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THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 March 2019

Attendance:

Councillors
Learney (Chairman)

Stallard
Clear
Evans
Gemmell
McLean

Thompson
Tod
Weston
Lumby

Deputy Members:

Councillor Berry

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Horrill (Leader), Griffiths (Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing), Hutchison and Miller (Portfolio Holder for Estates)

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Brook (Portfolio Holder for Built Environment)

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Cunningham

1. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Stallard and Tod both declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in relation to various matters on the agenda due to their role as County Councillors having been involved in discussions thereon.

In addition, Councillor Stallard stated that her interest was also due to her role as HCC Executive Member involved in decision making.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2019, be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Paul Spencer (Executive Director, Business Improvement District (BID)) and Mark Mills-Goodlet (Hampshire Chamber of Commerce) addressed the Committee with regard to Item 5 (Station Approach) below and David Cox addressed the Committee with regard to Item 6 (Movement Strategy). In addition, Councillor Hutchison addressed the Committee on both Items 5 and 6. A summary of their comments are set out under the relevant item below.

4. **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

(Report OS215 refers)

Councillor Griffiths introduced the report and its appendices, highlighted particular outcomes of the partnership from the previous 12 months and drew attention to key priorities and challenges going forward.

The Committee were reminded of their role in the review and scrutiny of the decisions and work carried out by the Community Safety Partnership which for 2018/19 focussed on three priority categories: Domestic Violence and Abuse, Protecting Vulnerable People and Tackling Anti Social Behaviour, in urban and rural areas.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Chief Inspector Mark Lynch, Hampshire Constabulary, who outlined the Crime Summary, as set out in Appendix 2 of the Report. Where requested, he provided updates to the Committee and together with the Portfolio Holder and officers they responded to detailed questions.

In summary, the following matters were raised by the Committee:

- (i) Flytipping – A significant 64% reduction in reported cases was reported;
- (ii) Approval received for the Housing Team to appoint a Health Support Worker;
- (iii) Working in collaboration with other local authorities and the Police Crime Commissioner the CSP is working to tackle the issues related to the growth in the street community;
- (iv) Serious violence incidents remained low with a slight rise reported in burglary and car crime which were currently a priority;
- (v) Measures were being taken with partners, businesses and the BID to reduce levels of Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) in the Town Centre and support vulnerable people (i.e. rough sleepers etc) in securing suitable housing accommodation to meet their needs. It was noted that all information received regarding the safeguarding of vulnerable people should be reported directly to the Police for an effective response;
- (vi) Winchester Community Courts – It was reported that Winchester was one of two other authorities pioneering this system which had been

launched during early December 2018. The Winchester Community Courts sought to provide intervention at an early stage for low level offences (mainly ASB). The Court comprised of a panel of trained young people who would assess the offence and interview the perpetrator in order to reach a satisfactory conclusion to the case (i.e. community work etc). Feedback provided since its commencement suggested this process was successful and worthwhile;

- (vii) Boomtown – The number of offences from last year’s event had reduced from that in previous years and it was reported that there had been no adverse impact from the 2018 event on the local community; and
- (viii) Reporting of community issues – It was noted that reporting incidents via the 101 phone service was proving difficult due to long wait times, therefore it was suggested that the online reporting tool be used.

A community engagement plan had been created and effective ways of keeping the public informed were being established (i.e. facebook, twitter and other forms of social media). The Police continued to speak to communities and Parish Council’s and supports one formal PACT (Police and Communities Together) meeting on an annual basis, with the flexibility that where any significant concerns be raised by local residents direct to the Police which would be addressed as a separate matter. The Police held management meetings on a daily basis to regularly review issues as and when they arise.

At the conclusion of debate, the Committee noted the changes to the operation of the 101 system, reporting of crime and community engagement going forward.

In summing up, the Chairman stated that the Committee had raised questions in relation to street lighting at night, changes to patterns of drug crime, the increase of burglary and weapon offences and welcomed the appointment of a mental health support worker, the innovative approach taken on spearheading the Winchester Community Courts and the improvements in engagement with Parish Council’s.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing have regard to the matters raised by the Committee, as set out above.

5. **STATION APPROACH - OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS (LESS EXEMPT APPENDICES)**

(Report OS225 refers and Presentation)

Councillor Miller introduced the report and the presentation provided by the Head of Programme which provided an update on the scheme and set out the Outline Business Case and the next steps to be taken for the Station Approach project.

The Committee received a presentation on the progress of the scheme to date which was available to view on the Council's [website](#).

