

COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 22ND NOVEMBER, 2022

At 7.00 pm

in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, MAIDENHEAD,

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
5.	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u> Written responses	3-10

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a) David Buckley of Datchet ward asked the following question of Councillor Rayner, Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor

Windsor being one of the largest tourist locations in the UK. I understand there is an ongoing shortage of hotel rooms for both the tourism and business sector. Have the Council considered restricting local hotel use to tourists, business visitors using any laws or regulations available. This would increase income for the local economy and support the growing tourism sector.

Written response: Hotels fall within Use Class C1 of the Use Classes Order which includes hotels boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided and must be used for these purposes. There are a variety of reasons why people may legitimately stay in a hotel and there are no laws or regulations which would enable a Local Authority to prevent certain types of guests.

It may be of interest that there is currently a planning application under consideration in respect of Windsor Yards (Ref: 22/02893/FULL) which seeks to provide additional hotel and apart-hotel accommodation for visitors. The application is currently undergoing public consultation and the Council would welcome any comments on the proposals.

b) Ed Wilson of Clewer and Dedworth West ward asked the following question of Councillor Hilton, Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot:

Why is the Council's medium term financial plan showing a need for £7M+ savings in 2023/24?

Written response: The medium term financial plan published as part of the budget papers in February 2022 already included a shortfall of £4.883m for 2023/24. This was mainly caused by inflation assumptions (£2m), demographic growth (£1.5m) and reduced NNDR funding (£708k). Further details are shown in Appendix 1, Annex A of the February Budget Report to Full Council. The updated MTFP presented to Cabinet in July and Full Council in September included revised assumptions for increases in inflation and interest rates that increased the potential shortfall to over £7m.

c) Ed Wilson of Clewer and Dedworth West ward asked the following question of Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport:

Noting that Maidenhead now has a new £12m car park, what improvements are being made to existing car parks in the Royal Borough?

Written response: Approximately £150k will be spent on car park improvements throughout the borough in 2022/23 including resurfacing of Windsor Leisure Centre, lighting improvements in Multi Storey Car Parks as well as general repairs. Currently there is a £200k capital bid for 2023/24 for car park improvements and the draft budget will be considered by Cabinet on 1st December.

d) Mohammed Ilyas of Belmont ward asked the following question of Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport:

Well done RBWM for listening to local residents and putting forward steps to improve safety of the highway in Ellington Park, Belmont.

What Highways budget will be set aside for safety improvements such as this, over the next year. In particular addition of zebra crossings outside schools for example as the one already outside St Luke's School in Belmont.

Written response: *The draft budget will be considered by Cabinet on 1st December which will include a draft capital programme for next year. The papers for that meeting will be published shortly so it would be inappropriate to comment on the detail at this stage. All residents and stakeholders will have the chance to comment on the proposals and. I can reassure you that road safety is a high priority for the borough. Our intention is to bring forward appropriate budgets to enable delivery of capital projects to tackle road safety issues and delivery of our Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan.*

e) Mohammed Ilyas of Belmont ward asked the following question of Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport:

Will the Cabinet member for Highways and Transport indicate as to why a bus service route has not yet been approved nor is one in service now for the residents and Community groups in Holmanleaze following the removal of public parking in the area due the start of development on St Cloud Way?

Written response: *Whilst the start of the St Cloud Way development has seen a reduction of available car parking at the former Magnet Leisure Centre, part of the car park is still available for use with other options nearby. I would be happy to engage with any residents or community groups with concerns to help understand the problem we are trying to solve and what appropriate solutions might be.*

f) Hari Sharma of Furze Platt ward asked the following question of Councillor Bhangra, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside:

Furze Platt Conservatives in 2014-2016 set up two play areas called Moffy Hill & Shifford Crescent in the ward. These play areas are very popular and well used by our children. It's been a while now since it was installed.

Can you assure residents these rides and furniture fitted in there have been inspected regularly and safety checks conducted recently?

