

MAIDENHEAD TOWN FORUM

MONDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Philip Love (Chairman), Claire Stretton (Vice-Chairman), Marius Gilmore, Marion Mills (sub for Charles Hollingsworth), Hari Sharma and Derek Wilson

Also in attendance: Councillors Judith Diment and Mohammed Ilyas. Saghir Ahmed, Simon Bond, Mike Copeland, Richard Davenport, Bob Dulson, Stephen Hedges, Kate Hughes, Anita Li, Kirsty Meredith, Irmgard Murcott, Martin McNamee, Annie Panton, Roger Panton, Derek Roberts, Gary Robson, Valerie Robson, Ian Rose and Richard Thorogood.

Officers: Tanya Leftwich and Chris Hilton

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Charles Hollingsworth (Councillor Marion Mills was sub).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on the 29 June 2015 be approved.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed them that it was being recorded.

UPDATE ON THE MAIDENHEAD AND COX GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chairman explained that this meeting had been arranged so that Members could receive a presentation on the Maidenhead and Cox Green Neighbourhood Plan (the MNP).

The Chairman welcomed his fellow speakers (Richard Davenport – Chair of the Town Centre Working Group, Martin McNamee – Chair of the Development Working Group, Ian Rose – Chair of Green and Blue Working Group, Roger Panton – Chair of the Design Working Group and Mike Copeland – Chair of the Community & Infrastructure Working Group) to the meeting.

The presentation covered the following:

- Do we need one – to cover what?
- What is a Neighbourhood Plan?
- The Working Groups.
- The MNP Process.
- Key Statistics.

- Town Centre Issues?
- Town Centre – MNP Policies?
- Development Issues?
- Development – MNP Policies?
- Green and Blue Issues?
- Green and Blue – MNP Policies?
- Design Issues?
- Design – MNP Policies?
- Infrastructure – Community Issues?
- Transport Issues?

The Chairman informed everyone present that the Localism Act enabled communities to draw up a neighbourhood plan for their area and would give power to local residents and communities to take a lead in setting local planning policy. It was noted that the new type of planning document would give local residents and communities the power to shape the way Maidenhead & Cox Green would change over the next 15 years.

The Chairman explained that the MNP was not expected to go back and re-consider policies for the town centre but compliment the already adopted Area Action Plan. It was noted that in the Royal Borough there were ten community groups working on the preparation of neighbourhood plans, with one already completed (Ascot and the Sunnings), which would sit alongside the Borough Local Plan and guide decisions on planning applications.

It was explained that two different qualifying bodies were able to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan – a parish council (no minimum number of people) or where a parish council did not exist, a neighbourhood forum (with a minimum membership of 21 people). The Chairman explained that after talks with the Cox Green Parish Clerk it was agreed that the Steering Group be formed to prepare The Maidenhead and Cox Green Neighbourhood Plan (MNP). It was noted that the area covered six wards of Maidenhead and the parish / ward of Cox Green which had a population of well over 60,000. The Chairman went on to explain that four goals were identified which were translated into six key objectives in the MNP's vision statement which were being developed as the Plan developed. It was noted that a consultant was appointed last year to help with the Plan's development to ensure the MNP's policies and objectives were clear and achievable. The Chairman explained that the consultant had helped define a scope and brief for the MNP which encompassed two areas – the town centre and the seven surrounding wards. It was noted that the challenge for the MNP was not to oppose development but to influence where and how the town grows and how to best focus that growth on the needs and opportunities that would arise. It was decided that the topics be broken down into five working groups so key issues could be investigated and solutions proposed. The Chairman invited each Chairman of the Working Groups to address the Forum for ten minutes on their specific areas:

- ❖ Richard Davenport discussed the Town Centre Working Group and explained that this was covered by the adopted 2011 Area Action Plan but that the Borough Local Plan was set to amend many of its policies and set a far higher housing target. A number of the issues identified were parking, more residential in the Town Centre to ease Green Belt pressure, affordable housing (whether to broaden the mix across the town), mix of uses, public open spaces and building heights.

Richard Davenport then read out the policies suggested and explained what the aims were behind the suggested policies.

- ❖ Martin McNamee discussed the Development Working Group and explained that a number of the issues identified were preserving character, housing type mix, housing density, costs, affordability, rental market, housing sites, light industrial / commercial sites, Green Belt and whether a new settlement should be considered.

Martin McNamee then read out the policies suggested and explained what the aims were behind the suggested policies.

- ❖ Ian Rose discussed the Green & Blue Working Group and explained that a number of issues identified were very little Green Space in the Town Centre, more residents wanting access to Green Space, getting around, green connections and biodiversity.

Ian Rose then read out the policies suggested and explained what the aims were behind the suggested policies.

- ❖ Roger Panton discussed the Design Working Group and explained that a number of issues identified were building heights, off-road parking, Open Space, room sizes and to ensure no new building on the Flood Plain.

Roger Panton then read out the policies suggested and explained what the aims were behind the suggested policies.

- ❖ Mike Copeland discussed the Community Infrastructure Working Group and explained that a number of community issues identified were the infrastructure needed for additional housing, the need for more local shops, whether the Nicholson's Centre could be revamped, Open Space, the ageing population and accessibility. It was noted that a number of transport issues identified were the transport hub, station parking, whether to increase short-term on-road parking in the Town Centre, St Clouds Way, A4 bottleneck, whether an additional river crossing was needed and junction improvements needed across the town.

Mike Copeland then read out the policies suggested and explained what the aims were behind the suggested policies.

Everyone present was asked to split into groups and sit with one of the Working Groups Chairmen and discuss their views and desires on how they would like to see their local areas develop over the next fifteen years.

The Chairman stressed the importance and influence that the MNP would have if it was approved by the public in the Referendum next year. It was noted that Council decisions would have to take into account the MNP policies that had been discussed at the meeting tonight.

The Chairman thanked the speakers and everyone present for attending the meeting, and explained that another meeting would be held to look at the written policies. It was noted that a copy of the presentation was available from the Clerk.

ITEM SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE FORUMS

The Chairman informed everyone present that future meetings would be a forum where ideas could be put forward and discussed as decided as to whether they were believed to be feasible.

It was requested that item suggestions be emailed to tanya.leftwich@rbwm.gov.uk

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the date of the future meeting to be as follows:

- ❖ Tuesday 28 February 2017 (6.30pm start).

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 8.30 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....