

MINUTES

Meeting: SALISBURY AREA BOARD
Place: South Wilts Grammar School for Girls, Stratford Road, Salisbury SP1 3JJ
Date: 10 October 2011
Start Time: 7.00 pm
Finish Time: 9.47 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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Papers available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr Richard Clewer (Chairman), Cllr John Brady, Cllr Christopher Cochrane, Cllr Brian Dalton, Cllr Mary Douglas and Cllr Ricky Rogers

Cllr Jane Scott OBE (Leader of the Council) and Cllr John Thomson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Communities and Housing)

Wiltshire Council Officers

Marianna Dodd, Salisbury Community Area Manager
Alistair Cunningham, Service Director for Economy and Enterprise
Richard Walters, Director, Salisbury Vision
Shane Verrion, Tree Officer
James Hazlewood, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Town and Parish Councils

Salisbury City Council – Cllr Su Thorpe, Cheryl Hill, Cllr Anne Chalk, Cllr Bobbie Chettleburgh, Cllr John Collier, Cllr John Lindley, Cllr Jeremy Nettle, Cllr Andrew Roberts, Cllr Joe Rooney, Cllr Ian Tomes, Cllr Gloria Tudhope, Reg Williams

Laverstock and Ford Parish Council – Cllr David Law

Partners

“Our Salisbury” – Salisbury City Community Area Partnership (SCCAP) – Debrah Biggs

Salisbury Royal British Legion – John Grigsby

St Edmunds Community Association – Mary Stephens

Salisbury City Centre Management – Ian Newman, Graham Gould

Salisbury Wheelchair Awareness Group – Helen Farmer Francesca Stout

Harnham Neighbourhood Association – John McGarry

Salisbury Journal – Annie Riddle

Spire FM – Martha Bedford

Total in attendance: 184

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Salisbury Area Board and invited the members of the Board to introduce themselves.</p> <p>The Chairman also explained the role and arrangements of the Area Board for the benefit of those who were attending for the first time.</p>
2.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Wiltshire Councillors Paul Sample and Bill Moss.</p>
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
4.	<p><u>Chairman's Announcements</u></p> <p>None.</p>
5.	<p><u>Salisbury Market Place</u></p>
5.1.	<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>The Chairman explained that the situation had changed since the agenda had been published, and that the Salisbury Vision Board had published a statement indicating that it had transferred responsibility for the Marketplace refurbishment project to the Area Board. Councillor Jane Scott, Leader of Wiltshire Council, had also given assurance that resources and funding would be made available to the Area Board to take the project forward.</p> <p>In view of the Area Board's new role in the process, the Chairman moved that the existing planning applications be withdrawn, to allow for further consultation with the Community and for a revised plan to be put forward.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> The Salisbury Area Board agreed to withdraw the planning applications in relation to the proposals for the Marketplace (ref S/2011/1320, S/2011/1321 and S/2011/1322).</p> <p>The Chairman also referred to the public survey which the Area Board had</p>

	<p>published to find out about the views of Salisbury residents in relation to the various elements of the proposals for the Marketplace. Nearly 1200 responses had been received so far, and the survey would remain open for a further 3 weeks. Paper copies of the survey were available at the meeting, along with freepost envelopes. Alternatively, the survey could be completed online at www.goo.gl/AeLEz. The Chairman encouraged everyone to circulate the survey to all friends and family; it was important to get a high response rate in order to ensure a cross section of the community, and an accurate reflection of the views of those who live, work, or shop in the city.</p> <p>At the Chairman’s invitation, City Cllr Su Thorpe (Leader of Salisbury City Council) made a statement on behalf of Salisbury City Council (SCC), including the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC had not formally debated the issues relating to the Salisbury Vision, although it supported the Vision’s mission statement of making Salisbury “a clean, green, safe and friendly city...consistently acknowledged as being one of England’s best places to live.” • SCC had inherited the decision of the former Salisbury District Council (SDC) in terms of the selection of the architect and the proposal which included the removal of the trees and moving the war memorial. This decision had only been made four months prior to Councillors assuming office in SCC and no Councillors, including four of the SDC cabinet members who had made the decision, considered that the decision should be reviewed. Once the planning application had been submitted, the standard planning consultation process had begun. As part of this process, the SCC planning committee had considered and supported the proposal, on the proviso that the replacement of trees, the changes to disabled parking, and the moving of the war memorial were all done sensitively. • SCC was aware of significant public concern over the adequate provision of disabled parking. It was noted that New Canal Street could accommodate more disabled parking spaces. • SCC considered that it was extremely important to get the Vision projects right (including the Marketplace refurbishment), to create a sustainable future for Salisbury, keeping young talent in the city. It was also important to take the opportunity for investment in such an important space in the city. <p>The Chairman thanked Cllr Thorpe for the City Council’s contribution.</p>
5.2.	<p><u>Feedback of Survey Results</u></p> <p>The survey had asked respondents to indicate how strongly (or not) they agreed with a number of statements. The Chairman explained that he would give the results for each section of the survey in turn. For ease of reference, the results for “strongly agree” and “agree” had been combined, as had those for “strongly</p>

