

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

Scott Anderson (Economic Development Administrator), Tel: 01722 434689 or  
 (email) [scott.anderson@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:scott.anderson@wiltshire.gov.uk)

**In Attendance:**

Sir Christopher Benson (SCB)	Chairman
Richard Walters(RW)	Director, Salisbury Vision
Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philippe (FRP)	Economic Development and Strategic Planning, Wiltshire Council
Cllr Richard Clewer (RCI)	Chairman, Salisbury Area Board
Cllr Su Thorpe (ST)	Salisbury City Council
Debrah Biggs (DB)	Salisbury City Community Area Partnership
Alistair Cunningham (ACu)	Director Economy and Enterprise – Wiltshire Council
Reg Williams	Salisbury City Council
Alastair Clark (ACI)	Salisbury Civic Society
Robert Newman (RN)	Chamber of Commerce
Peter Edge (PE)	Business Representative
Scott Anderson (SA)	Economic Development Administrator – Wiltshire Council

**Members of Public in Attendance: 86**

**Total in Attendance: 97**

Item	Subject
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies</b>  Ian Newman – City Centre Management Jack Wills – SWEP Mark Bonney – Salisbury Cathedral
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of Last Meeting (30 June) and matters arising</b>  The Chairman confirmed the protocol regarding the submission of questions and statements to the Board. He noted that in light of the

	<p>unusual circumstances of this meeting that for this occasion, more than the three statements normally permitted for any agenda item would be allowed for Agenda Item 3a), The Market Place. He requested that wherever possible representatives of groups or organizations should make statements on behalf of the members to avoid multiple statements. He also noted that individuals would be allowed to speak for more than the specified three minutes usually allowed, on item 3a).</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed Cllr Clewer to the Board.</p> <p>Two members of the public, David Brown and Helen Farmer, requested that matters of detail be amended within the Minutes from the April and June Board's respectively. On both counts, the amendments concerned making additions to the minutes.</p> <p>In the case of David Brown this was to include his verbal statement to the Board, and for Helen Farmer the addition of text to further clarify her statement and the Vision's response.</p> <p>The Board agreed the amendment of the earlier board minutes to reflect these requests.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Current project updates (RW)</b></p> <p><b>3a) Market Place</b></p> <p><b>New application submitted</b></p> <p>RW provided an update to the Board on this project:</p> <p>A new planning application has been submitted. The original planning application was submitted in April 2011. Since that time there has been extensive consultation and a number of significant changes to the proposals. Because of this, and in light of the fact that there is now an application for listed building consent, requiring a consultation period of the same length, it was agreed that a fresh application would be made on the Market Place Project itself.</p> <p>This will provide the public and stakeholders with the opportunity to comment upon the revised scheme, and ensure that there will be no ambiguity concerning the responses to this scheme in relation to those received for the original proposals.</p> <p>The new planning application was formally registered on 5 September.</p>

Documents were made available in the library for public inspection.

The original planning application was withdrawn.

#### Listed Building application

An application for listed building consent has been submitted in respect of the proposals for the war memorial. This will be considered at the same time as the main application.

The public were able to comment on this application and the hard-copy documents were made available alongside the planning application in the library.

The application was prepared in close consultation with English Heritage and Wiltshire Council's Conservation Officer.

The War Memorials Trust and Royal British Legion (Wiltshire Branch) were kept informed throughout.

#### Key Changes to Original Proposals in the New Application

RW advised the board that the main changes made in the new application were as follows:

##### *Trees*

The proposals increased the number of trees proposed from 17 to 25. The species of tree was changed from *Pyrus Chanticleer* (ornamental pear) to common hornbeam and tulip trees.

##### *Resurfacing materials and pattern*

The area in front of the Guildhall was to have a different paving pattern from that of the market square in order to subtly differentiate it and retain its identity as a civic space, while not compromising the core principle of unifying the whole Market Place.

##### *Lighting scheme*

The LED tips of the lighting posts were removed from the scheme, at the recommendation of the conservation officer.

##### *War Memorial*

The space surrounding the re-sited war memorial was increased.

### *Car Parking*

Wider off street spaces for Blue Badge holders were to be provided along Blue Boar Row and, and the submission confirmed the proposed sites for relocated Blue Badge Holder parking spaces (Blue Boar Row(6), Minster Street (2), Silver Street (1)).

### *Street Furniture and Structures*

Further details on proposed seating, soft planting, stone cladding and toilet / bin store buildings were provided in the plans.

### Programme

RW advised the Board that the aim was for the application to be considered at planning Committee in October. The programme for appointing a contractor was running along in parallel and the team plan to be in a position to appoint a contractor to proceed with the early engagement with the stakeholders as soon as planning permission is granted.

While a start on site was planned for early 2012, RW recognised that this would depend upon forthcoming events. RW asked RWi for an update on the Olympic Torch event, which had been scheduled to take place in the Market Place in the summer of 2012.

RWi continued that Salisbury had been chosen for one of the stopover locations for the Olympic Torch; it had always been anticipated that the event would take place in the Market Place. However, LOCOG and the security bodies in charge of overseeing the event had concluded that the Market Square's size was too small, since they are unable to use the Guildhall Square given the location of the War Memorial, and the trees separating the two spaces. On that basis the event was unlikely to proceed in the Market Place in Summer 2012; and an announcement would be made in due course confirming where the event would take place.

SCB added to this that discussions with the Salisbury International Arts Festival were looking for alternative venue for the arts festival next year partly due to uncertainty, and partly due to its configuration.

