

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

Wednesday, 11 September 2019

Attendance:

Councillors

Becker (Chairperson)

Gottlieb
Craske
Ferguson
Green
Hiscock
Hutchison

Mather
Murphy
Thompson
Tod
Weir

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Porter, Cabinet Member for Built Environment & Wellbeing

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Learney and Scott

1. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Hiscock and Tod declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest due to their role as Hampshire County Councillors.

Councillor Gottlieb asked that the minutes record that he has a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to St Clements Surgery and that he was a deputy member of the Councils Planning Committee, however he did not believe that these interests related directly to any agenda item of this evenings meeting.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 12 June 2019 be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Representatives from the 6th Winchester (Abbotts Barton & Hyde) Scout Group addressed the Forum regarding a Community Infrastructure Levy application for their "Barn" project. The representatives of the group provided the Forum with some background to the project, the key aspects of the proposal, the progress

made to date, the links with the Council's Strategies and an overview of the consultations with the community and the Council already undertaken.

The Chairperson thanked the speakers for their presentation and Members asked a number of questions regarding it. In addition, Members of the Forum suggested that Officers at the City Council and the County Council may be able to advise and support the group regarding alternative sources of funding in addition to the Community Infrastructure Levy fund.

Mr Slinn and Mr Jobson provided the Forum with a presentation regarding the Movement Strategy. Their presentation made a number of points and concluded, in their opinion, that additional evidence and further modelling was required. In order to achieve this, Mr Slinn and Mr Jobson proposed that it may be necessary to commission external consultants for this work.

The Chairperson thanked the speakers for their presentation and Members asked a number of questions regarding it. The speakers were advised that the Movement Strategy had been scrutinised and tested through the City Councils and the County Councils Scrutiny and Cabinet meetings in March and April 2019 and an action plan had been developed. In addition, Councillor Murphy, Cabinet Member for Environment advised that the Movement Strategy project was entering its "feasibility" stage and that much of the evidence referred to in the presentation would come through as part of that stage.

Teresa Skelton addressed the Forum regarding the minutes of the Town Forum held on the 12 June 2019. Ms Skelton felt that those minutes didn't accurately reflect her contribution at that meeting when she spoke to Members regarding Allyene House. Ms Skelton advised the Forum that at the previous meeting she had wanted to highlight what she saw as the lack of involvement and engagement of her local Member of Parliament and the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Chairperson thanked Ms Skelton for raising the matter with the Forum and confirmed that her comments would be recorded within the minutes of this meeting.

4. **HERITAGE ACTION ZONE BID (VERBAL UPDATE & PRESENTATION)**

Councillor Weir, Cabinet Member for Local Economy advised the Forum that the Council had bid for funding for a High Street Heritage Action Zone. The purpose of the Heritage Action Zone status was to strengthen Winchester as an international cultural and heritage location and a "Weekend destination of choice".

Members asked a number of questions regarding the bid and the Heritage Action Zone status. A further update would be provided that would give more information regarding the funding, the benefits and associated timings once the status of the bid was known.

5. **WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM - GRANT ALLOCATION PROPOSAL**

(Report: WTF276)

The Funding and Development Officer and Councillor Weir introduced the report and advised that it was proposed to create a Winchester Town Fund as a specific grant fund to be accessed through the Council's crowd funding platform.

The Forum, at its meeting of the 17 January 2019 agreed a number of grants which had left £33,000 of the Winchester Town Forum grant budget uncommitted for this financial year. It was proposed that the new crowd funding platform would provide a process for funding specific projects that met outcomes agreed by the Town Forum and would also provide valuable support to organisations applying. The Forum was advised that crowd funding is used by a number of other local authorities and has a number of benefits for the Council and local organisations. Crowd funding suppliers were currently being sourced and it was hoped to have a supplier agreed shortly.

Members welcomed the report and were pleased to see that progress was being made. Members asked a number of questions regarding the types of use for the fund, the sizes of the grants available and the available support to organisations applying.

RESOLVED:

That Winchester Town Forum approve:

- a) The creation of a Town Fund to be made available via the Council's crowd funding platform.
- b) The Town Fund delivery outcomes of Inclusion, Environment and Well-being, as set out in the Detailed Proposals section, against which grant funding applications are to be assessed.
- c) A match funding limit per project submitted on the crowd funding platform for the Town Fund of 50% or £2,000 whichever is the less.
- d) The match funding contribution from the Town Fund would only be offered when the project has secured, from the public investment pledges, a value of 25% of the target total project expenditure.
- e) The option to revise or withdraw the grant offer of match funding contribution if the organisation fund raising for the project fails to reach its stated target expenditure.
- f) That one project per organisation in a single financial year is eligible for funding through the Town Fund.
- g) That authority is delegated to Corporate Head of Service for Engagement to approve grant allocation and to enter into grant agreement, monitor and in circumstances where reasonable

and grant offer criteria and conditions are not met to withdraw from the funding arrangement.