disagree” and “disagree”. A full breakdown of the results was available, and would be published in due course, once the survey had closed.

5.3.

Trees

The issue of the trees had generated the most public interest in the scheme, with a petition in support of retaining the existing trees receiving over 11,000 signatures to date.

The results of the survey (so far) relating to the trees were as follows:

Statement	% Agree	% Disagree
There should be trees in the Marketplace.	96	2
All of the existing healthy trees in the Marketplace should be retained	73	15
Diseased trees in the Marketplace should be replaced with semi-mature trees of the same species.	76	10
I would be happy to see trees in the Marketplace taken down providing they were replaced with semi-mature trees	40	51
Some of the existing trees are too big and block views in the square	32	56
Where tree roots are breaking up the surface of the Marketplace, action should be taken to repair it	80	10
Benches and street furniture should be put around large trees to prevent roots causing a trip hazard	67	16
Some of the trees should be removed to open up the views in the Square	25	60

The majority of the trees should be removed	10	80
The trees should be replaced with smaller specimens that are properly managed	23	64
If trees in the Marketplace are replaced, the species they are replaced with should be decided by the public	44	29

The Chairman invited questions and comments, noting that Shane Verrion, the Council's tree officer was present to answer any technical questions in relation to the trees:

- In response to a question it was noted that the replacement of the trees as part of the Vision's withdrawn plans had accounted for a relatively small proportion of the overall cost of the scheme. An exact answer could not be given as the work on the detailed breakdown of costs would have been undertaken after the planning permission stage.
- Shane Verrion, Wiltshire Council's Tree Officer, confirmed that his personal opinion was in favour of the retention of the 30 healthy trees which were graded B (worthy of retention). Of the remaining four trees, number 480 (as shown on the plan at page 1 of the agenda) was graded R (needs replacement), and numbers 482, 464, and 486 were graded C (of no great value).
- Responding to a question, Shane estimated that the trees had not been maintained for over five years, although it was noted that this was the responsibility of another part of the Council.
- Shane considered that the four large trees along the western boundary of the Marketplace could be brought back into condition with regular pollarding on a 3-7 year cycle.
- It was noted that Letts Wheeler, the architects who had designed the Vision's proposal, had been selected partly as their proposal originally proposed to retain the trees. This had changed once the architects became aware of the root damage to the tarmac and drains, and was to protect the proposed high quality surfacing.
- In response to a question, Shane noted that it was not good practice to run cables between trees, although it was not unusual, and the trees would tolerate a small amount of damage from tack pins etc.

- The questions was put as to whether Letts Wheeler had failed to meet the requirements of the contract as the design had been withdrawn, or whether the procurement process had been inadequate. Alistair Cunningham, Wiltshire Council's Service Director for Economy and Enterprise, undertook to investigate this and report back to the Area Board.