### Trees

RW noted that since the last Board Meeting there had been a great deal of concern expressed in the media over the issue of trees. He provided a summary of the situation as follows:

- The original intention of the Vision was to retain the existing trees if this was possible.
- The presence of trees within the Market Place has always been at the heart of the Vision's plans. It has never been the plan to create a treeless space.
- The Vision is committed to delivering a long-term and sustainable solution to the Market Place that meets the needs of the whole community, including residents, visitors, businesses and those who rely upon and make their livelihood there.
- Following the initial competition to select a design team, there was the need to develop a detailed design. To do this required investigations into the physical condition of the Market Place both above and below ground.
- Specialists were appointed to undertake surveys – including a professional arboriculturalist and engineers to do a CCTV survey of the drains.
- These surveys made it clear that the surfaces were being affected extensively by the trees and also identified a number of trees that were experiencing problems and required attention. Also, some of the drains were being affected by tree roots.
- If the trees were retained, then much of the newly laid surface would be being pushed upon within a very short time. Not only would this be expensive to repair, but it would also increase the risk of trip hazards.
- Also, as there were so many roots already at the surface there were obvious risks to the trees when removing surface roots to prepare the area for resurfacing.
- The survey also made it clear that the large trees along Oatmeal Row that obscured the buildings behind them have grown beyond the size where they can be effectively pollarded and are having a serious effect upon the surfaces. This was known to be interfering with the operation of the market.
- All possible options were looked at to retain the trees, but each one was compromised, either affecting the usability of the space for its primary purpose (as a market), creating significant and on-going maintenance costs and pedestrian hazards, or potentially damaging the trees themselves.

- In the end, and on professional advice, following a full and extensive site inspection accompanied by the professional advisers the Board agreed that the only appropriate option was to replace the trees.
- The trees that the team has now selected can grow to a size and scale equivalent to those they will replace.
- The Vision's advisors have advised that, provided that large semi-mature trees are planted in the first place, which is the plan, the space will essentially be 'green' within one season. Within five years the Avenue along Blue Boar Row will have a tree canopy to a similar level to that we see today.
- If nothing is done about the problems associated with the trees, a significant number will still need to come out over the next few years, leading to gaps and an even more haphazard planting situation to that which already exists. All the time the surfaces will deteriorate and the appeal of the Market Place will diminish.
- Put simply, without a solution to the problems arising from the trees there would be little or no point in resurfacing the Market Place.

*Statements and questions from the public relating to the Market Place – which constituted the entirety of statements and questions received at the Board – were received at this point. Please refer to the Appendix for transcripts of statements and questions received from the public.*

*The Chairman asked Reg Williams, City Clark, if he wanted to give a response to the statements made regarding the proposals for trees on the Market Place. RWi stated that he had been responsible for the management of trees in Salisbury for the past 25 years, and acknowledged that trees were a very sensitive subject in the public realm, and noted that a great deal of care was given when deliberating on any tree's removal. He further observed that when seeking advice on suitable replacement schemes and species, it was common to receive a wide variety of suggestions, since it was a subjective as well as technical matter.*

*To this RJW added that the Vision had sought the advice of a professional arboricultural consultant and consulted the views of the City Clark and Wiltshire Council's tree officer during the design phase and in both pre-and post-planning application discussions.*

*Cllr Richard Clewer said he wanted to understand in further detail the possibility of pollarding the existing trees, toward assessing whether or not the existing trees could be retained as part of an improvement*

*scheme. He also stated his view that the public should be asked about their favoured species of replacement tree, in the event that the existing trees did need to be removed. He announced that these issues would be discussed at a meeting of the Salisbury Area Board on Thursday 15 September. He encouraged those wishing to express an opinion to attend. He noted his concerns regarding the provision of disabled parking and facilities.*

*In response to the statement that had been made with regard to the development of the market square in Devizes, Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philippe stated that it had been known at the time that those trees that had been removed had been in extremely poor condition, and disagreed that the resultant space was in any way “soulless”.*

*Debrah Biggs expressed the opinion that it was a shame that the opinions expressed at the meeting had not been available earlier in the design process, and added that it was important to consider the implications of measures to protect trees upon how the space can be used thereafter. She also stated a wish to be involved in forthcoming discussions about the provision of disabled parking.*

*SCB raised the possibility of forming of a sub group of the Board to explore the issues raised by the public at this board meeting. He noted that in terms of programme, the situation had changed now that earlier imperatives (the Olympic Torch relay) were no longer an issue. This presented the opportunity for further consultation and research.*

### **3b) Central Car Park and The Maltings**

#### **Competition**

RW confirmed that the competition to select a developer partner for the Central Car Park & The Maltings was proceeding to programme. There were three bidders competing for the opportunity to be the council's developer partner:

- Harvest Partnership (a joint venture between Land Securities & Sainsbury)
- Henderson Global Investors and Shearer Property Group
- Stanhope

A fourth bidder, Tesco, withdrew from the competition shortly after the initial bidder meetings when all bidders were given the opportunity to discuss the Vision's plans with the Vision team in more detail.

The objective remained to deliver a retail-led, mixed use, open street

development that would link in with the existing city centre, providing high quality new retail of the type which was currently lacking in the city.

A preferred developer partner should be identified early in 2012.

Cllr de Rhe-Philipe emphasised her view of the importance of this project to the future of Salisbury in making it a more vibrant city centre.

Alastair Clark noted the presence of rivers on the site and the need for the scheme to link in with the rest of the city in a coherent fashion, recognising that a lot more work would need to be undertaken by the selected developer partner with this regard. The Chairman noted that the Council's core strategy would be central to informing scheme design.