6. **ST MAURICE'S COVERT - UPDATE**

(Report: WTF274)

The Corporate Head of Regulatory introduced the item and advised the Forum that this report followed from Cabinet report, ref CAB3812. Cabinet at its meeting on the 28 August 2019 had agreed to increase the budget for these works to £225,000. The purpose of this paper was to provide the Forum with an update on the progress to the improvement scheme.

Members raised a number of questions regarding the costs, the specification and the start time and sought reassurance regarding the quotes obtained. Officers advised that the costs had been examined carefully, and that the detailed specification had been reviewed by the Town Forum High Street Informal group. In terms of start dates it was envisaged that works would start early in 2020. The Forum was advised that a further meeting of the steering group would be arranged shortly.

RESOLVED:

1. The Forum noted progress on the St. Maurice's Covert improvement scheme.

7. **LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**

(Report: CAB3191)

The Strategic Director and Councillor Porter, Cabinet Member for Built Environment and Wellbeing introduced the report which was also due to be presented to Cabinet on the 18 September 2019. The report provided the Forum with a programme for moving forward with Local Plan 2036 and with a particular focus on how the Council would engage with communities and stakeholders across the District.

The Report recognised the role of the Forum and its input into the local plan process. To achieve this, it was suggested that the "Vision for Winchester" document be updated given the importance of this to express a range of local aspirations across the WTF area and surroundings which could be used to inform the local plan, where relevant.

To fund an update of the Vision, the report proposed that a budget of £50,000 would be provided from the existing General Fund Local Plan budget and £25,000 from the Town Forum earmarked reserve.

Members debated the proposal and were supportive of it. Councillor Hutchison on behalf of the Planning Informal Group welcomed the proposals. She advised that the Informal group had met a number of times, that they would be preparing a draft brief and were looking forward to taking this piece of work forward.

RESOLVED:

That the Winchester Town Forum considered the paper and provided comments for the Cabinet Member. In particular, the Forum:

- Supported the proposal to refresh the 'Vision for Winchester' building on the concept of the 2012 Vision document.
- Agreed that a supplementary budget estimate of up to £25,000 is allocated from Winchester Town Forum earmarked reserve to fund specific city related research and engagement to support this work.

8. WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PLANNING 2020/21

(Report: WTF273)

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, Fees and Charges and Community Grants.

Members attention was drawn to paragraphs 11.12 through to 11.14 regarding future items of expenditure that would require review. These included:

1. The Environmental Services Contract (ESC)
2. The Public Conveniences Cleaning Contract and
3. A Tree Survey project

Finally, Members were updated regarding the Capital programme and that budgets for the following items were currently included within the capital programme:

1. Chesil Theatre Grant
2. Changing Pavilion North Walls
3. Changing Pavilion King George V
4. Play Area Refurbishments
5. Report WTF265 identified an additional budget requirement of £200k for the KGV play area and skate park.

Members raised a number of points regarding the grant to Chesil Theatre, the adequacy of the Reserves and Sports and Recreation Land.

Regarding Community Infrastructure Levy, Members were keen to explore ways to encourage more applications to come forward and to provide support to applying organisations. It was suggested that additional awareness raising and

training sessions may be useful.. Members reported that many local groups had communicated their difficulty with specifying project costs, the implementation of suggestions and general knowledge of the scheme. There was support for the suggestion that the priorities for CIL could be linked to the outputs of the revamped "Vision for Winchester" document. Finally, it was noted that a report regarding CIL would be coming to the Town Forum meeting in November.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Forum notes the financial projections in Appendix A, and agrees the budget timetable for 2020/21.

9. **WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

Members reviewed the Work programme and noted its contents. The following additional points were made:

Councillor Hutchison advised that the Informal Planning group intended to report back to the Forum in January 2020 regarding the "Vision for Winchester" work.

Councillor Becker advised that she had been in contact with the Director, Resources regarding the Governance issues item and it is planned that an update will be provided to the Forum in November 2019.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.25 pm

Chairperson