

## ACCESS ADVISORY FORUM

MONDAY, 27 MARCH 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Angela Clark (Chairman), Hughes (Vice-Chairman), Sharon Carrigan, Tim Clare, Manley, Robin Pemberton and Charles Hollingsworth

Also in attendance: Councillor Coppinger

Officers: Shilpa Manek, Gordon Oliver, Lynne Penn and Neil Walter

### ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The clerk began the meeting by asking for any nominations for the Chairman position. Councillor Hollingsworth proposed Angela Clark and this was seconded by Lisa Hughes.

This was **Unanimously Agreed** by the Forum.

### ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman, Angela Clark, proposed Lisa Hughes for the Vice Chairman role. This was seconded by Councillor Hollingsworth.

This was **Unanimously Agreed** by the Forum.

### CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed all to the Forum especially Eric Waters and Alison Hanscomb from Great Western Railways and Councillor Coppinger.

The Chairman informed the Forum that as of 6 April 2017, it would be illegal for taxi drivers to discriminate against wheelchair users or charge extra or refuse the fare.

Dominic Manley asked how passengers were to know the correct fares as he had been quoted £24 for a one mile journey. Lynne Penn informed the Panel that any issues should be reported to the Licensing team at RBWM with the license plate number or registration plate.

Lisa Hughes asked about therapy and guide dogs travelling with passengers in taxis, could they be refused? Lynne Penn informed the Forum that there was no reason to refuse the fare unless the driver had an allergy, in which case they could refuse but also must report to the authority.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Love and Julia White.

### MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting on 12 December 2016 were **Unanimously Agreed**.

### MATTERS ARISING

#### **6.1 Partnership Progress update (Achieving for Children, Optalis, Highways & Transport)**

Lynne Penn, Transport & Access Team Leader gave an update on the partnership progress. See attached.

Points raised by Forum Member included:

- Where would RBWM staff be located? Councillor Coppinger informed the Forum that all staff would remain as now except after the refurbishment of York House, Children's Services would join Adult Services there.
- What age did Children's Services cover up to ? Councillor Coppinger informed the Forum, the age was 25 years, however, for a period, both Children's and Adults would have involvement.
- Councillor Coppinger informed the Forum that benefits of the partnerships would include retention of staff as there would be more opportunities. Unitary authorities tend to be smaller and staff turnover tends to be high as a result of lack of opportunities.

## **6.2 Maidenhead Station**

Eric Waters and Alison Hanscomb, Great Western Railways, gave an update to the Forum on the main changes at Maidenhead Station. These included:

- There will be additional stairs on platforms 2 and 3 and on platforms 4 and 5 to allow a better flow of passengers.
- A new enhanced ticket office will be available.
- There will be ten gates in total, the southern entrance would have four gates instead of two.
- The entrance is being considered as currently it included more than one building which had too many pillars.
- The platforms will be extended to cater for the extra long CrossRail trains.
- The power supply will be increased in seven weeks.
- All trains will be fully electric. Currently these only operate between Hayes and London Paddington. After the increase in the power supply, they will travel between Maidenhead and London Paddington. And from January 2018, they will travel between Didcot and London Paddington.
- The carriages on the trains will increase, with eight carriages on all stopping trains and twelve carriages on the limited stop trains.
- Canopies will be extended, with two additional bays on each platform.
- The subways will be refurbished.
- Two current lifts on platforms 2 and 3 will be moved to a more central position. There will be a new lift on platform 1.
- All platforms will be raised for the ease of use for wheelchair users, however ramps would still be required. The issues of ramps and staff were discussed, especially when unbooked. The Forum was reassured that assistance would be available from the station office.
- Currently there are toilets on platforms 4 and 5, which are wheelchair accessible. There are no plans to increase the number of toilets.
- The coffee shop will remain as present.
- The latest design for the forecourt includes a wider pavement from the road to the station and disabled parking closer to the station entrance.

Gordon Oliver, Principal Transport Policy Officer, updated the Forum on the modelling work that was being carried out on the crossing between the town centre and the station. Options will be discussed at a meeting with the LEP on 11 April.

Councillor Hollingsworth enquired about a path behind the station leading to Grenfell Road and who owned it. It was suggested that it was owned by Network Rail.

The work would all be complete by December 2019.

### **6.3 Guildhall Access update**

Julia White, Visitor Manager, was unable to attend the Forum but sent the following update:

We have investigated options with Stannah to fit a wheelchair platform in place of the stair lift but they have advised it is not possible. I'm not aware of any progress as far as installing a lift into the building. I believe Margaret Kirby previously carried out a feasibility study and that a conservation officer was involved in discussions but I'm not sure that a firm proposal was put forward. There have been changes in staffing subsequently and I'm not sure who the project now sits with. My team is responsible for the sales and marketing of the venue and the building maintenance etc. sits with the property services team.