#### Flats

RW reported that Wiltshire Council had responded very quickly to the needs of a lady who had been unable to move from her flat in the Maltings because of the uncertainty relating to the competition to appoint a developer partner for the council. The council purchased the lady's flat allowing her to move into a new warden assisted home closer to her daughter, and will continue to consider residents' needs on a case by case basis.

FdRP confirmed that a second flat had been acquired.

STh highlighted the need to invite the public to proactively engage with the Vision in consultation at the earliest stage.

FdRP agreed and added her support to this idea. RCI announced his intention to hold a special Area Board to discuss the project.

SCB advised that there was no doubt that the eventual developer partner would want to engage at an early stage with the public, and that there would be public meetings.

#### Speculation in the Media

RW confirmed that contrary to reports in the media, there were no plans whatsoever to demolish the market hall façade facing onto the Cheesemarket. As a listed building it would remain, whatever scheme was to come forward. He also noted that the library will remain where it is, unless a new and improved facility could be delivered within the city

centre – preferably within the Maltings site as part of the scheme.

### **3c) Transport and Movement Strategy**

#### Bus Quality Partnership

RW confirmed that discussions were ongoing with the Council's Transport Department and the local bus operators to establish a Bus Quality Partnership (BQP) for the city to ensure that their projects were aligned with the Vision.

STh asked whether there had yet been any response from Network Rail with regard to the Station Interchange project.

RJW noted that exploratory discussions has been held with Network Rail, however the BQP work was focused on bus transport. He also noted that the future of the Station Interchange would be informed by the emerging proposals for the Central Car Park & The Maltings.

To the suggestion that the platforms of the railway station be extended to allow direct access to the Central Car park & Maltings site it was noted that this would be unlikely to be deliverable on cost grounds. ACu noted that some time ago (as the then Wiltshire County Council) this had been looked at, and there had also been found issues with the surrounding environment.

ACI asked whether any steps were being taken to relieve the through traffic running through the city centre. RJW advised that discussions were taking place with the council's highways and transport team, and that the council's advisors Atkins were being asked to test strategic solutions to the issues affecting Salisbury's road network.

#### City Centre – further pedestrianisation

RW noted that, in partnership with Wiltshire Council's transport team, the Vision had asked transport consultants Atkins to take an initial look at the transport implications of restricting private car movements across the city centre, specifically on Blue Boar Row.

This work would use the existing traffic model developed by Atkins to test the strategic road network which informed the council's Core Strategy. It was currently ongoing and when the findings became available they would be reported to the Board.

### **3d) Churchfields**

	<p>RW advised that discussions were on-going with the advisory team to move this project forward. There had been limited activity on this over the summer as the Vision's resources had been focused on the Market Place and the Maltings projects.</p> <p>The next stage of work would need to include further engagement with landowners and businesses. It would also require developing a phasing strategy and assessing its implications for off-site business relocations. Discussions with Wiltshire Council over its own landholdings within the estate were also relevant and would continue.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Other projects / issues (RW)</b></p> <p><b>4a) Open Meeting / Forum</b></p> <p>RW noted that Wiltshire Council was planning to host a seminar meeting on Wednesday 26 October, at City Hall to discuss issues affecting the city. The details of this are still under discussion, but it was anticipated that not only the business community but also other stakeholders would be invited to attend.</p> <p><b>4b) Business Improvement District</b></p> <p>An informational document explaining the role and purpose of a BID had been uploaded to the Vision website. Discussions on how to move a BID forward would be progressed with Salisbury City Centre Management, the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses. However it had currently taken a lower priority than other projects.</p> <p>ACu added that one of the things that the council was insisting on concerning the Central Car Park &amp; The Maltings site would be that its upkeep and security would be paramount, and preserve and contribute to those of the overall city centre.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>A concern was raised by DB concerning the length of time before the next meeting. This was discussed and the board agreed that the date of the next meeting would stand. It was noted that there would be a large amount of consultation and consideration that would need to be given to issues raised at the present board, in the interim.</p>

	<p>SCB concluded by suggesting that in future meetings it would be appropriate to adhere more strictly to the protocol for public participation, in relation to both the the quantity and brevity of submissions. He expressed his disappointment that because this meeting had been dominated by one particular project, many members of the public attending had departed before the Agenda had reached the other very important projects the Vision was also taking forward.</p>
<b>6</b>	<b>Next meeting: 1 December, 2011, Salisbury Guildhall</b>

# APPENDIX

## STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

### Statements

#### Agenda Item 3 A

##### **Solomon Rimer – Market Trader**

Chairman and board members,

As a long standing market trader and one who has already been given the opportunity to address the board regarding the initial designs of the market place, i feel the need to come to you once again due to current anti-development feeling which is being spread amongst members of the local community.

When I first came, early in the year, it was to discuss traders' fears regarding the possible relocation of stalls and impact upon our trade due to the proposed works. I, along with a fellow trader were chosen to represent the traders as a whole group. Having seen your acceptance of our feelings and thoughts towards the regeneration, and the subsequent redesign of key features i was able to report back to all traders that you had listened well to our grievances and we were all in a position to accept and indeed support the plans. This was further enhanced when Reg, the city clerk, promised that any work would only take place at the beginning of the year, not take very long, and not interfere with our busier trading time towards Christmas. As a group, we accept that change is necessary for the future of our city, but we were happy that the board acknowledged our position as important stake holders in the market place. Indeed, the market square's primary objective is to provide an area to facilitate the functioning of the market. I know I don't need to tell you here, but as some of you represent business owners with shops and cafes in Salisbury, you all appreciate the massive positive effect the market has on your colleagues businesses. Many shops do more business on the 2 market days than all other days added together.