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the following consultants who were in attendance to provide further advice regarding the design, delivery, economic, financial and commercial aspects of the project

- Alex Lifschutz - Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands (LDS)
- Mark Rymell – Citicentric
- William McWilliams - Grant Thornton
- Chris Cave - Vail Williams
- Simon Ward - Propernomics

In summary, Mr Spencer raised the following points:

- Winchester BID fully supports the Station Approach and Carfax scheme – it provides a fantastic opportunity for the Town. Excited and keen to see the scheme progress;
- Sends a positive message that Winchester can deliver development for the benefit of the local economy;
- Previously expressed the need for improved and adequate office space;
- The scheme will attract businesses, achieve high quality employment and enhance the public realm area of Station Road and Station Hill; and
- As previously suggested, businesses looking for Grade A office space in Winchester would also seek to secure car parking provision on site, despite central location and nearby public transport links of the scheme.

In summary, Mr Mills-Goodlet raised the following points:

- The project provides a significant improvement for the economic benefit of Winchester, without which would result in businesses vacating the City due to the high demand and need for centrally based Grade A office space;
- He suggested that the Council should consider the competition it faced for space in other similar sized locations;
- Businesses would expect the provision of parking, despite the scheme's close proximity to the train station; and
- The Chamber confirmed that they had a list of Members that wish to become tenants at this scheme.

In summary, Councillor Hutchison raised the following points:

- Supports the scheme and the design proposals;
- Concerned to see the scheme progressed to the submission of an outline planning application at this stage;
- Recognised the support for the public realm but suggested that improvements highlighted by various parties had not been resolved i.e. access issues for pedestrians and cyclists which were matters she considered were fundamental to the scheme and loss of trees without scope to mitigate this loss;

- Detailed costings for additional wider elements of the public realm had been requested which remained outstanding, together with the provision of details regarding the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) funding contribution; and
- Consultation event took place during February 2019 - therefore considered this report to be premature as response to the comments made had not been adequately addressed or embedded into the scheme as a whole.

The Strategic Director: Place clarified that significant engagement had taken place regarding the scheme to date which had included vast input by the Design Team and the Advisory Panel comprising of Winchester BID, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, City of Winchester Trust, Hampshire County Council and the Council's Advisors, Councillors and the Project Team.

The Head of Programme advised that the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) Board were due to meet during the following week to make a final decision on the award of £5m funding. He emphasised that if awarded, the timetable imposed by the LEP for grant spend was by 31 March 2021. In addition, the Head of Programme confirmed that the full consultation report, including response to the recent local consultation events, would form part of the outline planning application.

The Committee discussed the content of the report in detail and the Portfolio Holder, together with the consultants and officers present, responded to Members' questions in relation to the following matters, as summarised below:

- Technical discussions were on going with South Western Railway, Network Rail and Hampshire County Council to assess key points such as pick up and drop off points and cyclist parking and access. Alex Lifschutz highlighted that matters such as cycle issues, design and style and the use of materials would all be addressed within the detailed Reserved Matters application to follow;
- In respect of the public realm and landscaping, the Head of Programme clarified that the trees located within the car parks had been assessed and were deemed to be of low amenity quality. These trees would be replaced with new planting on street frontages where possible;
- Car Parking balance had been assessed and had reduced from initial levels. It was recognised that an element of car parking was required on site in order to make the scheme viable and secure rental levels. A minimum of 156 cycle spaces are proposed and it was considered that this, and proximity to the station and bus stops, would encourage workers to use other modes of transport;
- Outline Planning Permission – The Head of Programme clarified that this was critical in order to spend the LEP funding by the March 2021 deadline. In order to ensure substantial controls were in place as part of any outline planning consent, it was confirmed that the use, access, height and mass, as well as principles of set backs within the building, would all be part of any approval of the outline planning application., In addition, it was

emphasised that the selection of the right developer for the scheme was a key factor;

- Assurances that the rents proposed were achievable, particularly as a result of Brexit? – Chris Cave clarified that development and engagement work was on going. However, discussions with prospective tenants were indicative that rents were set at an achievable level deemed appropriate for such a high quality proposal in this central location.
- The Head of Programme confirmed that the Outline Business Case demonstrated that the scheme was commercially viable;
- Strategic Case - The Head of Programme clarified that the scheme would generate in excess of 2,000 jobs, comprising of 1,000 office and retail positions, an additional 400 indirect roles and 640 construction jobs;
- Income Strip - Mark Rymell highlighted that further work regarding implication and risk would be explored going forward; and
- Management Case – In response to questions regarding the timing of development, the Head of Programme clarified that a back stop would be part of any land transfer agreement. Options were being explored to ensure this could be accommodated.

The Committee moved into exempt session to discuss the contents of the exempt appendices, before returning to open session to consider the report's recommendations.

At the conclusion of debate, in summing up, the Chairman made the following statement:

That the Committee welcomed the potential job creation, supported the principle of development and recognised that the public realm was vitally important to the scheme.

The Committee requested to see a developed response to the recent public engagement and more information of what controls will be used to develop the scheme.

Concerns were expressed regarding the viability of the scheme, which the Committee considered would need further testing as the scheme progressed

The Committee agreed that the scheme be moved forward to obtain the outline planning permission required in order to secure Local Economic Partnership (LEP) funding and to further test viability.

