

WINDSOR TOWN FORUM

THURSDAY, 8 OCTOBER 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Jack Rankin (Acting Chairman), Malcolm Alexander, Hashim Bhatti, John Bowden, Samantha Rayner, Shamsul Shelim and Ed Wilson (sub for Natasha Airey).

Also in attendance: Councillors George Bathurst, John Collins and Colin Rayner. John Bastow (Windsor Neighbourhood Plan), Andrew Melville (Windsor & Eton Society), Helen Price (West Windsor Residents Association), Trevor Robinson (resident), Anne Taylor (Windsor & Eton Society) and Garry Williams (resident).

Officers: Ian Church, Chris Hilton, Tanya Leftwich, Helen Leonard, Gordon Oliver and Neil Walter.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Natasha Airey – Councillor Jack Rankin agreed to chair the meeting.

The Acting Chairman informed everyone present that the meeting was being recorded and would be uploaded to the RBWM website.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor George Bathurst stated that he was present as a member of the public for the Windsor Link Railway Progress Update item.

Councillor Colin Rayner and Samantha Rayner declared personal interests in the Windsor Link Railway Progress Update item as the railway could potentially go through their land.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 18 June 2015 were approved as a correct record subject to the bullet point on page vi 'That the bus stop furniture in Clewer South be reviewed as some was felt to be damaged' being changed to state that the review had already taken place.

ATEGI SHARED LIVES & HOMESHARE

The Acting Chairman welcomed the Homeshare Co-ordinator, Michelle La Garde, to the meeting and invited her to address the Forum.

The Homeshare Co-ordinator informed Members that Ategi had two schemes that were running which were:

- Shared Lives Scheme.
- Homeshare.

Members were informed that the Shared Lives Scheme arranged accommodation and support to vulnerable adults in the homes of carefully chosen people living in the community. It was noted that these people were called Shared Lives Carers. The Homeshare Co-ordinator explained that they were actively recruiting for carers.

Members were informed that the Homeshare scheme was a way of helping people to help each other by matching people with different needs, who both had something to offer. It was

noted that a householder was someone, often an older person, who needed help and / or companionship and had a room for someone to stay in. It was noted that a homesharer was someone looking for accommodation and in exchange could offer approximately ten hours help (e.g. cooking, cleaning, shopping and gardening) a week.

The Homeshare Co-ordinator requested that if Members knew of anyone or any organisation that they could link the non-profit organisation to then that would be really helpful. Contact could be made with the Homeshare Co-ordinator via michellee@ategi.co.uk

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That over the past eighteen months six matches (12 people) had been made with regard to the Homeshare scheme.
- That the Shared Lives Scheme in Bucks had been running for seven years and had made over forty matches.
- The biggest issue for the Shared Lives Scheme was recruiting carers in the Bucks area.
- That these schemes were funded by the Royal Borough for three years as well as by the Homeshare Co-ordinator attending local Forums and events. It was noted that Ategi made promoted these schemes by making contact with GP's, churches, leisure centres and would be manning a stall outside Marks and Spencers tomorrow for anyone who was interested.
- That contact with Age Concern / Age UK had been made by Ategi.
- That Homeshare was for a minimum of one year in order to retain continuity although a long-term commitment was ultimately the aim.
- Helen Price explained that the West Windsor Residents Association were promoting the Homeshare scheme on their website and she would welcome feedback as to whether it was felt the marketing had been successful.

The Homeshare Co-ordinator explained that she would be leaving leaflets on both schemes and her business cards for anyone who was interested. The website address was noted to be www.ategi.org.uk

The Chairman thanked the Homeshare Co-ordinator for Ategi for attending the meeting and addressing the Forum.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGET CYCLING SCHEMES

The Principal Transport Policy Officer, Gordon Oliver, gave Members an update on the Participatory Budget Cycling Schemes. It was noted that there had been £225,000 allocated funds in 2015/16. Members were informed that 1500 responses had been received from residents of the Royal Borough. It was noted that for the area wide schemes residents had voted for £40,000 to be spent on road and footway repairs, £5,000 on parking and £5,000 on cycling improvements.