I fear however, that the current 'save our trees' protest will do nothing to help the market as we all struggle against the harsh economic troubles of our time. The main reason for saying this is 2 fold. 1, it is delaying the critical decisions which must be made to ensure Salisbury is an attractive destination for shoppers, and 2, the trees, particularly along Oatmeal row are becoming seriously dangerous and a threat to the economic vitality of traders and indeed the cafes which also share our space. Let me explain. There is no doubt, the market square is tired, sad and badly maintained. You can understand why it has come to this with the changes in local government and the promise of the Vision in revitalising the square, meaning remedial work was kept to a minimum. We must grasp therefore, the opportunity we have

now and use the funds available to create a space which benefits the market and the city. The new surfaces and slabs to be used will make the square look amazing and also fit for purpose as a market place. The trees to be removed are creating havoc for us traders who pitch beneath them. Over the past 22 years, our pitch has become so uneven that every single market either one of my staff or a member of the public trips or stumbles over the roots. Due to their current size, the trees are unmanageable and allowing the roots to be left open by removing tarmac and slabs around them, would swallow our entire stall and have a terrible impact on our business - let alone the other stalls sharing our problem. I have always supported the idea of removing the trees and replacing them with something more suitable for the space, and in fact Tuesday morning, a quick straw poll of traders who trade directly under trees were 90% in favour of their removal and subsequent change.

I am not someone who supports the removal of the trees for the sake of it, but i firmly believe, if left unattended they're negative effect will increase exponentially. I also acknowledge that they do seem attractive from a distance and particularly on non market days, and it is always a shame when older trees have to be felled. But, we cannot be romantic about some trees which, as i believe, were only planted in the last 100 years or so, particularly when the new ones, as detailed by the Vision plans will be so much more suitable.

I'll leave you with something a pensioner customer of ours said just a few weeks ago. She feared that she wouldn't be able to come and see us anymore because of the tree roots, she said it was the highlight of her week to come to the market, but the surfaces were becoming too uneven for her and her trolley. Do we want people to avoid the market because of the trees? No we don't. We want people to come and marvel at the square, the thriving stalls and businesses, and the ambiance which I am sure will be better than i can ever remember.

*NB. The above statement was made by Solomon Rimer as a private individual not as a representative or spokesman of the market traders, a point Mr Rimer made clearly at the meeting.*

**Salisbury City Centre Management  
Salisbury & District Chamber of Commerce  
Salisbury Federation of Small Businesses**

Today Salisbury lies at a turning point. It faces the choice of whether to invest in its city centre to the benefit of current and future generations or to turn its back on this investment and accept the consequences.

Together, our organisations represent the vast bulk of businesses within our city. Between us we have over 1,000 members, including most of the city's retailers as well as many office and commercial enterprises. These businesses are central to the success and prosperity of Salisbury and provide

many jobs and services to the community.

Our members have made it clear to us that continued investment in the city's public spaces is essential for Salisbury to remain competitive. Of all of the commercial spaces, the Market Place is undoubtedly the most important, as it is the historic heart of our city. Today it is a sorry sight, beset with poor surfaces, street clutter and bad lighting and being little more than a shabby car park for the majority of the week. The city of Winchester has already invested a very large sum of money in the centre of their city and Southampton and Bournemouth are actively doing the same. None has such an important single space in its centre as our Market Place and Guildhall Square, and yet they have already committed large sums to investment in their cities, and make no apologies for this inward investment program.

They know that the way out of a recession, is to invest in the only thing which will bring us out, the businesses of the place. Neither do they make it a secret that they will be seeking to take business in the retail sector and other sectors from Salisbury. In times of economic difficulty, we have to show that Salisbury is still looking ahead, and is poised to continue to make this city a place with a vibrant beating and healthy heart. "When the going gets tough, the tough get going". We have fought hard to gain this investment, we need it now, time will not wait.

It has taken at least three years and as many public consultations to develop the current proposals, now submitted for planning approval. These address the situation in the Market Place in a comprehensive way and will create an attractive flexible pedestrianised space with robust surfaces designed to last many years into the future. New trees are an integral part of the scheme and as semi-mature trees are being planted, the Market Place will be as green and leafy as it is today within five years.

We firmly believe that the Market Place proposals are not just desirable but essential to safeguard the economic future of our city centre. The opportunity for this substantial investment is here now, but if not taken, will unquestionably be lost with all the consequences that this entails.

It is for these reasons that the city's businesses community urge those considering these proposals to look to the future and support them in their entirety.

**Laura Bell**

While understanding the old adage, you need to spend money to attract money, surely the Vision would attract more support from the people of Salisbury, who are, not to forget, their constituents and funders, if it was seen to be more in tune with the times. In all walks of life we are being asked to curb spending. Surely even the Vision can see how the felling of the Market Square's trees and buying expensive replacements is a wanton waste of money. If this is the type of economics and values expected by future 'investors' it is best that they are kept out of the City.

## **Janet Davies**

I am very concerned about the felling of all the trees in the market place. My concern is shared by most of the population of Salisbury, judging by the considerable numbers who have been eager to sign the 'Save the Trees' petition. The response has been overwhelming – the public are horrified to hear what is being planned for these much-loved trees. They say the trees *are* the market place and some from further out will not continue to visit Salisbury in future if the trees are felled. They also say, 'Why in this day and age are we not planting *more* trees rather than taking them away!' Understanding the value of trees in our changing climate and in dealing with pollution should be a chief priority. They are especially important in the centre of the city.