Written response: *All play areas that the borough has responsibility for are inspected regularly, including those at Moffy Hill and Shifford Crescent Open Spaces, which are inspected three times a week. In addition a more detailed monthly and annual inspection of all play areas is undertaken by independent play inspection companies to ensure that the play areas are safe to use. Health and Safety inspections also take place regularly for our nature reserves, parks and open spaces.*

g) Hari Sharma of Furze Platt ward asked the following question of Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport:

Central Government is to provide £60m to help bus operators cap single adult fare at £2 / child at £1 per journey. As I understand, most cities outside London are bringing these fares in to help residents during this cost-of-living crisis. When will residents of the Royal Borough get a reduction of their bus fare and start paying £2?

Written response: *The scheme has been set up such that the bus operators have to apply directly to Government for the grant to support the offer. We are working closely with operators through the Borough's Enhanced Partnership to try and take advantage of this opportunity. From our discussion I can confirm that several are actively looking at this. Further detail will be available from the Department for Transport in Mid-December on the details of the grant and therefore we will continue to work with them to try and bring this forward for the benefit of residents.*

In addition to this, as part of our plans in the run up to Christmas there will be further offers on public transport. In partnership with operators, we will be offering free travel on supported bus services on selected Saturdays leading up to Christmas, including the days of the Windsor and Maidenhead switch-on events. You can travel for free when you board within the borough on 19 November, 26 November, 3 December and 10 December on the following services: Thames Valley Buses routes 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 53, 127, 234/235 and 238/239, and White Bus route 01.

h) Jack Douglas of Pinkneys Green ward asked the following question of Councillor Bhangra, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside:

Regarding the proposed agreement with the Lawn Tennis Association for investment in the hard courts at Kidwell's Park, and other parks in the borough, what is the current utilisation of courts by residents, what is the expected utilisation after the scheme is in place, and how is usage measured?

Written response: *The current usage is not monitored due to the open access currently available at the sites within the proposal.*

Future demand/use is derived by using the following information / expected to be as follows:

The LTA use a penetration number as a measure of confidence that a park tennis site will attract sufficient player numbers to be sustainable. Where it is around or above 1000, they have high confidence that this will be the case and therefore look to invest in those facilities.

The LTA get the penetration figures using Periscope mapping software which contains demographic data based on postcode locations. Using this demographic data they divide the population into different tennis market segments i.e. predicting what sort of tennis offer will be most attractive to people in each segment. They then look at those segments most likely to be casual players who would choose to play in a park setting (compared to e.g. a more formal tennis club setting) and take a percentage of those

populations to make a prediction about the number of people we can realistically expect to come and play tennis at each of the venues.

The penetration figures and available court hours for the RBWM sites are as follows:

Goswells Park – 965 penetration figure, 10,512 court hours.

Desborough Park – 1,124 penetration, 7,008 hours

Kidwells Park – 1,167 penetration, 13,104 hours

Usage based on LTA data is projected to be made up of 7% of court hours booked via pay as you go, and 23% of the target households purchasing an annual membership (number of households is penetration figure divided by 2.4) utilising courts in addition to pay as you go. Pricing and charging options have yet to be confirmed, and some free sessions are also required under the terms of the funding agreement which will provide additional usage.

Future usage will be monitored via the LTA's ClubSpark booking platform and the use of access control gates.

i) Sajid Khan of Furze Platt ward asked the following question of Councillor Bhangra, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside:

Could the Council inform as to whether the budget funds have been allocated for works for a path between the Christian and Muslim burial areas at Braywick Cemetery. If not, for what reason has this not been completed, as this had been discussed with the Council over the past year?