Members were informed that the safety in Victoria Street multi storey car park would be improved by the installation of CCTV. It was also noted that cycle racks were to be installed in Barry Avenue, Alexandra Gardens and possibly Bachelors Acre which were locations that had been identified in consultation with Leisure Services.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That Maidenhead Road would be unsegregated shared use once completed.
- That the CCTV in the Victoria Street Car Park would allow the Council and Police to identify individuals involved in assaults and also help combat the issue of vagrancy and drug use.
- It was noted that the CCTV monitors were located at Tinkers Lane.

- It was agreed that the Principal Transport Policy Officer would email Councillor Edward Wilson with the number of votes received from people living outside the Royal Borough.
- That the Council was notified in advance of cycle rallies due to take place in the Royal Borough which allowed officers to check that no conflicting events would occur.
- Councillor Colin Rayner explained that as Lead Member for Highways and Transport he was in the process of putting together a paper that would go to Cabinet stating that events such as cycle rallies needed to be booked a year in advance and it would request that they did not finish events in Central Windsor (preferably finish at venues such as Windsor Racecourse, etc).

The Acting Chairman thanked the Principal Transport Policy Officer for the update.

HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS TO WINKFIELD ROAD / IMPERIAL ROAD (FUTURE PLANS & SUMMER TRAFFIC)

Councillor Colin Rayner gave Members an update on highways improvements to Winkfield Road / Imperial Road. It was noted that an announcement had been made at Full Council that the Planning Team were to consult all residents and users of Imperial Road and Clewer Road junction area.

Members were informed that the scheme options were for alternative methods of junction control, to endeavor to deal more effectively with the existing volumes (and possible future traffic growth) and reduce queuing between the junctions and on the approaches.

It was noted that queuing at both junctions could be experienced during the regular commuter peaks. However, it was during the summer months and on busy days for the local visitor attractions that the greatest queuing tended to occur. Members were informed that the traffic signals were able to make decisions using vehicle detection equipment to adjust the phasing times on a real time basis in order to respond to varying flows on each arm. It was noted that where heavy traffic persisted over an extended period of time, the limited physical space available and the need to serve numerous movements, could lead to gridlocking of the junctions. This was particularly the case during the summer, where queues could extend back towards the M4 at junction 6.

Members were informed that there were two options currently being suggested which could be found on the RBWM website:

Option A:

- Small roundabout at Imperial Road / St Leonard's Road junction.
- Clewer Hill Road traffic to give way at Winkfield Road with a 'no right turn' restriction from Clewer Hill Road (traffic can use new roundabout to turn or seek alternative route).
- Longer length of right turn lane into Clewer Hill Road.
- Tighter radius on kerb for left turn into Clewer Hill Road to improve safety and offer increased turning opportunities for traffic to turn right into Clewer Hill Road and left out of Clewer Hill Road.

Option B:

- Mini-roundabout at Winkfield Road / Clewer Hill Road junction.
- Priority from Imperial Road into St Leonards Road west and east.
- Priority from St Leonards Road western arm into Imperial Road.
- St Leonards Road (east arm) to give way at Imperial Road with a 'no right turn' restriction also in place (traffic can use new mini-roundabout to turn or seek alternative route).
- St Leonards west to St Leonards east to be served using long right turn lane.

It was noted that traffic modelling had been carried out over the summer and that the traffic lights had been manually operated over the summer months.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That the Town Partnership, local businesses and the Town Forum would be consulted as part of the public consultation.
- That the two traffic light systems were different makes and therefore did not communicate effectively with each other.
- Councillor John Bowden requested that the residents living in close proximity to the junctions (e.g. those on Winkfield Road, Clewer Hill Road, etc) be written to personally to inform them of the works. Councillor Colin Rayner confirmed that local residents would receive a letter and a leaflet notifying them of the options. It was noted that it had also been requested that a resident's sub-committee be created so that local views could be voiced.
- That after the consultation period it would be brought back to Full Council in the New Year.
- It was hoped that the installation works would be completed by early spring (avoiding Bank Holiday weekends).
- That no venue or date had been set yet for the public consultation but that the press would be informed and notices / posters put up once these details had been confirmed. It was noted that a two page article would also be placed in the Around the Royal Borough newsletter.
- That people who were unable to attend the public consultation would be able to comment via a website.
- Councillor Shamsul Shelim explained that he found the traffic in the Bracknell / Bagshot to the M4 area to be congested and stated that he felt an option to divert traffic would need to be found.
- That if the option decided upon did not work the Council would ensure enough funds were available to change the junction back to its former state.
- That these options were not for Legolands benefit but to ease the traffic in general.
- That the traffic lights installed in 2006 was not part of a Council led scheme.
- That it was believed that if the traffic flow could be improved it would in turn have a positive effect on pollution levels.
- That there would be a period of 3-4 weeks of traffic getting used to the new scheme.
- That signage with regard to the new scheme would be needed in the Royal Borough.
- That details about the public consultation could be found at http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/highways_consultations.htm .

