

**AT A MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber -
Town Hall on Tuesday, 13th December, 2016**

PRESENT: Councillors Sayonara Luxton (Chairman), John Lenton (Deputy Chairman) and Councillors Natasha Airey, Malcolm Alexander, Christine Bateson, Malcolm Beer, Phillip Bicknell, John Bowden, Paul Brimacombe, David Burbage, Stuart Carroll, Gerald Clark, John Collins, David Coppinger, Carwyn Cox, Judith Diment, Simon Dudley, David Evans, Dr Lilly Evans, Marius Gilmore, Jesse Grey, Geoff Hill, David Hilton, Charles Hollingsworth, Maureen Hunt, Mohammed Ilyas, Lynne Jones, Richard Kellaway, Paul Lion, Philip Love, Asghar Majeed, Ross McWilliams, Marion Mills, Gary Muir, Eileen Quick, Jack Rankin, Colin Rayner Samantha Rayner, Hari Sharma, Julian Sharpe, Shamsul Shelim, Adam Smith, John Story, Lisa Targowska, Leo Walters, Simon Werner, Derek Wilson, Ed Wilson and Lynda Yong

Officers: Rob Stubbs, Russell O'Keefe, Alison Alexander, Simon Fletcher and David Scott

98. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Airey, Bhatti, Bullock, Pryer, Richards, Saunders and Stretton

99. COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2016 be approved.

100. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hunt declared an interest in the item 'Central House, Maidenhead' as she owned a property in the town centre. She remained in the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Hill declared an interest in the item 'Central House, Maidenhead' as he owned a property in the town centre. He remained in the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Clark declared an interest in the item 'Central House, Maidenhead' as he owned a property in the town centre, not near the site. He remained in the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Dudley placed on record his thanks, on behalf of all councillors, to Simon Fletcher, Strategic Director of Operations and Customer Services as this would be his last meeting before leaving the council.

101. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor submitted in writing details of engagements that she and the Deputy Mayor had undertaken since the last meeting, which were noted by the Council.

The Mayor explained that the Housing Benefits team had worked exceptionally hard to deliver significant improvements to the way the Council delivered benefit services to its residents. Using new technology and redefining the way they interacted with residents they had significantly reduced the time taken to process new claims and changes in circumstances. In 2015-16 the borough was the best performing unitary council in the South East, and the best across the UK for processing new claims.

The improvements had led to avoidable contact in the Customer Service Centre reducing by 57% and resident satisfaction with the service increasing to 94%, the highest for any service across the whole council. In addition they had delivered significant financial efficiencies. The team were finalists in two categories in this year's prestigious Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation Awards, recognising the great improvements made. The council was very proud of their achievements.

The Mayor highlighted that she had attended some very interesting and humbling events over the last two months, including Christmas parties for disabled children. She had also been present when the German delegation had presented a Christmas tree to the town in Windsor. She thanked the Mayoral team for all their support during 2016.

102. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

a) Bethan Osborne of Belmont ward asked the following question of Councillor N. Airey, Lead Member for Children's Services

Can you confirm given the Leader's recent statement "*free school meal figure at (Sir) William Borlase school was a disgrace*" that RBWM will not be progressing a satellite option with them or with any other grammar school?

Councillor N. Airey responded that evidence from a number of reviews, including the Sutton Trust in 2008, indicated that disadvantaged pupils eligible for free school meals were under-represented in traditional grammar schools for a variety of reasons. The same reviews showed that on average pupils who attended grammar schools achieved slightly higher results than a similar cohort in comprehensive schools.

The Royal Borough was ambitious for all its school children in the borough and wanted to provide the best education for all, taking into account the family preferences for education type including faith, gender, comprehensive or selective. To that end the borough had committed £30m to provide more school places at Windsor Boy's and Girls', Dedworth Middle School, Charters in Ascot and both Cox Green and Furze Platt in Maidenhead.

The borough wanted to explore innovative ideas from any school or educational body which addressed the need to raise the level of attainment for disadvantaged pupils while offering increased choice of high quality education to all residents. Officers had written to Sir William Borlase Grammar School to see how they might address their historic lack of disadvantaged pupils as part of any proposal they might make.

