

LEISURE, CULTURE AND LIBRARIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

8 APRIL 2014

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Mellins (Chairman), Claire Stretton (Vice-Chairman), Clive Bullock, John Lenton, Marion Mills and John Penfold.

Non-members: Margaret Lenton, Jeff Lloyd, Councillors Natasha Airey, Mohammed Ilyas, Eileen Quick, Hari Sharma

Officers Robert Cowan, Steph James, Michael Llewelyn, Kevin Mist and Christabel Shawcroft and Mark Taylor.

PART I

60/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Peter Lawless.

Councillor John Lenton kindly substituted.

61/13 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Hari Sharma declared a pecuniary interest in item 6: Furze Platt Community Leisure Centre as he lived close to the location of the centre and was a governor of the infant school.

Councillor Mohammed Ilyas declared a pecuniary interest in item 6: Furze Platt Community Leisure Centre as he was a governor of the infant school.

62/13 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Part I and Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 22 January 2014 be confirmed.

63/13 MIDNIGHT MARKETS

The Panel received a presentation from Mr Jeff Lloyd, who had won the Bright Idea Challenge for his idea for a 'Midnight Market' in Maidenhead town centre.

Mr Lloyd informed the Panel that he was working with Steph James, Maidenhead Town Centre Manager, and Councillor Natasha Airey to make his bright idea a reality.

By way of background, Mr Lloyd explained that he was inspired when he visited La Rambla, Barcelona, Spain. The streets had stalls as well as living statues and portrait painters etc.

Mr Lloyd stated that a similar idea in Maidenhead town centre would involve the

local community, increase footfall and remind people to use their town centres as a place of community.

The Panel noted that setting an appropriate date which avoided school holidays and the football World Cup had been difficult. 12 July 2014 had proven to be the only available date. This was also the date of the World Cup third place play-off.

The 'Midnight Market' would take place from 6.30pm until 11.30pm. The set up time would be 5pm until 6pm.

The Market would take place in the town centre with a performance space at the Nicholson exit. On either side of the performance space would be rows of stalls and shops. Local food operators were being approached to take up a stall. There would also be funfair rides at either end of the stalls.

There would be live entertainment such as jugglers and living statues. Mr Lloyd informed the Panel that provisional bookings for these acts had been made and that, where possible, local acts were being booked to reduce costs.

Councillor Natasha Airey also noted that the market could be replicated in other areas of the Borough. It was a great starting point and could be developed in the future. The event would encourage people to use the town centre after work.

It was noted that television presenter Michael Parkinson, who had judged the Bright Idea Challenge, had ideas for involving chefs who he knew in the project.

Steph James, Maidenhead Town Centre Manager, stated that another reason it had been difficult to find an available date was due to the fact that there was something happening every weekend in Maidenhead Town Centre, such as the beer festival and Maidenhead festival.

The Panel noted that fixed traders such as coffee shops had been informed about the Market, however it was up to them whether they stayed open. Ms James informed the Panel that she did not see any licensing issues though she would look into the matter.

Mr Lloyd suggested that the Market could be replicated at different times of the year with a different feel, for example a Christmas market in the winter.

The Chairman suggested once the first Midnight Market had been completed, further Markets could be organised around the Borough. Councillor Claire Stretton suggested an Events Committee should be set up in each area. It was noted that the Market would be well placed in Ascot where the town centre was not very busy.

It was suggested that Councillor Richard Kellaway and his jazz band may wish to perform at the Market.

Mrs Margaret Lenton suggested that ideas from other cultures could be used as well. For example that of Shang Hai, with tai chi and ballroom dancing in the evenings.

Mr Lloyd was described as a great example of local people getting involved in

their communities. He was thanked for speaking to the Panel about his project.

64/13 MAGNA CARTA 800TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS UPDATE

The Panel received an update on the preparations for the Magna Carta 800th Anniversary Celebrations from Mrs Margaret Lenton.

