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WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

Thursday, 15 June 2023

Attendance:

Councillors

Reach (Chairperson)

Batho
Edwards
Eve
Morris
Prest
Scott

Tippett-Cooper
Thompson
Tod
Westwood
Wise

[Full video recording](#)

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Becker and Learney

1. **APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON FOR THE 2023/24 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Reach be elected Chairperson and Councillor Batho be appointed Vice-Chairperson for the 2023/24 municipal year.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Becker and Learney.

3. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Tod declared a personal (but non prejudicial) interest concerning agenda items that may be related to his role as a County Councillor and as a board member on the Partnership for South Hampshire.

4. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson welcomed all newly elected and returning members of the Forum to the first meeting of the new municipal year.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13 MARCH 2023**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 March 2023 be approved and adopted.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Nicola Rule and Deirdre Wood spoke during public participation regarding Winnall Moors Nature Reserve and traffic issues on Hyde Street respectively. In summary they made reference to the following points set out below.

Nicola Rule made reference to the following points:

- Suggested that the profile of Winnall Moors Nature Reserve be enhanced to bring it to the forefront of Winchester's public eye as a space in the heart of the city that few residents currently used and fewer visitors know about.
- With 64 hectares of space and two and a half miles of boardwalk Winnall Moors featured flora and fauna and included the River Itchen and should therefore be signposted in town with a connection corridor created to the centre to enhance the public realm for the city.
- A prominent entrance should be considered with a manned kiosk in the style of the National Trust to welcome visitors or an honesty box with a view to charging in future to assist with the preservation of the Moors.
- She suggested that improvements be made to the lake area with the installation of benches, rare species of plants and flowers could be a labelled, carbon capture from the trees could be monitored and greater community involvement could be explored with the introduction of rotational working groups.
- The story and history of the Durngate could be explained at the entrance that area, with the involvement of other organisations such as Natural England to help ambitions for growth and work towards carbon neutrality targets.

In response to Ms Rule, the Forum considered that some of the suggestions raised should be explored further in dialogue with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and the Winchester Town Forum Parks and Recreation Informal Group.

Reference was made to the planned works at Friarsgate which proposed to open up walking routes from The Broadway through this part of the town and to the nature trail project 'Wonky the Woodpecker' that was created to encourage young people to use the local parks and open spaces.

Deirdre Wood made reference to the following points:

- Growing unhappiness in Hyde Street regarding the volume and speed of traffic due to the narrow nature of the road, resulting in the 20mph speed limit introduced in 2014 being rarely observed.

- Noise, vibration and pollution from heavy traffic use with vehicles using the road as a 'rat run' and a high risk of road traffic accidents and a danger to cyclists and pedestrian users.
- The effective slowing of traffic in this area with proper controls would have a major impact on pollution, could improve road safety and decrease car emissions.
- The 20mph speed limit painted road signs have worn away and there were no repeater signs reminding drivers of the speed limit. The installation of red and green speed recording lights and gated white residential area markers were suggested as an effective way of patrolling traffic speed and tackling the worsening situation in this area.

In response to Mrs Wood, the issue of speeding traffic in Hyde Street and in other areas of the city centre was recognised. Councillor Tod stated that he supported the 20mph speed limit in Hyde Street in his role as HCC Councillor and reported that he sat on the working group looking at 20mph speed limits and options to extend their use and improve implementation. Fading road markings and lack of repeater signs had been reported to the HCC and would be followed up with the road safety team in due course. It was noted that there was a capital cost to install flashing speed light signage with safety audits etc and the town forum would explore the cost implications of this going forward. It was reported that there were a number of measures coming forward which should improve traffic on Hyde Street, including project work funded by Active Travel England to reduce traffic levels along Hyde Street by re-engineering Worthy Road, improving road safety for cyclists and pedestrians. Lastly, it was noted that Speedwatch investigated driving speeds and behaviours and residents interested in this matter were encouraged to come forward and participate on this group.

At the conclusion of public participation, the Chairperson thanked public speakers for their comments and contribution.

7. **TO NOTE THE DATE AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FORUM AS SET OUT BELOW:**

RESOLVED:

That the date and times of meetings for 2023/24, as set out on the agenda, be noted.

8. **BUDGET REVIEW UPDATES 2023/24 (WTF319)**

The Strategic Director introduced the report which set out a summary of the medium-term financial projections published in January 2023, confirmed the budget review areas and timetable for consideration in 2023/24 and answered member's questions thereon. The Forum were reminded of their commitment to closing the cumulative shortfall of £282k by the end of 2025/26 to maintain a 10% net expenditure reserve balance required in the medium-term financial strategy. The outcomes of the research work carried out by the Town Accounts Informal Group had been timetabled into the work programme to come forward to the Forum throughout 2023/24, as set out in the report.