It is surely possible to work around the trees. The problems identified in your plans are due to neglect and the appalling practise of tarmac-ing over roots and up to tree trunks has exacerbated this.

Most people see the solution to be :

Remove the tarmac, make flower beds around some of the trees and circular benches around others providing a two-fold purpose. - Some pruning or pollarding is probably necessary.

I have spoken to Tony Kirkham the senior arboriculturist at Kew Gardens. His advice was :- Plane trees are the *best* in an urban environment, with their 'self-cleaning' bark and shiny leaves which are easily washed clean. They are also very tough and long-lived. (We know that the largest on the West side of the square are 100 years old) but the earliest plane trees were planted in Britain in the C16<sup>th</sup> and are still surviving! He also said Large Plane trees *can* be managed (ie pruned) which we have been told by Salisbury Vision is not possible.

How can 'Duramen Consulting' be calling the smaller plane trees along the North side of the square 'Middle Aged' when they are not more than 30 years old and saying that at 100 years old the larger ones have only 40 years left? There do seem to be some self-serving 'Myths' in this report.

Are the Vision aware that the Queen has launched a tree planting project to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee next year - for 6 million trees to be planted? It is not shameful that Salisbury should be marking this event by felling 34 mostly perfectly healthy trees, this, within the Conservation Area - where all the trees are meant to be protected? To add to this sad tale, four of these fine trees were planted to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee!

## **Helen Farmer**

It has been confirmed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, that an assessment of the impact of policies on equality issues is not only required at strategic level. Whilst it is no longer a requirement to produce specific documents called "Equality Impact Assessments", to quote directly

from EHRC: "Assessment of the potential impact of policies on equality is inherent in the public sector Equality Duty. Public bodies must, in exercising their functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and promote good relations. To do that and demonstrate that they have done that, they will obviously need to understand how their policies and practices affect or could affect equality outcomes".

All bodies carrying out public function, which includes Salisbury Vision, are bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty.

A disabled person is "someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

Walking, from other car parks, to the library, post office or banks in the city centre would be considered a 'normal day-to-day activity'.

Not all disabled people are issued with Blue Badges, only those assessed as having 'severe' mobility impairment. There are more disabled people, without Blue Badges, than with. Therefore providing a few Blue Badge parking spaces would not discharge Salisbury Vision's obligation to disabled people.

Salisbury Vision has not undertaken an assessment at any stage, but instead relies upon Wiltshire Council's strategic documents.

Perhaps this explains the fact that despite spending £1.2 million on the refurbishment of this building [Salisbury Guildhall], so little improvement to the accessibility has been achieved that some members of our group have been unable to attend tonight's meeting, as they simply cannot gain access to this building. Those unable to climb stairs, must enter one at a time, via the rear entrance lift; what would happen if there were a fire? An access route which, it should be noted, is not signposted from the car park, or anywhere else.

The Equality Impact Assessment for the Parking Strategy (PS3), to which I was referred when I raised this issue at the last Board meeting, states:

"National guidance on disabled parking facilities should be stated as a minimum requirement which 'Wiltshire council' should strive to improve on.

"It is important to recognise the complexity and the non homogeneous nature of the label of disability and providing for these needs without discrimination and exclusion is a significant challenge".

On the subject of various 'options' for LTP3 which were assessed, including those on parking; "The true impact of these options is to be considered at a later stage when the details of the schemes and the location for implementation can also be taken into account in the assessment of the impacts on issues of equality.

"In order to inform parking policy and decisions, consistent research on

utilisation of car parks and the 'users' of these car parks would be useful. Resource restraints currently prevent this research taking place on a regular basis."

Wiltshire Council has not therefore undertaken any assessment of the impact of this specific policy (the removal of all car parking from the Market Place), and recognises that further assessment is required.

At the last board meeting, it was stated that a meeting between Salisbury Vision and Salisbury Wheelchair Awareness Group was desirable. However, this has not yet happened; a request that the Council Officers responsible for advising the Vision on Equalities Issues be invited, was met with the response that the Vision "didn't know who they were", as late as last week, this was still the case. How then, can SV be so sure that it is meeting its legal obligations toward disabled people?

Another issue resulting from the actions of Salisbury Vision is the removal of the accessible public toilet. The Market Square toilets have a sign, in three different languages, stating that the accessible toilet is behind the Guildhall. This is no longer the case, as it was removed when the Guildhall was refurbished. What assessment of the impact of this decision was undertaken? And how long are disabled people to cross their legs and wait, before a replacement is provided?

*Su Thorpe made an apology to Helen Farmer had she encountered difficulties in entering the Guildhall and asked Reg Williams, City Clark, to investigate what happened, and to respond on the issue to disabled access toilet facility in the Guildhall.*

*RWi explained that the facility which had been at the back of the Guildhall and had to be moved as part of its refurbishment (during which process consultations had been undertaken), was intended to be accessible by anybody needing it to access it at any time that the Guildhall was open. RWi also explained that part of the Market Place proposals was to build a fully DDA compliant disabled access toilet facility on the Market Place which would be accessible twenty fours a day, seven days a week.*