ACTION: Alistair Cunningham

- The view was expressed that the Marketplace should be kept as two distinct spaces (i.e. the Market Square and the Guildhall Square), rather than being combined into one large space by the removal of the line of Lime trees down the boundary of the two squares, as proposed under the Vision's withdrawn proposal.
- The view was also expressed that having one single space would offer greater flexibility for events, such as the Christmas lights switch-on, and the Remembrance Sunday parade. It was also noted that the Marketplace had been one single space until the trees had been planted in the 1890s.
- In response to a question, Shane advised that surface roots should only be a significant problem around larger trees, often within a 2m radius of the tree. Exploratory work would be required prior to identifying a solution. If the roots could not be pruned due to risk of destabilising the tree, then other options included a raised surface around the tree, or resin-bonded surfacing which would absorb some root growth.
- Replying to a question regarding systems to ensure the survey was only completed once by each household, the Chairman explained that only 1 electronic reply could be submitted per computer, although this could not be verified for paper copies.
- Shane confirmed that there was an established virus for London Plane trees. However, this was no more prevalent than similar diseases for other species, and was not apparent on the trees in the Marketplace.
- In response to a question, Shane reported that the life expectancy of London Place trees was in excess of 40 years, although it was impossible to be accurate, as each specimen would be different.
- Reference was made to a village in France where the main square was built on a raised area to accommodate tree roots, while also maintaining a level surface for wheelchair users.

In concluding the discussion on the trees, the Chairman asked for a show of hands from the room on a number of issues, as follows.

- The meeting was in favour of retaining two separate spaces inside the Marketplace (i.e. the Market Square and the Guildhall Square).
- The meeting was in favour of keeping the existing trees.
- The meeting was in favour of regular maintenance of the trees.
- The meeting had no strong view regarding planting more trees.
- The meeting was in favour of the option of providing street furniture around the trees to address the issue of root growth.

It was noted that this was only representative of the views of those present, and that further public debate (including the results of the survey) would be necessary to ensure a reliable indication of public opinion.

5.4.

Car Parking / Disabled Car Parking

The results of the survey (so far) in relation to car parking and disabled car parking were as follows:

Statement	% Agree	% Disagree
The Marketplace should be resurfaced	58	24
The Marketplace should become a pedestrian only zone	62	30
There should be disabled parking spaces in the Marketplace	53	32
There should be more disabled parking spaces in the Marketplace vicinity	49	26
Disabled parking places could be placed along roads on and near the Marketplace	66	18

At the Chairman's invitation, Helen Farmer spoke on behalf of Salisbury Wheelchair users group, in relation to the provision of disabled car parking in the Marketplace, making the following points:

- Roadside spaces were more dangerous for disabled users to park in, due to access issues when getting in and out of wheelchairs.
- Around 50-75% of cars in the Marketplace were blue badge holders, but it was also important to remember drivers with disability or mobility issues who did not qualify for a blue badge.
- The idea of using New Canal Street for additional disabled parking was supported.

- The Wiltshire Council parking strategy set out a commitment to meeting national minimum standards, of providing disabled parking within 50m of essential services. The Marketplace currently met this requirement, with the library, banks, Post Office and a pharmacy all within a short distance.
- Consideration needed to be given to accessibility when choosing surfacing. For example, cobble stones or similar surfacing could be uncomfortable or even painful for wheelchair users. Paving stones would be more suitable, although they had to be maintained to prevent cracks and wobbles.

The Chairman thanked Helen for the presentation and invited questions and comments from the floor. The following points were raised:

- The view was expressed that the pavements in Salisbury were inadequately maintained. It was also stated that improving the surfacing in the Marketplace was only worthwhile if contractors and utilities companies were required to reinstate the original condition after digging. Sustainable revenue funding would also need to be identified to maintain the quality of the surfacing.
- Several comments were made in relation to the need to maintain the distinction of the historic right of way from the north-east corner to the south-west corner of the square. This was supported by a show of hands from those present.
- Responding to a question regarding how many disabled parking spaces were required in Salisbury, Helen was unable to give a number. However, she noted that Salisbury had around half the recommended number of spaces as a percentage of total car parking spaces. In addition, some car parks did not have level access, and wheelchair users had to travel on the road to get onto the pavement, creating a danger for them and passing vehicles. Helen considered that a review of off-street disabled parking in Salisbury was required, to ascertain the number of spaces needed and where these could be provided.
- Adequate cycle parking was raised as an important requirement for the refurbished Marketplace, as it was cheap to provide, took up little space, and encouraged cycle use.
- Reference was made to the possibility of pedestrianising Blue Boar Row.
- Helen requested that any plan should be subject to a full equality impact assessment.
- In relation to a question regarding how much money had been spent on the project so far, this was estimated to be around £200,000, and a full breakdown would be provided for the next meeting.