The Chairman thanked Councillor Colin Rayner for the update.

WINDSOR LINK RAILWAY PROGRESS UPDATE

The Director of Development and Regeneration, Chris Hilton, gave Members an update on the progress of the Windsor Link Railway. It was noted that the Director of Development and Regeneration had joined the Council in the summer of 2014 and during his time at the Council had had a number of discussions with Councillor George Bathurst on this subject.

Members were informed that the Windsor Link Railway Limited was a privately promoted project.

It was noted that to date the Council had not formally made a commitment or otherwise to this project. Members were informed that Windsor Link Railway Limited main request was that the Council supported the project and granted options on Council owned land.

The Director of Development and Regeneration explained that the Council first needed to assess the viability of the project, assess and risks associated with it and whether it would be sensible to allocate public funds to fund it. It was noted that this could be done via the Neighbourhood Plan or a Referendum process to see if the public wanted to support the project. Members were informed that over the next couple of months a paper would be presented to Cabinet regarding due diligence work so that a view could be taken as to whether the project should be taken forward.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That the Council would consult at a later date.
- That the Planning Department was very busy at the moment and was in the process of recruiting new officers (New Regeneration Manager, etc).
- Councillor Edward Wilson stated that as a private individual he would want the Council to do a feasibility study and do due diligence on it at no cost to him.
- The Director of Development and Regeneration explained that if someone had an idea to help the Council meet its housing targets the Council would work with them to help make it work.
- That a Borough Local Plan was emerging which could potentially feature the Windsor Link Railway in it. It was noted that car parking was also an issue including the flow in and out of Windsor.
- It would be Cabinets decision as to whether the Council wanted to spend money on due diligence and employing independent advisors if advisors were felt to be necessary.
- That the Director of Development and Regeneration would have to take advice as to which Overview and Scrutiny Panels the Cabinet report would go to.
- The Director of Development and Regeneration stated that he believed a feasibility study would cost approximately £30,000.
- Councillor John Bowden questioned where the technical knowledge would be coming from and whether the stations would be large enough to cope with a ten coach train.
- Helen Price questioned whether the project would be made up of phases and if felt unacceptable could the project be stopped at phase 1 to help reduce costs to which the Director of Development and Regeneration answered 'yes'.
- That the project had been 'on the cards for seven years'. That the Council had put an online survey on the RBWM website to get thoughts from residents. It was noted that the statement asked for feedback on something of incredible magnitude whilst lacking back-up information on the project. The Director of Development and Regeneration explained that this feedback was for the Borough Local Plan and whether there was an aspiration to include this project or not.
- Anne Taylor explained that the Windsor & Eton Society had sent a long letter back to the Council in response to the request for feedback mainly about the lack of information provided. It was suggested that when the public consultation took place information about car park entrances and exits and the infrastructure of buildings needed to be readily available. It was noted that the National Trust land implications should also be made clear rather than just the positive points. The Director of Development and Regeneration explained that addressing points of access would be addressed as part of a planning application.
- That over a year ago Windsor had been divided into two Neighbourhood Plans and that the business area had received information on the Windsor Link Railway project. It was noted that at that time it had been argued that not enough sufficient information had been provided to cover such a strategic issue.
- The Director of Development and Regeneration explained that he believed the Borough Local Plan should refer to the Windsor Link Railway as it was suggested as a possible solution to connectivity issues in Windsor.
- The Director of Development and Regeneration stated that he believed with two Neighbourhood Plans currently taking place an Area Action Plan (AAP) would be too much all at once and that the Council should wait for the Neighbourhood Plans to run their course and then decide if an AAP was needed.

