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WEST OF WATERLOOVILLE FORUM

Tuesday, 4 March 2025

Attendance:

Councillors:

Winchester City Council

Bennett (P)
Chamberlain (P)

Cutler (Chairperson) (P)

Langford-Smith (P)

Havant Borough Council

Harris (standing deputy for Cllr Faiz)
Harrison (P)

Robinson (P)
One Vacancy

Hampshire County Council

Briggs

Brent

Newlands Parish Council

Crichton (P)

Read (P)

Others in Attendance that addressed the meeting:

Councillor Porter

Others in Attendance that did not address the meeting:

Councillor Clear

Officers in Attendance:

Julie Pinnock – Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services,
Winchester City Council

Steve Lincoln – Service Lead: Communities and Wellbeing, Winchester City
Council

Emalene Hickman – Culture and Creative Sector Development Officer,
Winchester City Council

Mark Maitland – Community Officer, Winchester City Council

Wayne Layton – Executive Head of Regeneration, Havant Borough Council

Laura Jones – Regeneration Officer, Havant Borough Council

Louise Weaver - Development Infrastructure Team Leader, Havant Borough
Council

Others in attendance:

Karen Seear – Clerk to the Council, Newlands Parish Council

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Briggs – Hampshire County Council
Councillor Faiz – Havant Borough Council
Stuart Palmer – Havant Borough Council (Officer)
Steve Weaver - Havant Borough Council (Officer)
Rose Chapman – Winchester City Council (Officer)
Chris Williams - Grainger plc
Lea Hampton - Grainger plc

Deputy Members:

Councillor Harris (deputy for Councillor Faiz)

[Full recording of meeting](#)

1. **CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME**

The meeting was held virtually, and the Chairperson welcomed all representatives in attendance to the meeting.

2. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received as set out above.

3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations made at this meeting.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2024
(INCLUDING ANY MATTERS ARISING)**

(i) **Arts Programme**

Councillor Read asked about the absence of the Arts Programme report from the agenda, as a progress report for February had been received.

Emalene Hickman, Culture and Creative Sector Development Officer at Winchester City Council stated that good progress was being made, with most artists appointed and engagement on site was underway. Workshops were due to commence during March and April.

Councillor Crichton queried the lack of consultations with Newlands Parish Council, noting that previous reports mentioned the community group but not the parish council. In response, it was clarified that community engagement was in its early stages, with initial conversations focusing on existing community activities, and a specific session with the parish council could be arranged in due course. It was noted that the Arts Programme would be considered at the next meeting, and at subsequent meetings as and when required.

(ii) Other Matters

Councillor Crichton raised concern about the absence of Grainger representatives, given several items related to their report. The Chairperson acknowledged this disappointment and suggested discussing the report, with any urgent points for Grainger to be followed up in writing by the Chair.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 29 October 2024, be approved and adopted.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present to make representations.

6. GRAINGER PROGRESS REPORT ON WEST OF WATERLOOVILLE MDA (REPORT)

The Forum referred to the update report that was circulated with the agenda pack for information and comment. It was reiterated that Grainger representatives had been unable to attend this particular meeting.

Members raised a number of matters on the report as summarised below:

- (i) Councillor Crichton raised concerns regarding the lack of indication about the district centre, particularly the community centre. Concern was also noted regarding the lack of information on the health centre.
- (ii) Further concerns related to Grainger's intention to retain control of the allotment/cultivation plots and lease them, questioning the compatibility with the Section 106 agreement. The complexity of the Section 106 agreement due to delays with the deed of variation was highlighted. Councillor Crichton suggested that Grainger's position regarding asset transfers to the Parish Council appeared to be influenced by local government reorganisation.
- (iii) Councillor Read sought confirmation on the timeline for infrastructure work in Phase 4, aiming for Summer 2025. A question was raised about the southern access point's crucial role in opening the south of the site, noting the original plans for development traffic.

- (iv) The Chairperson expressed concern that the update from Grainger referred to discussions with planning officers at both Winchester and Havant, suggesting that no further consultation on the Town Centre was needed. Disagreeing with this view, the Chairperson advised that he discuss this matter further with Grainger
- (v) Councillor Crichton highlighted frustrations over the lack of Joint West of Waterlooville MDA Planning Committee meetings. Havant Borough Council had advised of a possible meeting for the Blue Star site, which could impact traffic in the development area. The Chairperson agreed to follow up on this.

In response, Louise Weaver (Havant Borough Council) noted that the authority felt councillors should be updated on the original consultation for the local centre plans, suggesting some level of consultation was needed.

In addition, Julie Pinnock (Winchester City Council) stated that the case officer was currently on leave but hoped there would not be a view that no consultation was needed and would follow up.