Until such time as the Government confirmed any new regulations that would allow the creation of new selective education places, a satellite option remained the only legal option to any local authority and she would therefore not rule out such a possibility

By way of a supplementary question Ms Osborne asked if the Lead Member could explain why the council believed it was appropriate to bring selective education to the borough when it knew that Borlase had just three children eligible for free school meals whilst the nearby secondary modern Cressex had 170, representing 22% of the school. Buckinghamshire had one of the largest attainment gaps in the country. Could she explain why it would be a good idea to partner up as a satellite with a school that offered so few places to free school meal children? If social mobility was an important issue, given the evidence in neighbouring authorities, why did RBWM think it would be different in the borough?

Councillor N. Airey responded that the report to Cabinet was responding to a consultation and clearly stated the safeguards that would be put in place to ensure disadvantaged pupils would not be excluded, for example a test that could not be tutored for, allowing entrance at different ages and limiting the proportion of selective places across the system.

b) Bethan Osborne of Belmont ward asked the following question of Councillor N. Airey, Lead Member for Children's Services

How can the council claim to be increasing Parental Choice when selective education will deliver a Grammar School for just 20% of children and, by default, a Secondary Modern to the remaining 80%?

Councillor N. Airey responded that data published in the November cabinet report 'Improving Choice in Education' set out the statistics about borough residents seeking school places from other local authorities. With 13% opting for those places last year, the provision of selective places inside the borough would obviously increase residents' choices.

The contention that just because there was some selection other schools would automatically be less desirable did not follow. Existing schools already delivered excellent education. Borough secondary school performance in 2016 meant that the Royal Borough was ranked the 9th highest local authority in England for pupils achieving A*-C in English and Maths at GCSE. The council was committed to building upon that success with schools that met the needs of all of residents and the council had invested £30m in the expansion of the existing schools so that parents had a choice of excellent schools within the Borough.

In considering or responding to any proposal for selective places, the Royal Borough would consider particularly the impact on existing comprehensive schools and the free school meals attainment gap. Consideration would need to be given to what measures could be introduced to offset these impacts such as: limiting the proportion of selective places; making places specifically available to children from disadvantaged backgrounds; using a test that could measure ability but could not be practiced; and allowing entry to grammar schools at different ages.

It was not the intention that the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead become a selective education system alone; the council wanted a rich and varied community of schools that all provided excellent education for their pupils and offered all parents choice.

By way of a supplementary question Ms Osborne asked if the Lead Member was aware of the work in Birmingham on selective schools which operated quotas for free school meal children. Was the Lead Member aware that the average was 4.4%? How did she think quotas would work in the borough?

Councillor N. Airey responded that she would be meeting with the Excellent Education for Everyone group and asked Ms Osborne to bring the evidence along to that meeting. Legislation had yet to go through to allow selective education; the Cabinet report was responding to a government consultation. The borough had stated safeguards for any school or institution looking to establish selective education. The council wanted to ensure a fair policy.

c) Andrew Hill of Boyn Hill ward asked the following question of Councillor Dudley, Leader of the Council

Following RBWM's unsuccessful September challenge to the ICO ruling, do you now accept in full the finding that because it was not "necessary" to the democratic function of investigating your alleged conflict of interest, it was therefore not lawful to publish the political affiliations of members of the public who raised concerns about your actions?

Councillor Dudley responded that the Information Commissioner's Office accepted the challenge by RBWM and advised the council on 7 October 2016 that they had decided there had been no Technical Breach, as they had originally indicated. However on 18 November the ICO wrote again to say they had reviewed their decision and decided to change their decision. They had now advised the council that although RBWM had provided the local resident involved with the opportunity to review the report in question prior to publication, she did not to request any amendments. The ICO had provided the borough with some further advice which was welcomed, and would be used and acted on going forward. The council also noted that the ICO had chosen not to apply any sanction to the borough in connection with this matter. The council did not accept that it had acted unlawfully

By way of a supplementary question Mr Hill asked, given that the ICO said that the release of personal data without consent amounted to the interference with an individual's right to respect of his or her privacy and was protected by Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and given this statutory protected right was apparently misunderstood over eight months by two Monitoring Officers, the Information Governance Manager and the legal team appointed in September, did the Leader agree that in the public interest that the decision notice should be independently re-examined by a Law Society recommended practitioner with acknowledged expertise in the area of data protection.