The Acting Chairman thanked the Director of Development and Regeneration for the update.

UPDATE ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

The Planning Officer – Strategy & Plans, Ian Church, gave Members an update on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plans. It was noted that the Planning Officer – Strategy &

Plans had been involved with the Neighbourhood Plans since December 2014 and that there were two Neighbourhood Plans for Windsor:

- A Central Windsor Business Neighbourhood Forum - Windsor 2030.
- A Windsor Neighbourhood Plan – based on the outskirts of Windsor and residential areas.

The Planning Officer – Strategy & Plans explained that both plans were making good progress. It was noted that the Windsor 2030 Neighbourhood Plan was in the process of drafting policies and also working to appoint planning consultants as the planning policy could be quite a complex process. It was noted that the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan was slightly further ahead and had appointed its consultants and was in the process of drafting its planning policies.

Members were informed that once the Neighbourhood Plans had gone through the consultation and examination processes, and if they received over 50% 'yes' vote in a referendum it would become part of the Development Plan.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That the general public needed to wait for the formal six week pre-submission consultation process in order to be able to make comments. It was noted that the pre-submission consultation process could potentially start in November for the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan.
- That the Neighbourhood Plans would then go to a public examination to ascertain whether the statutory requirements had been met, etc probably towards the end of spring next year.
- That it was too early to say whether the Neighbourhood Plans would be presented as one plan or two.
- That it was up to the Neighbourhood Plans as to whether they allocated sites for new housing.
- It was noted that if the Plan was not successful at examination it could be re-submitted.
- That there had been an investment of £20,000 from the Royal Borough to each group.
- That a lot of people gave up their time and effort in forming the Neighbourhood Plans and that it was felt a shame that more people were not involved. It was noted that help and views were always welcome and that being involved was not very time consuming for something that was considered to be a very important democratic process. It was noted that those interested could leave their contact details if they wished to be contacted by post or email.

The Acting Chairman requested that his thanks to everyone involved in the two Windsor Neighbourhood Plans be minuted.

The Acting Chairman thanked the Planning Officer – Strategy & Plans for the update.

TREE STRATEGY UPDATE

The Arboricultural Co-ordinator, Helen Leonard, gave Members an update on the Tree Strategy. It was noted that at the last meeting a resident had been concerned about the loss of trees in Windsor and had requested a tree planting scheme.

The Arboricultural Co-ordinator explained that there was a tree planting scheme on the RBWM website (<http://maps.rbwm.gov.uk/adoptatreemap.htm>) and that 54 trees had to date been proposed to be planted in winter which would be added to. It was noted that the Council was also encouraging residents to sponsor tree planting in addition to an adopt a tree scheme that the Council was running.

The Arboricultural Co-ordinator went on to explain that the Council was offering 1,000 trees to residents on a first come, first served basis in the form of tokens in the Around the Royal

Borough magazine that could be presented at the Braywick Heath Nursery from the 9 September – 30 November 2015. It was noted that the Council was looking to re-run the scheme next year and promote smaller trees for smaller gardens.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That Capital Funding had allowed the tree sponsorship scheme to take place without the need of spending sponsorship. It was noted that less than ten per year had requested to sponsor a tree in the Royal Borough.
- That the adopt a tree scheme was a fairly recent project and one which would be actively promoted in the future.
- That another article in the Around the Royal Borough magazine could be produced.
- That green spaces needed adequate space to make large tree planting sustainable.
- That litter in tree pits (area at the bottom of a tree) was not the Arboricultural Co-ordinators teams remit and was down to the street cleansing team. It was noted that the Council did appreciate it when residents helped to keep tree pits clean.
- That the Council was looking for areas that trees could reach maturity whilst avoiding pavements lifting by having adequate underground root growing areas.
- That native species of trees were available to plant by residents.
- That cutting off suckers on trees was added to the Councils programme of work if it was believed the tree would throw up suckers on a yearly basis.

The Acting Chairman thanked the Arboricultural Co-ordinator for the update.

