play area improvements and timings would take place in 2019 which would aim to identify funding which would feed into a future budget setting process.

Members asked a number of questions which were responded to as follows:

- A number of points were made regarding the grants budget and an update was provided following a recent meeting of the Town Forum Finance Group. Overall, Members felt it was important to maintain the grants budget at its current level. It was further proposed and seconded to recommend that the budget was restored to £60,000. This proposal was agreed.
- Regarding the budget for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), reference paragraph 11.14 (v). Members questioned why the budget appeared to be reducing from £100,000 in 2018/19 to £50,000 in 2019/20. It was explained that the previously agreed proposal was that £50,000 per annum be allocated into the Town budget to allow for the requirements of the programme. The 2018/19, £100,000 figure included a £50,000 carry forward from 2017/18.
- The CIL funding application from Winchester Lido Sports Association shown in Appendix C was raised. Following discussion, it was felt that the applicant and those Members supporting the application should initially discuss the requirements with officers from the Community Grants team.

RESOLVED:

**That it be recommended to Cabinet:**

1. that the draft budget for 2019/20 and the indicative projections for the strategy period are noted;
2. that the Council Tax precept for the Town area be increased by 3% (£2.02) to £69.19 for 2019/20;
3. that the Forum approved, in principle, CIL funds of up to £50,000 for road widening works at Weeke Community Centre;
4. that the Forum approved the financial strategy.

5. that the Forum makes recommendations to Cabinet on the budget to be set for the Winchester Town area for 2019/20 and

6. that the grants budget be restored to its previous level of £60,000 for 2019/20

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 7.35 pm

Chairman