Councillor Dudley responded that the council did not accept that it had acted unlawfully.

d) Andrew Hill of Boyn Hill ward asked the following question of Councillor Dudley, Leader of the Council

In August Councillor Dudley argued that the Council must "stop complaints" that are "politically motivated". The Monitoring officer must now pre-approve public questions, throwing out those that are deemed "politically motivated". I have demonstrated dangers in the Monitoring Officer's understanding and use of

this sensitive data. Please define “politically motivated” and state whether this pre-vetting will be urgently reviewed?

Councillor Dudley responded that no changes had been made to the Constitution with regard to Public Questions. The procedure for Public Questions to Council remained as set out in the Borough’s published Constitution, in Part 2 Section C9. This had not changed. There was no pre-vetting or pre-approval by the Monitoring Officer and there was no ‘politically motivated’ definition to define.

By way of a supplementary question Mr Hill stated that he had made a Subject Access Request for the documentation relating to the case. On 19 August Mr Tubbs said that ‘if my memory serves me right, I recall saying on the telephone that I did not feel that RBWM was really involved in the matter, the comments were those of the councillor’. Mr Tubbs seemed to be saying that RBWM was not the publisher and not really involved, which was obviously wrong. RBWM had to be involved and had to publish.

Councillor Dudley responded that he would ask the Monitoring Officer to write to Mr Hill personally

103. PETITIONS

Councillor Rayner presented the following petition:

‘The Windsor and Eton Society would like RBWM to restore quarterly meetings of the society with officers and local Councillors. The meetings cover relevant planning, conservation and environmental issues affecting Windsor and Eton but were stopped by RBWM for no apparent reason in December 2015.’

Councillor Rayner explained that the Windsor and Eton Society was founded in 1946. During its seventy years the society’s views and perceptions had changed but the one thing that had remained central was the commitment to preserve, protect, promote and improve features of historic or public interest in the towns of Windsor and Eton and their surrounding areas. Windsor was unparished so the Society felt it was particularly important that it had some enduring participation with planning, development and conservation in both towns. Furthermore the Society had a large amount of local and historical knowledge which had been used to benefit a positive and effective relationship with local councils, officers and councillors in the past. For that reason, ongoing quarterly meetings with RBWM planning officers and councillors were initiated in 2000 to discuss local planning and environmental issues and all involved found these meetings extremely useful. These meetings were, unfortunately, abruptly stopped in December 2015 with no reason given. In this context, the Windsor & Eton Society respectfully requested that the ongoing meetings with RBWM be reinstated and offered the signed petition in support of this.

The Mayor ruled that the petition be submitted to Cabinet.

Councillor Rayner left the meeting at 8.00pm

104. CHANGE TO COUNCIL TAX EMPTY AND UNFURNISHED EXEMPTION

Members considered removal of the discretionary one-month, 100% empty and unfurnished in line with many other local authorities with effect from 1 April 2017. The Lead Member explained that the net effect was that the council would collect a further £325,000 in council tax, £267,000 of which would be retained by the borough.

Councillor Werner welcome the proposal following an expose by the Maidenhead Advertiser. He commented that there was so much more the council could be doing about empty homes in the borough to bring them back into use, rather than building on the green belt.

The Leader responded that he had met with the Housing Minister and had requested that the upcoming White Paper include something to encourage the reuse of empty properties. Councillor Werner responded that there was so much that could be done under existing legislation, this was important when the green belt was being sacrificed.

It was proposed by Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Dr L Evans, and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Council:

- i. Approves removing the one-month Council Tax exemption for empty and unfurnished properties (previously known as Class C discount), with effect from 1 April 2017.**

105. INITIAL SAVINGS IN RESPECT OF 2017-18

Members considered savings proposals to reduce the council's expenditure by £6,107,000 in 2017-18.