CENTRAL WINDSOR ISSUES (INCLUDING TRAFFIC, PARKING AND SPEED AROUND THE TOWN)

The Parking Principal, Neil Walter, gave Members an update on Central Windsor issues. It was noted that changes to River Street Car Park were due over the next two to three months with the replacement of the pay and display system to a barrier display system. Members were informed that a number of teething problems had been raised as a number of private businesses entered and exited the Car Park including the Bowls Club. It was noted that the car park would be fully monitored 24/7 by a private company. The Parking Principal explained that the system could be developed in the future to incorporate blue badge free parking, etc and deliveries. Members were informed that the Parking Principal would like to put a scheme in so payments could be made online and where the barrier would recognise cars and lift automatically on entry and exit.

The Parking Principal informed Members that the loading bays in Thames Street had been changed to allow general use in evenings. It was noted that the visitors and residents of Windsor were benefitting from the free parking in the evenings.

Members were informed that the Council was continuing to review where additional parking could be freed up in Windsor along with the removal of pay and display parking and business parking in Francis Road, Adelaide Square for resident's benefits.

The Parking Principal explained that there were approximately 17 schemes in various implementation / development stages in Windsor. Members were informed that the Council was looking to make parking available at the Great Park.

It was noted that the Council continued to speak to residents regarding scheme requests and stated that there were currently over 270 schemes on the list. Members were informed that the Council hoped to do 150 schemes per year and that this year over 200 schemes had already been completed to date.

The Parking Principal informed Members that the Council was currently working on an overarching parking strategy for the whole of the Royal Borough which was planned for early

next year. It was noted that the initial drafts were currently being worked on and that approval would be sought over the Christmas period.

Members were informed that with regard to traffic congestion a potential scheme to remove 100 coaches from the Coach Park and relocate them to Windsor Racecourse was under discussion. It was noted that the Council was also looking at ways in and out of Windsor (particularly the Windsor Girls School and St Leonards Road area) to help free up traffic. The Parking Principal requested that the Highways Team be contacted if specific areas needed to be looked at.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That the Thames Street improvements had made a big improvement but that a resident felt that taxi drivers were abusing the parking spaces that had been made available outside Zizzis which was resulting in very little benefit to residents. It was suggested that an off-site taxi rank be created so taxis could wait elsewhere. The Parking Principal explained that the taxi drivers were well within their rights to park in the spaces outside Zizzis.
- The Parking Principal stated that Maidenhead had an abundance of free on-street parking unlike Windsor and that it would be wrong of him to suggest that Windsor should lose its only free parking bays. It was noted that whilst the Parking Principal would be happy to put in pay and display for the three parking bays outside Zizzis he did not believe it was something that would be supported by residents.
- That advantage card machines were checked on a daily basis to ensure they were working correctly. It was noted that the advantage card machines were very old and that the Council was looking at new technology to move away from the need to have cards.
- Councillor John Bowden stated that the bollards were working on Peascod Street and questioned the numbers going past at 11:00 and what was being done about the shop owners having free parking. It was requested that parking supervisors be asked to keep an eye on the area to ensure it wasn't being used inappropriately. The Parking Principal explained that the area was monitored by CCTV cameras located at Tinkers Lane. It was agreed that the Parking Principal would ask why vehicles were being allowed to park in the area outside specific hours.

The Acting Chairman thanked the Parking Principal for the update.

STREET SCENE UPDATE (CAFÉ ENCROACHMENT)

The Parking Principal apologised to the Acting Chairman and explained that he had not been briefed to cover this item. It was noted that he would ensure someone from the Highways and Transport Team attended the next meeting to give an update.

LOG OF FORUM ITEMS & CURRENT STATUS

The Acting Chairman referred everyone to the spreadsheet on pages 1-3 of the agenda that the Clerk had created and would continue to update which showed a log of the items that had come to the forum and their current status. It was agreed that this spreadsheet would be updated on an ongoing basis by the Clerk.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the dates of the future meetings were as follows:

- Monday 15th February 2016.

Any items suggestions for the next meeting were requested to be emailed to the Chairman (Clr.Airey@rbwm.gov.uk) and / or the Clerk (tanya.leftwich@rbwm.gov.uk).

- ❖ It was requested that an item on speeding be brought to a future meeting – specifically on roads such as Osbourne Road, St Leonards Road and Sheet Street.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 8.40 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....