### **Alistair Lack**

I must first say that the goals of the Salisbury Vision to improve the state of the city can only be welcomed. It is the implementation that is in my mind unsatisfactory. People need to be attracted to Salisbury for all its attractions, not just on market days but also on non market days. At the moment the market and the Cathedral seem to be the only attractions considered worth attending. If only the Board could see beyond this obsession with the square. The rivers in our city are just as important a feature and have been throughout Salisbury's history. But just look at them in the city area, behind the old walls, the litter swirling around behind Fisherton Bridge, the area east of the Central Car Park. The pavements of most of the old streets are dreadful mixtures of cracked paving stones and tarmac fill. Just look at Salt Lane or many of the others. Walking around the city is a hazard in itself. Taking tourists around, as I do, makes one almost feel ashamed of my

occupation. Now I know that correcting tarmac with infills, cheap shoddy maintenance has been allowed to happen in streets, in the market square, cracked paving stones and the lorries around onto the and suchlike is a history of inadequate maintenance. But this is just as important when bringing tourists and visitors into our city. I'm afraid I do have a criticism to make, sir. The Vision Board has released this statement entitled 'Market Place Project: Some Key Facts'. This is written in the most arrogant and patronising language that I can ever remember reading in an official document. The style is – in one word it is 'putting the record straight' that's straight on the front. Its opinions are described as fact and other views labelled as either myth or misconception. I can hardly believe that this is designed to allay the anxieties of your public. I have to point out one or two things, for example, hornbeams which you have just heard from Richard Walters will be placed on the square. Hornbeams are essentially beech trees; in your statement you say that they will grow to the same size as the existing trees. Fair enough. But beech trees don't take nicely to pruning, nor do hornbeams, so it will be difficult to see how those trees take light in the way the present trees take light. It's also true that the tree pits which are much vaunted as the solution to the root problem haven't been around long enough, aren't under any mature trees anywhere I can find a description of, to have been tested. We may then find the same problem arising in another ten to thirty years. I payed last Wednesday £2.20 for a half hour stay in a half empty car park only to find that the hairdresser no longer opens on a Wednesday, there just isn't enough custom. One certainly can walk all round our city with pride and people clearly no longer visit for pleasure. That's what we need to be able to do.

**Gabrielle Naisch**

My point was that before living in Salisbury I lived in Devizes which also had experts who came and regenerated the market place. That resulted in 13 plane trees being replaced with four. It's a soulless drab place. They replacement surfaces are now shabby, again, as it's not cleaned, and that I think is a main problem that we have had in Salisbury, the streets are dirty and need to be cleaned a whole lot better. I would suggest that members of the Vision go to Devizes and see what removal of the trees results in.

**Francis Spencer**

Many of the points that I wanted to make and I am really concerned about have been made very, very eloquently already. I do hope that you will find the time to consider them. I say this because having been collecting signatures on the market square for the last three weeks or so I wish to report the widespread spontaneous and deep shock from people now. Local people, and people from abroad, from Europe and America, their shock at this plan to remove these healthy and well adapted suitable and beautiful trees from our market square. Now that I am talking here I have been stopped by people in their 90s and by nine year olds. Now it may be romantic but I think they are expressing something very profound about the English people's connection with trees. And I would like to give their voice record here. The plane trees are the ideal trees for the Market square. I am in no way trying to stop a remake of the market square but please, these trees, are deeply suitable for the life of our city and our town. I simply do not believe that their removal

would improve the attractiveness or the commercial viability of Salisbury. Many of the people I have spoken to, many hundreds of people, four people have come to argue that the trees should go. The idea is here that the trees are the draw. People come from around about because they like the market square in its slightly higgledy piggledy way. It's an attraction. If it is cut down it will be lost. It is something that doesn't show up in architects' plans, this quality of life. What I want to do here is put something for quality of life for local people who have lived here for the duration of the life of those trees, who may have grown up with those trees, like one 91 year old who remembers their planting. So what I am asking you is please if it's possible at this late stage to change your minds.

### **Richard Tambling**

I've went on the internet and there doesn't seem to be much mention of the local tree officer being involved. Mr Shane Verrion, a very expert gentleman with a lot of expert knowledge and also would be cheaper than appoint experts from outside.

I visited the reference library I found the Observer's book of trees and it says the tulip tree grows to 100 feet in the UK and can grow to 150 feet and wonder if possibly more thought should be given to the choice of trees. Just to try and avoid changing the trees in a manner ranking along the "Salisbury ski jump".

### **Malcolm Adams**

I've been dismayed from the outset at this campaign and the way it's been put reluctantly to the public, dragged out phrase by phrase. I have been to Wiltshire County Council before and have to say and this has the same whiff of incompetence and arrogance. As Francis has just said I hope all of you here, particularly those of you elected by the public will listen and not be bound by fixed opinions that may already have been taken. One example of this arrogance has been citing that foreigners are signing the petition. There are many foreigners in Salisbury that are here not just to live but others have families, they have lived here before and the love the city and they value it and their opinions should not be disregarded. There have been stages of preparation in this campaign presentation and public involvement (deliberately avoiding the word consultation because it is so regularly abused in political circles.)

On two particulars: The trees in Salisbury, if they have to be replaced, and I do see that there are arguments about some of their issues, but some of those arguments are somewhat questionable as to how damaging these trees really are.

The trees that are being proposed: why bring the tulip trees in? They are not the species that is needed in Salisbury. I come from a small town in Somerset originally although I've had a 50 year association with Salisbury. To go ahead and put something like that up in the market square and then compare it with the arguments that have been put against the existing trees to do with security cameras, leaf fall, and root growth – the arguments just don't bear

out. Plane trees, we all know they grow comfortably, naturally, they look right, they work in pretty much every city in Europe. Even allowing for global warming, drought and all the rest of it, they grow, they are part of the atmosphere and the ambiance of Aix-en-Provence and countless other towns that attract visitors around Europe. Whose idea is it to go with tulip and hornbeam? Any argument being put forward to date is no stronger than it is to stay with the plane tree. So please, what I am asking, as some others have, is to please listen and not be fixed.