In response to a comment raised, it was considered beneficial to invite the neighbourhood services team to a future meeting of the forum to outline the positive work carried out by the team to reflect of the cost to the town account. Councillor Scott agreed to discuss this matter with relevant team.

RESOLVED:

1. That the medium-term financial projections from 2023/24 to 2026/27, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted.
2. That the budget review area target timetable for 2023/24, be noted.
3. That the budget timetable for 2024/25, be noted

9. **PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AT KINGS BARTON (WTF318)**

The Service Lead: Communities and Wellbeing introduced the report which advised the Forum of the proposed management arrangements for the public open space at Kings Barton which largely falls within the Parish of Headbourne Worthy, with a small proportion sitting within the town ward of St Barnabas, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, for which the forum would have responsibility.

It was reported that Cabinet approval would be sought in July for the open space land (and associated maintenance) within the Headbourne Worthy Parish to be transferred in phases from Cala Homes to Headbourne Worthy Parish Council and for the open space land within the St Barnabas ward to be transferred from Cala Homes to the council and allocated to the town account. It was reported that this would come with a commuted sum for the maintenance of the land for the foreseeable future. As a result, the management of public open space at Kings Barton could be delivered by two independent and separate maintenance regimes.

The forum noted that Headbourne Worthy Parish Council had offered to take responsibility of the land that falls within St Barnabas to be managed under a single contract which would require a share of the commuted sum due to the town forum to be passed onto them for the maintenance of the town land. It was clarified that long term governance arrangements for the area would not be resolved completely until 2025/26, after which time responsibility would pass could be passed on. The report sets out the reasons why it is believed this was a positive and pragmatic approach for the council to take going forward as an interim solution until arrangements for the Kings Barton area are reviewed alongside boundary matters.

Members asked a range of comments and questions which were responded to by the Service Lead: Communities and Wellbeing. These included details surrounding governance, the transfer of land, the boundary review and further clarification surrounding open space small pockets of highways land.

RESOLVED:

1. That the proposed management arrangements for the public open space at Kings Barton that falls within the town wards be noted; and
2. That the forum note that Cabinet be asked to approve the transfer of open space terms and the schedule of payments that will be made by Cala.

10. **INFORMAL GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Forum noted that individual updates from the Chairpersons of various Town Informal Groups would come forward at the next meeting of the forum.

RESOLVED:

That the updates be received from the Town Informal Groups at the next meeting of the forum.

11. **TOWN FORUM INFORMAL GROUP APPOINTMENTS AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2023/24 (WTF317)**

The Forum agreed the work programme as set out in the report, with the inclusion of the budget review items, set out in report WTF319 above, subject to the further inclusion of an additional item regarding the Review of Street Markets to come forward to the forum in due course.

Regarding the informal groups, it was agreed that the Planning for the future in Winchester Town Informal Group be merged in with the City Centre Informal Group due to the similar nature of the subject.

RESOLVED:

1. That, subject to the inclusions above, the 2023/24 work programme be approved and authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Chairperson, to further set the detailed work programme for the municipal year.
2. That membership of the Forum's informal groups for 2023/24 be approved as stated above and set out below:
 - (i) Winchester Town Forum (City Centre) Informal Group – (Planning for the future in Winchester Town Informal Group has now merged with this group above)
Members: Edwards (Ch), Batho, Becker, Learney, Scott, Thompson, Tod, Westwood and Wise
Lead Officer: E Ekeledo

- (ii) Winchester Town Forum (Parks and Recreation) Informal Group
Members: Batho (Ch), Becker, Edwards, Learney and Tippett-Cooper.
Lead Officer: S Lincoln
- (iii) Winchester Town Forum (Account Informal) Group
Members: Learney (Ch), Reach, Tod and Wise
Lead Officer: D Kennedy
- (iv) Winchester Town Forum (Heritage) Informal Group
Members: Tippett-Cooper (Ch), Eve, Morris, Thompson & Westwood
Lead Officer: D Ayre
- (v) Winchester Town Forum (Outdoor Swimming) Informal Group
Members: Eve (Ch), Becker, Tod and Tippett-Cooper
Lead Officer: S Lincoln
- (vi) Winchester Town Forum (Town Vision) Informal Group
Members: Batho (Ch), Becker and Prest
Lead Officer: S Robbins

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.30pm.

Chairperson