On the evening of the meeting a meeting was taking place at the Mosque involving young people

A number of dinners were set to take place. On 14 March a dinner was to take place at Coworth Park which had been booked. Also, a dinner with Professor Carpenter as the guest speaker was take place in Windsor in April. In May an WAMCF event was to take place in Maidenhead, this had been organised by Kanail Pannu.

Churchmead School's photography department had produced a book mark to celebrate the anniversary.

The Panel noted what was happening in the schools. In years 5 and 6 upwards, pupils would write a modern version of the Magna Carta. Years 4 and below would study heraldry. It was suggested that Councillors encourage the schools in their Wards to get involved with this.

It was hoped that a conference of secondary schools would take place at St George's House, for which a bid had been made to the Prince Philip Trust. The primary schools taking part in the Dance Festival organised by Emma Fitzgerald will have the Magna Carta as their theme in 2015.

It was noted that school events needed to have finished by the end of March to avoid the examination season which would have new syllabuses to be examined in 2015. By ending in March this would allow time to display work in the cloisters of St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle. Residents who were Advantage Card holders would get a discount on entry to the Castle.

Other plans included a flotilla along the Thames which would run from Boulter's Lock in Maidenhead to Ankerwycke and Runnymede. Mrs Lenton and the Chairman of the Panel were working together to to organise this. This would essentially be a relay taking representatives of the Borough organisations who will take a copy of the Magna Carta with them. The flotilla was to be a public spectacle which was free. It was planned to take place the weekend before the main celebrations so events were not in competition.

Several boat operators expressed interested in getting involved with the flotilla. Once that was organised the next step would be to publicise the event.

It was noted that discussions were in hand to add jousting to be added to the Windsor Horse Show. Both Windsor and Maidenhead were to be decorated. There would be displays in museums and public places.

A celebration beer was being brewed especially for the anniversary.

Further, 'Windsoria' was to publish a special edition of their publication and the Slough Express had promised a page to help publicise events. A book was to be published by an American author on the subject of the Magna Carta.

It was noted that a number of activities were planned in Wraysbury:

- 6 June 2015 – Archery contest
- 11 June 2015 – readings and music by the Wraysbury Players
- 13 June 2015 – The Wraysbury Fair becomes a medieval fair and pageant
- 14 June 2015 – A peel rung at St Andrew's Church
- 14 June 2015 – 'Songs of Praise' to be held at Ankerwycke

An embroidery was being worked upon showing King John and the barons. This was described as almost finished by the date of the Panel's meeting.

A brochure was being produced which would be distributed to residents in Wraysbury providing information on the Magna Carta.

It was noted that the majority of events were self-funded, however the flotilla and the jousting would both require sponsorship. It was noted that RBWM should get more involved with the 800 Committee. It was stated that this could be a 'talking shop' however the Borough needed a voice on the committee and it could lead to an improved chance of getting funding.

Mrs Lenton informed the Panel that organisation of the anniversary was taking place in cooperation with Runnymede's organisers so that events were complementary and not competitive.

It was noted that on 15 June 2015 the American Bar Association would have their refurbished statute unveiled by the Queen.

It was noted that the project was picking up momentum.

65/13

FURZE PLATT COMMUNITY LEISURE CENTRE

The Panel received a report and PowerPoint presentation from Kevin Mist, Head of Leisure Services, regarding the Furze Platt Community Leisure Centre.

It was noted that, after consultation with Sports England, concern was raised regarding the viability of the existing facilities. Therefore the report made recommendations to Cabinet to replace these facilities. This included a new cricket wicket, an all weather pitch for school football and hockey, and four fenced multi-use play areas for tennis and netball. The recommendations also included a new gym, refurbished changing rooms and a new entrance with a café.

If the recommendations were approved it was expected that community use would increase. The existing dance studios were noted as being in good condition and more community use was expected. Officers were working with the school to find a way to get greater community use out of the theatre studio.