Written response: There are a number of works that are being priced to be completed this financial year in Braywick Cemetery including works to extend the Muslim and Church of England sections to allow more grave space. It is not currently feasible to implement the works for the path as this would reduce the available burial plots.

j) Question withdrawn

k) Debbie Ludford of Oldfield ward asked the following question of Councillor Cannon, Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection:

Ozone is a gas which is damaging to human health and can trigger asthma attacks and inflammation of the respiratory tract, eyes, nose and throat. Ozone can also damage crops. RBWM doesn't currently measure Ozone, but at nearby Hillingdon and Harlington, ozone levels consistently exceeded the WHO limit during the July heatwave. Why isn't RBWM measuring ozone levels?

Written response: Ozone is not currently incorporated into the Local Authority Air Quality Management (LAQM) Regulations. The responsibility for assessing and achieving this objective sits with Central Government and the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

There are no direct sources of emissions for ground-level ozone. The formation of ozone is complex and depends on meteorological conditions. Ozone can form hundreds of kilometres away and then travel throughout the atmosphere. Unlike nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter 10 (PM₁₀) pollutants, ozone cannot be managed locally but forecasting services (the same for ultraviolet radiation) can help alert vulnerable individuals.

The two mentioned monitoring sites are part of DEFRA's national Automatic Urban and Rural Network (AURN) which is used for compliance reporting against the Ambient Air Quality Directives and forecasting services.

l) Michael Young of Oldfield ward asked the following question of Councillor Cannon, Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection:

CALA Homes Environmental Impact Assessment for the golf course refers to traffic volume monitoring. The M4 motorway now has 33% additional capacity since it was upgraded to be a 'Smart' motorway. Will this be taken into account when assessing the potential increases in air pollution in the borough?

Written response: Yes. Development proposals need to assess the potential air quality impact because of traffic generated by the proposed development. Traffic data is used in the air quality models to predict future pollution levels. Traffic data from RBWM's Strategic Transport Model factors in the cumulative impact from other planned developments and future traffic growth.

m) Tara Crist of Riverside ward asked the following question of Councillor Cannon, Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection:

Recent studies have linked air pollution to dementia, irregular heartbeats in teenagers and toxic air pollution particles have been found in the lungs and brains of unborn babies. How is it possible for RBWM to achieve National Air Quality Objectives by 2025 when it doesn't measure 90 per cent of pollutants which have National Air Quality Objectives?

Written response: The current air quality objectives incorporated into Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Regulations in England include nitrogen dioxide, PM10 and sulphur dioxide. RBWM are currently meeting the objectives.

The national air quality objectives for Benzene, 1,3-Butadiene, Carbon Monoxide and Lead have been met nationally for several years. There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) for these pollutants across the UK so local authorities do not have to report on these pollutants. Moreover, there are no significant sources (for example, heavy industry) of emission for these pollutants (and for sulphur dioxide) within the borough so there is little justification for these pollutants to be measured locally.

n) Tina Quadrino of Pinkneys Green ward asked the following question of Councillor Carroll, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation:

This council says it recognises air pollution as a major health risk, ranking alongside cancer, heart disease and obesity. It shortens lives and damages quality of life. How can this council take the appropriate steps to protect the health of residents if it doesn’t monitor air pollution properly?

Written response: *The current air quality objectives incorporated into Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Regulations in England include nitrogen dioxide, particular matter 10 (PM10) and sulphur dioxide. The Council are currently meeting the objectives.*

The Council has an extensive monitoring network including 40 diffusion tubes and 3 monitoring stations all monitoring nitrogen dioxide and the monitoring station at Frascati Way also monitors PM10 - road traffic is main source of pollution. The Council publishes an air quality Annual Status Report (ASR) that is also appraised by DEFRA. Air quality in the Borough is generally good and in recent years has markedly improved. Current nitrogen dioxide and PM10 levels are well below the national air quality objectives.