The War Memorial: I am appalled at the proposal that it be allowed to stand in front of the shop fronts. I know it stands where it does now because of the statue of Sidney Herbert - that in my mind does not in any way create an argument for changing its orientation. If anything, bring it back closer to the Guildhall; that then will retain the dignity it should be due and still fill the use requirement. If you move it where you are proposing, currently in front of TK Maxx there is Rymans; do you have any control over who will be there in 5 10 or 20 years time? Do you want the centre behind the war memorial or even worse? It could even be a sex shop in 20 years time. I doubt it though, but who knows what the future will bring. For goodness sake let's have some common sense, some true consultation, and a decent future for Salisbury market square.

## **Questions with Responses Provided by the Board**

### **Agenda Item 3a**

#### **Colin Duller**

*(Questions submitted to the Vision Board in June to which a detailed response could not be supplied within the time – the reply to these questions has been posted on the Vision web-site)*

3. What Total Amount of Public Money has been allocated to The Vision Program and who gave what?

7. Who provided the money for the Vision exercise and who controls the purse strings?

#### **Response**

As recorded in the minutes of the meeting, the funding for the Vision has derived from a variety of sources. In its initial stages there was funding from Wiltshire County Council, Salisbury District Council and the South West Regional Development Agency.

Since the establishment of Wiltshire Council as a Unitary Authority the principal funding for the activities of the Vision has come from Wiltshire Council. However there has been some funding secured from the Homes and Communities Agency.

Funding decisions made by Wiltshire Council are a matter of public record.

These decisions were recommended to Council by Cabinet and overseen by the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Select Committee. Agenda, reports and minutes of these meetings are available on Wiltshire Council's website.

For the purposes of these questions the most pertinent meetings and items have been:

- Cabinet Thursday, 11th February 2010, item 20b, Capital Programme Proposals 2010/11 to 2012/13
- Joint Overview & Scrutiny Select Committee Meeting Tuesday, 16th February, 2010, item 5, 2010/11 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme
- Cabinet, Tuesday 23 February 2010, item 34, Salisbury Vision Update
- Council, Tuesday, 23rd February, 2010, item 8, Budget 2010/11

Links to papers relating to all these meetings and the two main reports (Vision Report and Capital Programme) have been placed the Vision web site.

### **Mrs Sara Gruzelier**

Please would the board explain their reasoning behind changing the variety of tree now to be used?

### **Response**

There are a number of reasons behind this change:

The change to the current tree varieties (Tulip Trees and common Hornbeam) are a direct response to feedback from consultation which made it clear that the community wanted larger trees than the pyrus chanticleer originally proposed.

There was a desire to see trees that could provide the green canopy that currently exists within the Avenue. These trees had to be suitable to an urban environment.

The exact choice of tree was taken in consultation with the Council's tree officer and the City Clerk who between them will have responsibility for managing and maintaining the trees into the future. This was supported by advice and input from the specialist arboricultural consultant appointed to advise the Vision on this project.

*In addition to the above, Mrs Gruzelier also made the following statement:*

I am secretary consultant at the RHS, I myself am on the RHS list of speakers, I have consulted with the RHS, I am also on their speakers list, I should make that quite clear, I have had discussions with them and also opinions. Now, I find it rather strange that you have chosen *Carpinus* which is actually hornbeam for those who do not know its Latin name, and you do not state whether you are choosing a fastulent form which is very foreign and would be entirely unsuitable for Salisbury. You've also gone for the tulip tree

which I think other people have already mentioned has problems. Furthermore they tend to be somewhat brittle with age and shed branches. I do not agree with the fact that the plane trees, neither does Tony Kirkham who it has previously been said is one of the top arboricultural consultants, which is very different from an arboriculturalist. You can actually do a one year chainsaw course at Spartrall College and come up as an affiliated arboriculturalist. Very different from an arboricultural consultant. Now, going back to the plane trees. It is perfectly possible to pollard those plane trees. Secondly, if you get a proper tree surgeon, he would be able to do it. Furthermore, by changing the area around the base of the tree and pruning the roots which has been said to damage - I presume that some of you have heard of a root prune. If you root prune a tree at the same time as you pollard it, you actually slow down its growth because it does not have the root capacity to feed the branches above which have been lopped off and so therefore it only needs less maintenance. Also, a further point, and this is under your fact and myth trees do not damage drains which are in good condition. If you have faulty drains, roots will find their way into the faulty drains. Q.E.D. Now, you also say that the trees would be better because they would be planted in rows. Trees do not have to be planted in rows; I am not against as I suspect a lot of people here are not against the refurbishing or whatever you would like to call it Vision, New Vision of Salisbury Market Square, it certainly needs a tidying up, but that can be done in conjunction, not as we've heard earlier from your [inaudible] with the trees being felled. It can still be done if you consult an arboricultural consultant ; it can still be done because there is furniture, particular tree furniture, which could be placed around the base of the trees which would avoid a hazard to pedestrians, would enhance the life of the tree, enhance the Market Square, and produce additional seating. You also state that you are going to plant mature trees. If you are by saying you are planting mature trees, talking of something in the region of say, 21 feet (7 meters) I don't know what it is because that hasn't been answered yet, they would take fifty years to attain a mature canopy. Now I'll be pushing up the daisies by then and so will a lot of people in this room. So we will be without our shade. Also, to go back to the hornbeam, they actually prefer as [inaudible] to grow on moisture from - they are used in towns but they need quite a lot of moisture. We are all being told that we are going to have longer, dryer summers, so it seems rather that strange that your expert should recommend a tree that happens to prefer moister, clay soil.