It was noted that the building work would be isolated to minimise the effect on

school life. The all weather pitch would take 16 weeks to build.

The Panel noted that the school was keen for the development to take place as it would benefit pupils as well as the community. Some of the funding for the project came from the school budget. It was noted that the developments of Cox Green and Charters were at a high standard and better than many private facilities and the Furze Platt Community Leisure Centre would follow this trend.

Councillor Hari Sharma spoke on behalf of Cllr Derek Sharp and himself as the Furze Platt Ward Councillors stating that they were both in favour of the development. Councillor Mohammed Ilyas echoed the positive comments of his fellow Councillors.

It was suggested that the people involved with the Cox Green and Charters developments be involved with this, sharing their experience. The Panel was informed that this was already being done.

Councillor Sharma noted that there was concern from members of the public regarding the height of floodlights. It was noted that the floodlights would be approximately 12-15 metres high. However Councillor Clive Bullock informed the Panel that the Cox Green development had had similar concerns. Now that the Cox Green facility had been built there had been no comments from residents.

The Panel fully endorsed the project and wanted it to press ahead with full speed.

RESOLVED: That the Panel notes the contents of the report and welcomes the following recommendations to Cabinet:

- 1. Add the construction of a “joint use school and community leisure facility at Furze Platt School” to the 2014/15 capital programme with a budget of £1.6m gross, £400k net of grants, s.106 contributions and school contributions.**
- 2. Authorise the Deputy Managing Director and Strategic Director of Adult and Community Services and Lead Member for Leisure and Libraries to:**
 - (a) Conclude a facilities agreement with Furze Platt Senior School;**
 - (b) Include the operation of the facility within the negotiations for a concession contract in respect of the Council’s Leisure Centres;**
 - (c) Undertake a tender process for the construction of the facility;**
 - (d) Let the contract to the lowest acceptable tenderer.**
- 3. Approve a press release to be issued confirming the creation of the new community leisure facility in due course.**

66/13 INSTALLATIONS OF FUN

The Panel received a short update from Steph James, Maidenhead Town Centre Manager, regarding Installations of Fun. As the project was not ready for launch Ms James gave only a brief outline of plans for the 'Installations of Fun' project in Maidenhead.

It was noted that there was a high vacancy rate of shops and footfall in the town had fallen.

Projects such as 'Art on the Street', the produce market and the street food festival were examples of improving footfall. The Installation was intended to also improve footfall. Furthermore, there would be sponsorship opportunities, it would celebrate the history of the town, and would be fun and colourful.

The project would be launched to businesses in the upcoming few months. The project would not be ready for the summer of 2014 however there was a lot going on.

Members of the Press would be informed as soon as further information was available.

67/13 REVIEW LIST OF PUBLIC ART

The Panel received a review of public art in the Borough from Mark Taylor, Head of Libraries, Arts and Heritage.

It was noted that Cabinet had adopted a Public Art Masterplan in 2011 which had grown out of the area action plan. The plan was drafted principally to focus on the improvements envisaged in Maidenhead Town Centre however the principle of commissioning and decommissioning of public art were to be applied across the Borough. It was noted that guidance was available to developers.

Funding was mainly available through money gained through s.106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990, whereby developers contribute a proportion of the cost of their development for the Council to spend on Public Art and Heritage projects which are agreed as part of an annual process. It was noted that there was a smaller proportion in Maidenhead than there were in Windsor. Examples included new displays for museums and funding for archaeological digs. A small contribution had been given to Maidenhead heritage centre for a new display.

The Panel noted the vast majority of the balance of s.106 receipts for Public Art and Heritage (£400,000) was allocated to the Waterways Restoration project focussing on the York Stream in Maidenhead. Other projects receiving smaller sums of money included increased facilities at the Firestation Centre for Arts and Culture which included the installation of lifts to increase accessibility, enhancements to Windsor and Royal Borough Museum including new displays for 'Horton finds', as well as increased accessibility and interpretation for key historical places including blue plaques, information panels, walking trails and arts trails.