It was anticipated that a Joint West of Waterlooville MDA Planning Committee meeting would take place this year for Proxima Park - plot 500 (Winchester) and Phase 8 (Havant). The Chairperson reiterated Winchester's policy generally supports consultation on major developments affecting communities and this would be reported back to Grainger. Councillor Crichton clarified that the previous consultation on the district centre was two to three years ago, with a different concept now being considered following a visit to a community centre in Eastleigh. The importance of understanding what Grainger means by consultation was highlighted, with Winchester favouring pre-consultation. The increasing number of questions from residents about the lack of facilities was noted.

Councillor Read highlighted the importance of the Joint West of Waterlooville MDA Planning Committee for applications of shared responsibility between authorities to avoid mismatched developments. The synergies between the Village Centre and the Waterlooville Town Centre regeneration were noted, emphasising the need for Havant Councillors' involvement. The Chairperson compiled a list of points to take back to Grainger.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the comments raised by the forum on the matters set out above, be reported back to Grainger.

7. WATERLOOVILLE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS (PRESENTATION)

The Chairperson welcomed Wayne Layton and Laura Jones (Havant Borough Council) to the meeting who gave a presentation which provided an update of previous work, including the pop-up shop scheme, work with the Waterlooville

Business Association, street art, and events. The next phase, following council budget approval including around £150,000 for public realm improvements, was considered.

It was reported that public consultation through the master plan project indicated a desire for proper regeneration and an improved public realm. Initial designs suggested a need for approximately £800,000 for improvements between the bandstand and the new Exchange restaurant. A positive response from landowners had been received, anticipating potentially exciting news regarding new businesses. The investment was seen as sending a strong message about the importance of the High Street. The quick win initiatives had created a buzz, but significant public realm improvement was crucial, working with Hampshire colleagues.

Laura Jones outlined the design process, noting clear messages from public consultation for more green spaces, seating areas to encourage dwelling and use of retail, maintaining the market, and allowing events. Four initial design options were developed, with a fifth amalgamation. The focus was on the area from the bandstand to the Exchange, as the paving towards the heroes was relatively new. Face-to-face and online consultation (via Go Vocal) had been conducted, with the online consultation ending on 28th February. 43% of respondents favoured one particular option, to be announced soon. A feasibility study would assess affordability, fitness for purpose, future-proofing, and maintenance. Positive feedback from the public was noted, with a public consultation event held in the High Street.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Forum raised a number of matters which were responded to by the relevant officer's present on the following points:

- (a) Councillor Harrison welcomed the investment, noting the success of the vacant shop scheme in boosting confidence for other businesses. The need to address the appearance of the town centre was highlighted. The investment demonstrated commitment to making Waterlooville a destination.
- (b) Councillor Crichton thanked officers and previous administration for their work, noting positive feedback from The Exchange. A question was asked about the market's location during and after the improvements. Wayne confirmed that all designs accommodated the market and events in the High Street.
- (c) Councillor Read welcomed the report as a major step forward, seeking clarification on the highway status of the area. It was confirmed that the A3 remained under Hampshire Highways. Councillor Read suggested declassification might be beneficial.
- (d) The market access for vehicles was questioned. Ongoing maintenance was raised as an important consideration.

- (e) Concerns were noted about planting trees in hard landscapes and potential future damage. Officers assured that tree selection would consider sightlines for CCTV to address antisocial behaviour. Community involvement in gardening projects for planters was highlighted, noting the success in the boulevard.
- (f) The Waterloooville Business Association's plans for an "In Bloom" initiative were referenced.
- (g) A question was asked about improving access to the Town Centre from the MDA. Feasibility work by Hampshire on the crossing between the Shell garage and Archbold newsagents was underway. Lowering the speed limit near the fire station was discussed, but the presence of controlled crossings made the benefit unclear. The potential for public realm work to extend to the car park through the community centre was raised, but it was confirmed this was not in the current phase, although highlighted in the master plan. The need to prioritise the most impactful projects was noted.
- (h) Councillor Robinson was keen to see the Arts Programme involved in the regeneration, with some form of sculpture or art within Waterloooville. The Chairperson agreed to raise this with the Arts Group to ensure engagement with the regeneration team. The importance of integrating the MDA residents into Waterloooville was emphasised.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and the comments raised by the Forum, as set out above, be noted.

8. NEWLANDS PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE (REPORT)

Councillor Crichton provided an update to the report submitted by Newlands Parish Council and reference was made to the following points:

- (a) **Land Transfers and Open Space:**
It was noted that progress on the transfer of land for the play park and 17 acres of Country Park was reported to be getting closer.