Councillor Rankin explained that in the interest of transparency and openness, the report lay out in summary how the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) presented and approved by Full Council in February 2016 would be achieved. Very little in the report should surprise Members at the overwhelming majority of the recommendations had been through Overview and Scrutiny, Cabinet or Employment Panel. There would be more detail at Cabinet on 15 December and again in the new year. It was important to give clarity on the bigger picture to demonstrate the MTFP could be achieved and to add transparency so the savings were not buried in the budget book. Councillor Rankin proposed additional wording to the recommendation to reflect the Cabinet process still to come, following comments from the Opposition.

It was noted that authorisation at this stage would allow for the full-year effect. Naturally each saving would be signed off by the Lead Member and Strategic Director.

Councillor Rankin proposed an additional recommendation to primarily reduce duplication in the council and streamline processes that would wrap up the Participatory Budget schemes and roll them into the Grants Panel process.

Councillor McWilliams commented that the report clearly set out the vision for the council, which was further down the line of transformation than other councils. The council was using its land holdings prudently and was working with the private sector and third sector to ensure the challenges of a reduced budget were met.

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Councillor Dudley thanked all officers for their work in putting the budget together, and Lead Members and councillors who had also been involved. Savings of £6.1m were being achieved whilst investing heavily in areas such as home to school transport, temporary accommodation for vulnerable residents, social workers and the planning department and increasing grants to voluntary organisations.

Councillor Coppinger commented that all were aware that adult social care was a national crisis as people were living longer. Over the last two years the borough population had risen by 1.1%. The population aged over 65 had risen by 5.6% and aged over 85 had risen by 8%. This put a tremendous strain on services. Every year the council added funding to the adult social care budget to deal with the increase. In the previous year costs had to be covered by underspends in other directorates and the use of reserves. Yet there had been no cut in services. The council had taken advantage of the adult service precept to increase spending by £3m, with no cut in services. The council was moving towards a joint service through Optalis to take advantage of efficiencies through scale. The council had helped develop the Frimley Park Sustainability and Transformation Plan to prevent hospital admissions. The list of savings in adult services amounted to £1.3m, without one cut in service.

Councillor E Wilson commented that none of this was easy; tough choices had to be made. The council was doing the right thing in the right way to ensure a balanced budget,

Councillor Werner commented that at Overview and Scrutiny he had heard about a reduction in CCTV. He had been consulted by officers about the removal of CCTV in Pinkneys Green. He reminded Members that the CCTV had been introduced as part of a package of measures to deal with trouble on one estate in the ward. Removing it could bring back the trouble. In relation to highways he was aware that a number of councils had privatised their services in this area, but some had come back in-house a few years later. He cautioned that the proposal would cost money and affect services. The recent Nobel prize winner in Economics had undertaken an analysis of open-ended contracts and came to the conclusion that if you wanted good services to residents you kept them in house. He would not be able to support a privatisation paper. In relation to IT, Councillor Werner commented that external contract often ended up costing more money.

Councillor Dudley responded that in relation to CCTV each Member had been contacted to see if they would be interested in having it removed. The borough had more cameras on for more time than any other local authority in England. He had recently discussed the proposals with the Superintendent who had given support, confirming the proposed levels would give the level of oversight required by the police.

Councillor Hill stated that IT services were not being privatised. The data centre would be moved to a co-hosting centre to reduce costs. The proposals took into account that the structure of the council was changing.

Councillor Jones commented that with a reduction in central government funding and reductions in council tax over the last few years the savings were necessary. She had not been able to support previous budgets but recognised that given the budgets there was no option. She had concerns going forward as although the savings were necessary, she could not agree with some of the things providing them.

Councillor Brimacombe reminded Members of the Fundamental Service Review process that had been undertaken across the council. This process had led to Directors bringing forward a refreshed transformation programme in March 2016. The process had a long gestation and difficult decisions had to be made; there was no easy place to go for savings. However it had the provenance of a strategy that had been thought out and published. Directors had been before the Audit and Performance Review Panel to explain their proposals.

Councillor Bicknell commented that you could do nothing; this administration was always doing something and adapting for the future. He referred to the contract with Veolia that meant that on average there were less than 10 missed bins in the borough. If other services went the same way, the council would have a fantastic set of contracts.

Councillor Rankin commented that he felt Councillor Werner's comments were an unfair characterisation; the council was facing challenges from both government and demography. To overcome these it needed to think differently. The proposals did not represent privatisation, all sectors were being looked at, along with best practice elsewhere. He highlighted that details about the plans for Revenues and Benefits had gone to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny in October; for Highways in December and for Streetcare in September.