Funding for projects relating to Arts and Heritage in Bray, Old Windsor, White Waltham Parishes and Eton Town Council was delegated to those Councils for decisions about spending within their areas. The opportunity was available to all Parished areas of the Borough. 4 parishes involved in the ETA were looking at establishing an art trail to link Bridge Street and High Street.

It was noted that, as an alternative to making a s.106 contribution, developers could commission artists to create site specific works to be installed as part of the building process. For example the Kidwells Close redevelopment where the features of the entrance were visible from the road. Funding for developers who commissioned their own schemes was negotiated with council.

Local individuals who made private donations from fund raising activities were encouraged to use the guidance.

The Panel considered a list of potential opportunities for public art. These were subject to funding becoming available. It was noted that the aspirations of councillors and residents should be that people should want to visit Maidenhead.

Members noted that the Maidenhead locator system, a geographic co-ordinate system, was invented in Maidenhead.

The Panel noted that objectives had been set for the lighting of the bridge carrying the A4 over the River Thames.

The Panel also noted plans to conceal building work during the development work to take place in Maidenhead using a shroud. The shroud would then be used as a backdrop for a projected slide show of local artwork. It was noted that projections could be moved around the town. This was to be discussed by the Regeneration Board. However there was no capital dedicated to this scheme. Members suggested developers might wish to advertise on the projections.

Members also suggested electronic signs could be used to display events to pedestrians; however they noted that previous meetings of the Panel had ruled out signs for road users on road safety grounds.

Councillor John Penfold noted that a large number of wealthy people lived in the Borough and they might be encouraged to fund developments.

RESOLVED: That a Task and Finish Group be undertaken to review funding and priorities for Public Art in the Borough.

68/13

DESBOROUGH SUITE

The Panel received an update from Councillor Eileen Quick regarding the Desborough Suite improvements.

It was noted the minutes of the previous meeting in January give an adequate background to the developments. Since January, a steering group had been organised which included members of the visual arts community, representatives from Norden Farm and The Firestation as well as Council

officers and Councillors MJ Saunders, Claire Stretton and Eileen Quick.

The steering group had had 2 meetings by the time of the Panel's meeting. Several companies had expressed interest in carrying out the feasibility report however only two applicants had met the specific criteria that the steering group required. From the two, DJS was appointed to carry out the feasibility study.

Councillor Eileen Quick informed the Panel that a DJS representative had attended the second meeting of the steering group. The discussion at this meeting made sure DJS fully understand what RBWM expected of the report.

It was hoped that by the 3rd meeting of the steering group, consultation will have taken place with residents, especially with people who don't usually engage with entertainment in Maidenhead. It was noted as important that the plans include as many uses as possible, be flexible and future-proof.

Councillor Claire Stretton noted that the representation of Norden Farm, the Fire Station and visual arts community was important. This would help focus the project on identifying 'entertainment gaps' rather than encroaching on what is already provided. The upcoming publication of an interim report was noted as being useful.

The DJS Consultation was only for the Entertainment Gaps Survey. Consultants for the main work had yet to be selected however it was hoped that by the end of summer 2014 Cabinet would be presented with a complete blueprint of the project and the feasibility study would be integral to this. It was stated that the project would really enhance life in Maidenhead.

Councillor John Lenton highlighted a need to consider cost as well as identifying gaps.

Councillor Claire Stretton clarified that the project was being paid for from profits of commercial elements of the Maidenhead rejuvenation, rather than from Council Tax. £1.5-2million had been reinvested.

The Panel noted and approved of the project.

69/13

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

The Panel received an update from Steph James, Maidenhead Town Centre Manager, regarding Christmas Celebrations.