Councillor Crichton expressed frustration that most items in the report were also listed in the previous report with no progress. He advised that road adoption and completion in Wellington Park remained unresolved after ten years, mainly due to issues with the Section 104 agreement.

The ongoing issue of open space in the Havant part of Wellington Park was noted, with reluctance from Havant Borough Council to take it on before the Section 104 agreement. The need for Taylor Wimpey to maintain the space beforehand was highlighted.

An issue of Taylor Wimpey planting trees over sewage easements near the old Park Farm stream before Proxima Park needed rectification before land transfer to Winchester City Council and then to Newlands Parish Council. Pressure on Taylor Wimpey to address these issues was requested.

It was reported that the main outstanding issue regarding land transfer was Town Park, half in Havant and half in Winchester. The Forum had previously agreed the whole park should be managed as one by Winchester. A formal agreement involving both district councils, Grainger, and Newlands Parish Council was needed to address management and ownership issues.

In respect of industrial land in Wellington Park, a planning application for work on the south plot was believed to be imminent, resetting the planning permission. The intention was still to develop or sell the land with extant permission.

In response, Councillor Harrison asked about progress on the transfer of the park to Havant, given agreement between the Leaders of Havant and Winchester. Councillor Crichton suggested a meeting between the two primary councils and Grainger, with the involvement of Newlands Parish Council, to formalise an agreement. Options for the Havant part of the land included remaining with Newlands Parish Council under a management contract or being transferred. Local Government Reorganisation was noted as a factor, but the importance of resolving this issue was stressed.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, Councillor Porter addressed the Forum as Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan at Winchester City Council and agreed that the park issue could be addressed first by the two authorities. The Section 104 agreement problem was acknowledged as a genuine sticking point, while the Section 106 variation was being negotiated. The time taken for the Section 106 agreement was noted, and the Director (Legal) at Winchester was aware of the need to progress. Councillor Porter offered to discuss the park issue further with Havant.

RESOLVED:

That the update report be received and noted.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(i) **Public transport:**

Councillor Read raised the potential axing of the Hambledon bus service (D1/D2), funded by the Section 106 agreement for Newlands, noting the limited current service. The need to protect local bus services was highlighted. Councillor Crichton added concerns about the lack of bus route provision, with the opening of the second primary school in September and the opening of the link road, Grainger have

been asked of intentions to run a bus route in this area as there were concerns about the lack of public transport in this area, resulting in higher numbers of vehicular movements. The future of public transport within the development was a growing issue, particularly concerning access to the future health centre.

In response, Councillor Porter informed the forum of over £13 million coming to Hampshire County Council for bus service improvements, suggesting councillors contact their county councillor to see if Waterlooville/West of Waterlooville could benefit. Councillor Harrison welcomed this news, noting previous disappointing attitudes towards bus provision despite the large population. The need to continue campaigning for better bus services was agreed.

(ii) Local Government Reorganisation:

Councillor Crichton reported on an emergency meeting of southern parishes to discuss local government reorganisation, agreeing that if district boundaries were not retained, Newlands should logically become part of Waterlooville. The Parish Council agreed with this, subject to resident consultation, and would be willing to become part of Waterlooville Town Council.

The Chairperson provided an update on local government reorganisation, noting that parishes should have their say, but the process was fast and time limited and consultation would need to be explored. The Chairperson referred to the timeline for the local government reorganisation submission by the end of the following week.

The submission would not include lines on maps at this stage but would highlight the need for funding regardless of the unitary structure due to significant deficits. It was noted that the districts were urging four unitaries rather than three. The crucial role of parishes in making their views known was emphasised, and Winchester would consider improving the position of parishes in the event of unitarisation. Collaboration with Havant on parishing was suggested. The interim submission was due around 20th March, with the need for collective agreement to avoid government imposition.

Councillor Crichton hoped the submission would highlight the outdated nature of both the local government structure (the last reorganisation being 50 years ago) and the district boundaries, arguing for their reconsideration. The concept of "splitting" or "chipping" small parts of authorities for regularisation, such as moving Newlands into Waterlooville, was mentioned as potentially simpler than major district splits. The argument of doing this on a parish basis was noted.

Councillor Read reiterated the government's initial stance of there being no boundary changes. While acknowledging the geographical location of Newlands within Waterlooville, the initial statement on no boundary changes was recalled. The 500,000 population threshold had

softened, and boundary changes, while requiring a strong case, were not entirely precluded.

Councillor Harris informed the forum that the Boundary Commission was on standby, acknowledging that some requests for boundary changes would likely be made, although robust reasons would be needed, which could slow the process. This softened stance at government level was noted.

(iii) Date of the next meeting:

The next virtual meeting of the forum was scheduled to take place on 19 June 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the update be received and noted.

The virtual meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.15 pm

Chairperson

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