The national air quality objectives for Benzene, 1,3-Butadiene, Carbon Monoxide and Lead have been met nationally for several years. There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) for these pollutants across the UK so local authorities do not have to report on these pollutants. Moreover, there are no significant source (for example, heavy industry) of emission for these pollutants (and for sulphur dioxide) within the borough so there is little justification for these pollutants to be measured locally.

o) Will Scawn of Belmont ward asked the following question of Councillor Cannon, Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection:

Having spoken to residents in my local area of Belmont, I understand there may be increased levels of anti-social behaviour on the footpath/alleyways that connect roads in Belmont. What measures is the Council taking in order to tackle anti-social behaviour on these important paths and to ensure the safety of residents?

Written response: *Our reported incidents and data into our Anti-Social Behaviour inbox does not show any increase in levels of ASB in the Belmont area. We would encourage residents to report incidents through the ASB inbox highlighting the type of ASB, location and time; this will help us build and accurate picture of activity and enable us to direct our resources accordingly. The Community Wardens have been asked to conduct various Environmental Visual Audits to assess our alleyways and pathways as part of our safety drive to help women and girls feel safer. We would be happy to include locations within Belmont if more information could be supplied to anti.social@rbwm.gov.uk*

p) John Hudson of Oldfield ward asked the following question of Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport:

RBWM's Environment & Climate Strategy states 'The role of the natural environment in creating great places is critical to the success of the borough economy & to our residents' health & wellbeing, therefore it is important we take steps to protect it.'

How is the proposed development of the golf course remotely compatible with your environmental and climate strategy statement?

Written response: *The site was allocated within the Borough Local Plan which promotes a sustainable pattern of development for the Borough until 2033. The plan aims to provide for high quality new housing in the right places, including affordable housing, family housing and accessible housing, whilst at the same time meeting employment needs and protecting our valued natural and built historic environment and assets. During the plans evolution it was strengthened by increasing the emphasis on placemaking and tackling climate change, recognising that the Royal Borough declared an environment and climate emergency in 2019.*

The council is in the process of finalising a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for South-West Maidenhead which is scheduled to be discussed at Cabinet in December for adoption. This will set out our expectations on the development across a wide range of issues including delivery on biodiversity net gain and low carbon development. This will help to ensure that the development is consistent with our Environment and Climate Strategy, while also contributing to other essential sustainable development goals. In addition, the council expects to be in position to adopt a new Environment and Climate SPD next year which will support delivery of the Environment and Climate Strategy through the planning process, building on our current interim sustainability statement.

q) Claire Huntley of Belmont ward asked the following question of Councillor Carroll, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation:

Particulate Matter is microscopic pieces of solids or liquids suspended in the air we breathe. Particulate air pollution is toxic and scientific research has consistently demonstrated adverse health effects including asthma, lung and throat cancers, and premature death. How will this council protect residents from the harmful effects of the extra particulates generated by the development planned for our greenbelt?

Written response: *PM10 is monitored at Frascati Way, Maidenhead. The recorded annual mean concentration decreased from 25 µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic meter air) in 2016 to 19 µg/m³ in 2021. These levels are well below the national air quality objective of 40 µg/m³.*

Within the development of Local Borough Plan the council has undertaken a detailed air quality assessment across the borough. The dispersion modelling study shows low level concentrations for PM10 and PM2.5 within the five AQMAs. The predicted levels show full compliance with the air quality objectives and there is no identified risk that the objective may be exceeded in the future.

Development proposals would need to assess the potential air quality impact during both the operational and construction phases and demonstrate that these impacts can be sufficiently mitigated to prevent dust nuisance and/or the risk of exceeding the air quality objectives.

r) Hilary Su of Oldfield ward asked the following question of Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport

Please could we get an update on the footpath and cycle path in the Maidenhead Town Moor area? It's frustrating to residents so it would be great to know when it can be completed.

Written response: I appreciate the frustration of residents as we complete the final phase of this important project and thank you for your patience. The main bridge construction works are now complete and the project team are working hard to complete the remaining elements so that the Town Moor can be reopened, with the target to provide public access again by Christmas.