The Panel noted the celebrations in Windsor. New Christmas lights had been installed. The lights had been switched on by celebrities from the theatre production including Basil Brush and the event had been very popular. Residents had had the opportunity to see Santa and his reindeer, the event had included twelve elves, school helpers and a local marching band. A 'Living Advent Calendar' had been organised which involved twenty four surprise events in Windsor. It was noted that this idea would be used in Maidenhead in the upcoming Christmas celebrations. Events had been advertised through leaflets in the Windsor Observer as well as via social media and the RBWM website.

In Maidenhead, it was noted that free Saturday parking had been a success. Footfall in the town centre increased from 7.6% in November to 13.4% in December. It was noted that officers would lobby for free Saturday parking again in the run up to Christmas 2014. In a survey of businesses, 37% of respondents stated that business was better than in previous years and noted free parking as a reason for this improvement. The fireworks display was also noted as good value for money. Maidenhead had also enjoyed a light switch on and the opportunity to meet Santa's reindeer; however this had been on a smaller scale compared to Windsor. Local community groups such the Rotary Club had raised money. Also, 70,000 leaflets had been distributed door to door which promoted click and collect in recognition of changing consumer habits. Events had been advertised via social media and the town's website enjoymaidenhead.com.

The Panel noted that the Borough provided a location but did not pay for the ice rink in Windsor. This was organised by a 3rd party promoter as a purely commercial venture. As a result organisers were selective when it came to location. Maidenhead was noted as unsuitable to promoters and for the Council to organise one and cover the cost would be too expensive.

Councillors Marion Mills stated that she had attended the light switch on. She noted that there had been a good balance regarding the entertainment with rides available for both younger children and teenagers.

The Chairman suggested a Christmas market could be organised for Christmas 2014, in the style of continental Christmas markets. However the Panel noted the need to support local traders, which was Borough policy, as opposed to inviting traders from the continent to attend. It was noted that the lights switch on had involved stalls and it was suggested this could be extended into a market however there were no dates available as every weekend running up to Christmas 2014 had events already scheduled. It was suggested that the use of social media could gauge if people wanted more from the market. Ms James noted that it would be sensible to bolster the existing market.

Councillor John Lenton noted that there was a successful Christmas market in Bath which opened for a greater period of time. He also noted that Windsor was a more suitable venue for a market. It was also noted that any such event should not take business away from existing business, rather it should increase trade and footfall in the town centre.

Councillor Marion Mills also noted that there was a market in Hyde Park which was popular. She suggested suitable ideas and inspiration could be taken from both the Bath and Hyde Park markets.

It was noted that the local butcher in Furze Platt also has a stall on Saturday mornings in Maidenhead town centre.

RESOLVED: Steph James be invited to a future meeting after July 2014 to discuss Markets.

70/13 FUTURE MEETINGS

The Panel discussed how the Panel's meetings could be better scheduled.

It was noted that this had begun with the scheduling of meetings to consider the 'Integrated Performance Monitoring Reports' (IPMR), however the Chairman asked the Panel to consider if further changes could improve the efficiency of the Panel.

Councillor John Lenton suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels should be spaced out more.

Councillor John Penfold noted that the RBWM yearbook dates should be sacrosanct and meetings should not be rearranged after this was produced.

RESOLVED: That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman discuss possible changes and circulate to Panel Members electronically.

71/13 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman took the occasion to inform the Panel of reports which had gone to Cabinet without the Overview and Scrutiny Panel having the opportunity to consider them. There were two reports which the Chairman gave a brief update on.

Members noted the work programme as detailed in the agenda with the addition of two further items.

RESOLVED: That the following items be added to the work programme:

- **For the additional May 2014 meeting, 'Museum Accreditation' be added to the agenda.**
- **For the meeting after the July 2014 meeting, 'Midnight Markets' be added to the agenda.**

72/13 MEETING

The meeting, which began at 6.30pm, ended at 8.40pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....