### **6.4 Nicholsons Car Park**

Neil Walter, Parking Principal, updated the Forum that he had no budget to install the barrier at Nicholsons car park but he was discussing with the lead Member. A case for the finances had been put forward and results would be known in few weeks. The Chairman stressed that this was unacceptable and that the finances had to be found as it was very dangerous site, putting the lives of ShopMobilty staff and users, at risk.

### **6.5 Local Access Forum**

The East Berkshire Ramblers were carrying out additional metrics on footpath access. Lisa Hughes had used illustrative examples to show what issues people faced especially at crossing points. Lisa Hughes had offered to go and identify issues with them. The footpath survey was due to begin. The Chairman was glad to see assistance from the ramblers.

## ITEMS

### **7.1 Consultations**

Lynne Penn, Transport and Access Team Leader, informed the Forum Members that there were no current consultations.

If anyone wishes to see the consultations online, they can be found at:

<https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/consultations>

### **7.2 Planning Applications**

Lisa Hughes had volunteered to look at future planning applications which would be of interest to the Access Advisory Forum and was happy to report that there were four applications:

- Council offices in Windsor, additional floor, require lift clarifications.
- 2 x Apartment buildings, disabled car parking spaces removed after application passed.
- Picture house, Bridge street, clarification on signage.

The Chairman requested feedback on these four applications.

**ACTION: Lynne Penn to take forward.**

### **7.3 Changing Places**

Changing Places toilets provide:

The right equipment

- A height adjustable changing bench
- A tracking hoist system, or mobile hoist if this is not possible

Enough space

- Adequate space in the changing area for the disabled person and up to two carers
- A centrally placed toilet with room either side for the carers
- A screen or curtain to allow the disabled person and carer some privacy

A safe and clean environment

- Wide tear off paper roll to cover the bench
- A large waste bin for disposable pads
- A non-slip floor

The borough has three changing place, they are all located in leisure centres, one in the Magnet, Maidenhead, one at Windsor leisure centre and one at Cox Green leisure centre. The borough looked at placing a changing place at the coach park in Windsor but two accessible toilets would have been removed so did not go ahead. There are many opportunities for the borough with all the regeneration taking place. Mobile changing facilities are also available at some public events.

#### **7.4 Review of Terms of Reference**

The Forum had previously looked at the Terms of Reference and the following changes were agreed:

- In section 1.2, Membership,
  - delete point five,
  - in point six, delete the word 'appropriate', add the words 'enabling' and 'to access services' so it should read "RBWM officers concerned with enabling people with disabilities to access services".
  - In point eight, add 'or representatives' so it should read "The Forum Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be service users or representatives. They shall be independent from the Council and shall be elected from amongst the members of the Forum".

#### **7.5 Access to River Street car park, Windsor**

Tim Clare informed the Forum that there were problems in reaching the ticket machine to go into the car park. This was resulting in the barrier not going up and traffic building up. Tim Clare suggested a chip be placed in blue badge passes that could be read from further distance.

Neil Walter suggested the two options that were being discussed, Automated Number Plate Recognition and/or a proximity reader. Neil Walter suggested that as a short term measure, the driver could call before reaching the car park in order for the attendant to be aware. Tim Clare highlighted that this would not be manageable for him and would take time.

The Chairman asked if there were any plans to increase the number of disabled bays at the River Street car park and was informed that there were no plans at present.

Tim Clare informed the Forum that one of the disabled bays in the car park at the library had hedges overgrown into it and therefore could not park there. Neil Walter would follow this up.

**ACTION: Neil Walter to inform the Streetcare team.**

Neil Walter requested that the Forum identify car parking spaces that could be used as disabled bays so he could include them in a review he was conducting. All suggestions to be sent to [Neil.Walter@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:Neil.Walter@rbwm.gov.uk)

## **7.6 Public Bus Services**

Lynne Penn informed the Forum of current bus services being tendered for a number of reasons. The tender process was due to complete on 27 March 2017.

### **Any Other Business**

Councillor Hollingsworth informed the Forum that he would offer support to Neil Walter for finances to put the barrier in the Nicholsons car park and speak to Councillor Cox.

Tim Clare suggested that all planning applications should be checked for lift size as currently lifts are too small.

Robin Pemberton informed the Forum that there would be an Autism display in the Nicholson Centre on Wednesday 29 March.

### **DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS**

The dates of the next meetings were noted.

The dates of the next set of meetings are as follows:

Monday 19 June 2017

Monday 25 September 2017

Monday 4 December 2017

Monday 19 March 2018

The meeting, which began at 11.00 am, finished at 12.40 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....