In addition, it was noted that the Committee supported a leasehold disposal. .

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder note the comments raised by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out above, to be drawn to the attention of Cabinet (Station Approach) Committee,

6. **CITY OF WINCHESTER MOVEMENT STRATEGY**

(Report CAB3140 refers and Presentation)

Councillor Horrill introduced the report on behalf of Councillor Warwick, Portfolio Holder for Environment and highlighted that in 2017, the Council resolved to work together with Hampshire County Council on a Strategy to assess the movement of all traffic around the City over the next 20-40 year period.

In summary, Mr Cox considered that evidence provided a strong mandate to be bold and made reference to linking Winnall through the Kingsworthy link. He stated that those leaving Southampton would be using the M3 and M34 and queried the expectations for junction 9 in the future.

In summary, Councillor Hutchison stated that she welcomed the report and supported the references to the walking and cycling infrastructure and was aware of a number of people who would wish to participate in this process.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Andy Shaw, Transport Planner, Hampshire County Council, who together with the Leader and the Corporate Head of Regulatory, responded to Members questions thereon.

To address the points raised during public participation, Mr Shaw confirmed that it was hoped that Highways England would provide a solution to the junction 9 issue going forward. However, this was out of the control of Hampshire County Council but was being closely monitored.

The Committee received a presentation by the Corporate Head of Regulatory outlining the need for a Movement Strategy in Winchester and the progress with the development of the Strategy which was available to view on the Council's [website](#).

Councillor Horrill advised the Committee that a wide range of data had been collected from various sources and consultations carried out which had been collated to feed into the Strategy. Reference was made to the three key priorities: reducing city centre traffic; supporting healthier lifestyles and supporting sustainable growth used to underpin the over-arching vision of the Strategy. Councillor Horrill clarified that the Council had committed £500,000 which had been set aside to enable this piece of work and an application to bid for M3 LEP funding would be submitted, along with establishing other funding streams.

In conclusion, the Committee supported the document and in addition, also welcomed the opportunity this provided to rural areas to address movement across the District.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee welcomed and supported the Strategy for endorsement; and
2. That no matters of significance be drawn to the attention of Cabinet.

7. **ESTABLISHING THE WINCHESTER HOUSING COMPANY (LESS EXEMPT APPENDICES)**

(Report OS226 refers)

The Chairman stated that the report had been considered at Cabinet (Housing) Committee earlier during the day and would be considered further by Cabinet at its meeting on 25 March 2019.

Councillor Horrill introduced the report which provided an outline on the Council's formation of a Housing Company. The Council had been in dialogue with other authorities who had been through the process to establish an understanding from their experience and proposals were for a straightforward model of a housing company to be developed. It was recognised that there was further work, including material from the Government to process and preparatory work to undertake in order to finalise details during the Summer.

The Strategic Director: Services (Interim) advised that the proposal would enable the Council to develop alternative housing tenures which could not currently be provided within the Housing Revenue Account.

In response to questions from Members, the Strategic Director: Services (Interim) stated that the Council was committed to providing housing across the District. The importance of providing a level of security and support that does not exist for many privately rented tenants was recognised and it was noted that the approach used to establish risk through the process used high value scenarios in order to achieve assurance on the model.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder note the comments raised by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee as follows:

1. That the Committee welcomed and supported the report;
2. That the Committee look forward to clarification of governance; and
3. That no matters of significance be drawn to the attention of Cabinet

8. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
9	Station Approach – Outline Business Case and Associated Matters (exempt appendices)) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)
10	Establishing the Winchester Housing Company (exempt appendices)) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)
) Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings. (Para 5 Schedule 12A refers)

9. **STATION APPROACH - OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS (EXEMPT APPENDICES)**

(Report OS225 refers)

The Committee considered the contents of the exempt appendices to the report which included commercially sensitive information regarding the Economic, Financial and Commercial Appraisals as part of the Outline Business Case for Station Approach (detail in exempt minute).

Mark Rymell (Citicentric) remained in the room during the exempt discussion to provide response to any questions relating to the exempt appendices.

Mark Rymell provided a summary of the economic appraisal prepared by Grant Thornton which indicated that the scheme would be very beneficial in terms of employment. It was considered that there was a difference between rent previously achieved and what could be achievable in a high quality new scheme and that the rental levels proposed were robust based on comparables in similar urban areas.

The Head of Programme confirmed that MACE had advised that the levels of costing for the scheme were within the right range of costs for a high quality scheme of this type.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the exempt appendices be noted.

10. **ESTABLISHING THE WINCHESTER HOUSING COMPANY (EXEMPT APPENDICES)**

(Report OS226 refers)

The Committee considered the contents of the exempt appendices to the report which included commercially sensitive information regarding the business plan, in addition to legal advice.

RESOLVED:

That the information contained in the exempt appendices be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 10.45 pm

Chairman