It was proposed by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor McWilliams, and:

RESOLVED: That Council notes the report and:

- i) Authorises Strategic Directors in agreement with Lead Members to develop the proposals and carry out implementation once Cabinet process had been completed.**
- ii) Authorises the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Head of Finance and Lead Member for Finance to make the necessary changes to the constitution to omit the Cabinet Participatory Budget Sub Committee and related references, following the meeting scheduled for 19 December 2016, and revise the Grants Panel Terms of Reference to enable this rationalisation to be implemented.**

(47 Councillors voted in favour of the motion - Councillors Natasha Airey, Malcolm Alexander, Christine Bateson, Malcolm Beer, Phillip Bicknell, John Bowden, Paul Brimacombe, David Burbage, Stuart Carroll, Gerald Clark, John Collins, David Coppinger, Carwyn Cox, Judith Diment, Simon Dudley, David Evans, Dr Lilly Evans, Marius Gilmore, Jesse Grey, Geoff Hill, David Hilton, Charles Hollingsworth, Maureen Hunt, Mohammed Ilyas, Lynne Jones, Richard Kellaway, John Lenton, Paul Lion, Philip Love, Sayonara Luxton, Asghar Majeed, Ross McWilliams, Marion Mills, Gary Muir, Eileen Quick, Jack Rankin, Samantha Rayner, Hari Sharma, Julian Sharpe, Shamsul Shelim, Adam Smith, John Story, Lisa Targowska, Leo Walters, Derek Wilson, Ed Wilson and Lynda Yong. 1 Councillor voted against the motion – Councillor Simon Werner.)

106. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- a) Question submitted by Councillor Yong to Councillor Cox, Lead Member for Environmental Services**

What byelaws are in place to prevent spitting and public urination in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, and does his department have plans to introduce new byelaws to prevent these problems?

The Lead Member responded that there was a specific byelaw for urination only, drafted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972; namely, Byelaw 20: "No person shall urinate or defecate in a public place".

However, since the drafting of this byelaw, the most appropriate method of addressing the issue now sat within the Environmental Protection Act 1990, for which a £75 fixed penalty notice (FPN) could be issued (reduced to £55 if paid within 10 days). Two FPNs for this offence had been issued in 2016/17. The arm of the legislation had not been used historically for spitting, but would be looked into to see if it could be changed. No new bye laws were foreseen. However, the use of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) could be used to improve the situation.

Councillor Yong, confirmed she had no supplementary question.

b) Question submitted by Councillor E. Wilson to Councillor S. Rayner, Lead Member for Culture and Communities:

Will the Lead Member confirm community use agreements are now in place for the Dedworth Community All Weather Pitch and similar pitches across the Borough?

The Lead Member responded that a Community Use Agreement was in place for the all weather pitch at Dedworth Middle School and at similar pitches across the borough. This allowed Dedworth to have use of a top class facility in school hours, and community use at other times. She thanked all the volunteer coaches. There were a number of all weather pitches located at other schools in the borough, all were subject to use agreements based on legally binding facilities agreements. The pitches at Charters Leisure Centre had been used by the community for over 10 years via the lease agreements with the Charters Recreation Trust and the School. The pitches at Cox Green Leisure Centre were on land owned by RBWM and use by the school was governed by a facilities agreement, as was the case at Furze Platt.

Councillor E. Wilson, by way of a supplementary question, asked whether a Community Use Agreement was in place on day one as was promised.

The Lead Member responded that unfortunately this had not happened due to school holidays, however it was now in place.

c) Question submitted by Councillor Lion to Councillor Bicknell, Lead Member for Highways and Transport:

Will the Lead Member explain why Streetcare sanctioned a drop kerb on Clare Road and was this decision communicated to and developed with the ward members?

The Lead Member explained how a resident could achieve a 'cross over run up' or dropped kerb, allowing motor vehicles to cross a public footpath on to their land. The highways department had a system in place which contained a set of criteria to allow or not allow a resident or business to do this. The cost included a fee for officer time to check for utilities such as gas pipes and water mains under the cross over point and

the construction which was carried out using preferred professional contractors. One of the major factors was that any vehicle crossing the footway must not hang out obstructing the footpath.