### **Jenny Bickerton**

Salisbury Vision state on their website that 'a comprehensive programme of public consultation was undertaken during January 2009. This included a three day public exhibition of the designs in the Guildhall attended by 1,246 people.' This was an exhibition of the six designs entered for the competition, not a consultation on the final design selected by Salisbury Vision. What report if any was produced as a result of the 'consultation'?

### **Response**

This document is available and has been placed on the Vision web-site.

**Malcolm Wilkinson**

Why does the proposed plan not see fit to respect the demarcation between the civic space in front of The Guildhall and the commercial area of the Market Place as is currently clearly, but subtly marked with a line of trees?

**Response**

The plans do include proposals to provide a different treatment to the hard surfaces on the Market Place and Guildhall Square area to ensure that the separate nature of these spaces is maintained.

The removal of the line of trees separating the two spaces has been an important component of the design from the outset. This will allow for a much more flexible use of the space for a wide range of activities including cultural and community events as well as the established markets and other activities in the city's calendar.

The plan illustrating this may be found here:

[http://southplanning.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-planning-application-documents/00462000/00461811\\_Site\\_Plan.pdf](http://southplanning.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-planning-application-documents/00462000/00461811_Site_Plan.pdf)

**Philippa Daniel**

How many signatures do you need before the Committee listens to the wishes of Salisbury citizens and many others, who come into the city regularly, before the idea of felling the trees is dropped.

**Response**

The Vision Board and Wiltshire Council is listening to the citizens of Salisbury. It is also listening to wider stakeholders who use and rely upon the space including the market traders and the business community.

The current petition has been raised against earlier proposals that have now been changed. This does not mean that the Vision is dismissing the relevance or importance of the petition but does call into question whether all the signatures on the petition would be there had the signatories had the benefit of the correct information.

If the signatories were armed with the knowledge not only of the damage the trees are causing but that their replacements will be creating a similar green effect within the space within a period of 5 years many may have taken a very different view.

**Barbara Farrel**

*Question 1*

Salisbury Vision say that appropriate trees will be 'planted in pits specifically

designed for the purpose'. According to the manufacturer of tree pits, the product assists architects in drawing up the specification - there is a CAD program showing how the product should be drawn in relation to different location scenarios. It simplifies the process for the contractors because the equipment clicks together quickly and simply and the planting is done using a single product code which is described as 'a real time saver'. There is no mention of an improved environment for the trees. Do Tulip trees which are described as 'towering to 36m' in the Collins Tree Guide have smaller roots than plane trees and does this mean that tree roots would not appear above the surface in 20-30 years time? If they do presumably they would have to be cut down and the process started again.

#### *Response to Question 1*

The problem of growing large trees in this type of environment is not unique to Salisbury. Best practice now indicates that the use of a cellular structure providing the necessary support with a rooting medium that should not be compacted by the traffic above is the optimum approach. There are a number of different providers of the material cells, most of which have derived from American manufacturers and practices. They all work on the basis of encouraging root growth at lower levels rather than immediately beneath the pavement slabs.

The Greenleaf RootCell tree pit system is designed specifically for the trees and the numbers of cells below ground is varied to take account of different species. The RootCells are structural, supporting the pavement above and allowing the void below to be filled with a soft growing medium in order to provide the roots with a healthy growing environment. The specification of this product has been placed on the web-site.

The tree officer from Wiltshire Council has confirmed that all the trees will be pruned on a regular basis to keep them down to a manageable size to allow on-going maintenance. An alternative would have been to specify smaller trees with smaller root systems, which was what was initially proposed. However after public consultation the smaller trees (*Pyrus calleryana*, *Chanticleer* and *Carpinus betulus Fastigiata*) were not considered appropriate for the Market Place.

It is correct to say that without regular management and maintenance we could have the same problem in 20 – 30 years time. However, by applying best practice, this situation can be avoided. We do know that the existing trees are causing problems already, and that there is no real solution, once the roots have shown that they are not happy proliferating at depth, rather than at the surface.

#### *Question 2*

Would Salisbury Vision explain why the tree specialist selected to do the tree report on Salisbury Market Place comes from Ashford in Kent when there are at least nine well qualified tree consultants in the Wiltshire/Hampshire area registered under the Arboricultural Association? Although Dr Jon Heuch, the Principal Arboricultural Consultant of Duramen, is said to be a

Professional Member of the Arboricultural Association, he is not one of their 45 registered consultants. As the report does not say who actually carried out the survey or what their qualifications are, I wonder if you would enlighten us.

*Response to Question 2*

Letts Wheeler Architects advised Salisbury Vision in the appointment of John Heuch BSc(For) PhD MICFor MArborA, of Duramen Consulting on the strength of his qualifications, previous work & experience.

It is correct that he has no personal connections with Salisbury. We do not however consider this to be a disadvantage. Indeed it could be argued that having no local associations is a strength, as we may be reassured that the advice we have received is completely independent and impartial - which it is.

Dr Jon Heuch carried out the tree survey. Jon is a forester by training and has over 10 years experience as an arboricultural consultant with over 25 years worldwide experience of growing and managing trees. He has worked for a variety of Councils in south east England as a locum tree officer and in a consultancy role. He has considerable experience of the interaction of trees and structures in the built environment and has acted as an expert witness in a variety of cases.

Dr Heuch is a professional member of the Arboricultural Association and a corporate member and Registered Consultant of the Institute of Chartered Foresters. He has served as a Trustee and Director of the Arboricultural Association since 2007, acting as Vice Chair 2008-2009 and Chair 2009-2010.