ACTION: Alistair Cunningham

The Chairman invited a show of hands from the room on a number of issues, as follows:

- The meeting was in favour of resurfacing the Marketplace.
- The meeting was evenly divided on the issue of whether the Marketplace should be pedestrianised.
- The meeting was against pedestrianisation during the daytime, and allowing parking in the evening.
- The meeting was in favour of providing more disabled parking in the city.

5.5.

War Memorial

The results of the survey (so far) in relation to the War Memorial were as follows:

Statement	% Agree	% Disagree
The War Memorial should be moved	57	31
It makes a difference if English Heritage agree that it can be moved	25	53

The Chairman invited questions and comments:

- The view was expressed that the War Memorial was not ideally situated in its current orientation, in terms of the Remembrance Day parade. The Vision's proposal had suggested that the Memorial be moved to the western boundary of the Marketplace, facing east.
- However, views were also expressed that the location of the War Memorial was not a problem for the parade. It was also considered that it would be insensitive to move the War Memorial, whilst British Forces were actively deployed in Afghanistan.
- It was noted that the Royal British Legion did not support the relocation of the War Memorial.

At the Chairman's request for a show of hands, the meeting was strongly in favour of leaving the War Memorial in its current location.

5.6.	<p><u>Public Toilets</u></p> <p>The results of the survey (so far) in relation to the provision of public toilets were as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="336 421 1479 595"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="336 421 719 483">Statement</th> <th data-bbox="719 421 1098 483">% Agree</th> <th data-bbox="1098 421 1479 483">% Disagree</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 483 719 595">There should be public toilets in or near the Marketplace</td> <td data-bbox="719 483 1098 595">93</td> <td data-bbox="1098 483 1479 595">2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>At the Chairman's request for a show of hands, the meeting was <u>in favour</u> of providing public toilets. It was noted that this should include disabled toilets.</p>	Statement	% Agree	% Disagree	There should be public toilets in or near the Marketplace	93	2
Statement	% Agree	% Disagree					
There should be public toilets in or near the Marketplace	93	2					
5.7.	<p><u>Summary and Conclusion</u></p> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions to the discussion and proposed that a Community Working Group be established to consider and propose a design brief for the refurbishment of Salisbury Marketplace.</p> <p>During discussion a number of final points were raised, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Market traders should be consulted on any proposal which would impact on the layout of the marketplace. • Despite the high level of response to the petition and the survey, this still only represented a relatively small percentage of the population of Salisbury. Everyone was asked to encourage friends and family to give their views. • The business community wanted the refurbishment work to go ahead as soon as practicable. • The Community Working Group was asked to consider new ideas for the Marketplace, such as the provision of Wifi, and charging points for electric cars. • It was noted that residents of the surrounding rural areas should also be involved in contributing to the survey and any future proposals. • In response to a question regarding how the survey was being made available, the Chairman reported that, in addition to the online survey, paper copies were available at the library, and at the Council's offices in Milford Street. Copies of the survey and pre-paid return envelopes were also available at the back of the meeting. It was noted that the copies at the library did not have a return address listed. This would be corrected, although copies could be returned to library staff or to any of the Council's 						

	<p>offices.</p> <p>ACTION: Marianna Dodd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone wishing to be involved in the proposed Community Working group was encouraged to contact Marianna Dodd, on 01722 434696 or email Marianna.dodd@wiltshire.gov.uk. <p><u>Decision</u> The Salisbury Area Board agreed to establish a Community Working Group to discuss and propose a design brief for the refurbishment of Salisbury Marketplace, based on the outcome of the on-going survey, the 11,000+ signatures on the “Save Our Salisbury Trees” petition, and the views expressed by the residents of Salisbury.</p>
6.	<p><u>Future Meeting Dates, Evaluation and Close</u></p> <p>The Chairman invited those present to give an evaluation of the meeting, by way of a show of hands. In general, those present considered that the meeting had been good.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and noted that the next meeting of the Salisbury Area Board would be held on 17 November 2011, 7pm at Salisbury Guildhall, The Market Place, Salisbury, SP1 1JH.</p>