It was not part of the current process to involve ward councillors unless it was controversial for some reason. That said he would be more than happy to arrange a meeting with officers for Councillor Lion and any other ward councillors to attend in the new year.

Councillor Lion confirmed he had no supplementary question.

d) Question submitted by Councillor Jones to Councillor Coppinger, Lead Member for Adult Services and Health:

Could the Lead Member detail the smoking cessation targets and why they are not being achieved?

The Principal Member for Public Health responded that this was a targeted service focussed on high risk individuals. The targets were 220 four week quits per annum, specifically, 88 (40%) pregnant service users, 44 (20%) mentally ill persons and 88 (40%) young people under 18years. Additionally 130 four week quitters at 12 weeks using the same target group break down formulae. It was important to note that the national and local demand for stop smoking services had decreased. This was potentially attributable to the introduction of e cigarettes. There had therefore been fewer people requesting support locally and nationally. Small cohorts yielded small numbers. The council had a targeted service of vulnerable and hard to reach groups. In the first instance it would be expected that until full awareness and implementation had been enhanced, the council would not be on target. In relation to the young people cohort, evidence supported smoking prevention in young people and peer led interventions such as the ASSIST programme to stop smoking and prevent uptake.

The Principal Member outlined actions to get the service back on target:

- A new Public Health consultant had recently been appointed.
- The provider contract was being closely monitored, with assurance being provided that:
 - Closer working relationships were being established with primary care
 - The service was being actively promoted and the offer from national smoking cessation services
 - The provider was contacting early year's professionals and services to formally offer training and smoking cessation support.
- The Public Health team were promoting the targeted service and national programme across youth services and seeking to embed smoking cessation and prevention in young people into the PSHE network.
- Public Health had commenced work with Windsor Ascot & Maidenhead CCG to develop a case by case process for the review of patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease being referred to the Stop Smoking Service.

Councillor Jones, by way of a supplementary question, asked if, should more resources be required to reach targets, would this be reviewed?

The Principal Member responded that this could happen if needed, but he was confident with the planned actions that targets could be achieved.

e) Question submitted by Councillor Jones to Councillor D. Wilson, Lead Member for Planning:

Could the Lead Member detail the reason why the draft Borough Local Plan is putting forward approximately 105% of the housing target?

The Lead Member responded that Cabinet agreed to extend the Plan period by 1 year to 2033, which required a buffer zone of 102% rather than 105%. The council had met with the Inspector on 3 November 2016 who had advised that it would be extremely prudent to have a buffer zone.

Councillor Jones confirmed that she had no supplementary question

f) Question submitted by Councillor Hilton to Councillor Cox, Lead Member for Environmental Services:

Can the Lead Member for Environmental Services explain whether his Directorate is able to regulate home boarding and dog walking providers in the same way that it regulates kennels.

The Lead Member responded that local authorities were responsible for animal licensing which covered traditional pet boarding establishments such as animal kennels, and included home boarders where animals were kept in the home. The council operated a licensing scheme for dog kennels and catteries and a review was being undertaken for home boarder licensing with the aim of extending the licensing regime for these businesses in the new year.

There were no controls or specific regulations relating to dog walkers, however, the council could look at the applicability of Public Space Protection Orders to control the number of dogs that any one person could have under their control in areas where problems with large numbers of uncontrolled dogs had been evidenced. Similarly, unfair trading regulations applied to dog walking businesses in order to protect consumers from unfair and misleading practises or operators that were not professionally diligent.

Councillor Hilton, by way of a supplementary question, explained that he asked the question as an Ascot resident left their small dog with a dog walking establishment in Windsor for it to be walked and looked after for the day. When they returned to collect the dog they learnt that the proprietor had gone out leaving their dog and two others locked together in a room and that their pet had been mauled and killed. What was particularly disturbing was that the business had a very professional web site that stated they were fully insured and DBS checked which created a level of credibility that in this case was not deserved. Would it be possible to issue a recognisable Council logo to be displayed on accredited dog walking and home boarding

establishment web sites to protect dog owners from the unacceptable emotional stress that this Ascot resident had experienced?

The Lead Member responded that he would of course look into the possibility of this with officers. The introduction of a home boarding establishment licensing scheme in the new year would as a minimum enable those who were licensed to reference this on their marketing material. Customers would also be able to undertake cross references and reassurance checks with the council and their licensing records.

g) Question submitted by Councillor Carroll to Councillor Cox, Lead Member for Environmental Services:

Can the Lead Member please advise on the key principles and objectives of the forthcoming parking strategy and how residents in Boyn Hill and across the Borough can best engage with ongoing plans and raise issues about parking?

The Lead Member responded that the new parking strategy set out how parking management in the Royal Borough should progress over the short to longer term. The strategy confirmed the council's objectives to make better use of existing parking stock and ensure adequate provision so that spaces were available at locations that maximised the potential for achieving transport, social, economic and environmental goals, while also achieving a balance between supply and demand for both on-street and off-street parking. Local residents and business needs would as far as possible be prioritised.

The council would engage with residents, business and key stakeholders about major decisions relating to parking schemes through consultation exercises. Boyn Hill residents and indeed all residents of the Borough were encouraged to feedback to the council when these opportunities arose. More locally, the council would continue to undertake resident consultations in situations where any new or amended parking arrangements were proposed within the vicinity of people's homes.

Residents who were experiencing problems due to inconsiderate or illegal parking on the public highway should contact the Customer Service Centre to report such issues. These would be forwarded onto a parking officer for investigation.

Councillor Carroll, by way of a supplementary question, asked would the parking strategy specifically deal with letting help residents know where and how they could park across the Borough?

The Lead Member responded that the document included information and helpful explanations of different parking schemes and restrictions. These were intended to help residents and visitors park compliantly. It also confirmed that the borough would have a firm but fair approach towards enforcement.

107. URGENT MEMBER QUESTION

As per Part 2 paragraph C11.4 b) of the Council Constitution, the Deputy Leader had agreed that the following urgent question can be added to the agenda:

h) Question submitted by Councillor Lenton to Councillor Dudley, Leader of the Council:

Would the Leader please advise Council of the assistance the Borough is receiving from Environment Agency (EA) in protecting the residents of Wraysbury from the health and safety problems resulting from the waste disposal and other industrial operations along Hythe End Road, Wraysbury

Councillor Dudley responded that the council has no direct legal jurisdiction for health and safety and or nuisance issues associated with the primary waste processes carried on at the site in question. Nuisance issues for example noise, dust, odours and artificial light were incorporated within the Environmental Permit for the operation and as such are enforced by the EA.

In September 2015, the Council was advised that the EA had issued enforcement notices upon the operator of the site for non compliance with waste storage conditions. More recently the Environment Agency issued two revocation notices on the grounds of concerns about operator competence and was pursuing legal action in this regard.

Council officers learned at the start of December 2016 that the EA had withdrawn their legal notices and were no longer pursuing legal action against the operator of the site. The EA confirmed that this decision had been based on improvements that the Operator had made to operating methods at the site and that legal action would no longer be in the public interest. The council received no prior notice of this decision and were given no opportunity to comment on it. Officers have requested further information about the improvements cited so that this information can be shared with elected Members and local stakeholders.

Planning Enforcement Officers met with E.A. Officers in 2015 to discuss various planning issues that they would be required to comment on the current retrospective applications. Planning Enforcement has sought assistance on issues relating to the material change of use to incorporate an unauthorised skip hire business during the course of 2016 and received some assistance, albeit not always in a timely fashion.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Lenton explained that he had received a phone call from the EA that suggested they had not informed people because they did not have email addresses and did not know who to contact. On 6 December 2016 he had received a letter but this gave no explanation, did not say when the notices were revoked and made no reference to the two planning applications on the flood plain. He asked if the council would consider asking the Secretary of State to come to the council and explain why parish and borough councillors and officers were not kept up to date, and to explain the situation.

Councillor Dudley responded that he would happily write to the Secretary of State. It would be more appropriate for the Environment Agency to come to explain the situation at an Overview an Scrutiny Panel.

108. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

None received

Councillor Werner left the meeting at 9.00pm

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109. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on item 12 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act