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NOTICE OF MEETING

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RURAL FORUM

will meet on

MONDAY, 6TH NOVEMBER, 2017

At 5.00 PM

in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, MAIDENHEAD

TO: MEMBERS OF THE RURAL FORUM

COUNCILLORS CHRISTINE BATESON (CHAIRMAN), DAVID EVANS (VICE-CHAIRMAN), DAVID COPPINGER, RICHARD KELLAWAY, COLIN RAYNER AND MALCOLM BEER

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

COUNCILLORS GERRY CLARK, DR LILLY EVANS, JESSE GREY, MAUREEN HUNT, JOHN LENTON AND WISDOM DA COSTA A

Karen Shepherd - Democratic Services Manager - Issued: Date Not Specified

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting. The agenda is available on the Council's web site at www.rbwm.gov.uk or contact the Panel Administrator **Shilpa Manek**

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AGENDA

PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
1.	<u>CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION</u> The Chairman to welcome all to the Rural Forum.	
2.	<u>APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE</u> To receive any apologies for absence.	
3.	<u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u> To receive any declarations of interest.	5 - 6
4.	<u>MINUTES</u> To agree the minutes of the last meeting.	7 - 10
5.	<u>RURAL FARM WALK FEEDBACK</u>	
6.	<u>UPDATE FROM THE FARMING COMMUNITY</u> To receive an update from Mr Nick Philp on issues affecting the farming community.	
7.	<u>RURAL CRIME</u> To receive an update from Thames Valley Police.	
8.	<u>UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS</u> A presentation by Lisa Pigeon, Environmental Health Lead, on Unauthorised Encampments.	
9.	<u>GREEN BELT FOR FARMING</u> Rural Forum to discuss green belt land used for farming.	
10.	<u>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u> The date of the next Rural Forum is : Tuesday 6 March 2018 at 5.30pm at the Guildhall, Windsor	

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MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a DPI or Prejudicial Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

A member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest **may make representations at the start of the item but must not take part in the discussion or vote at a meeting.** The speaking time allocated for Members to make representations is at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, after speaking, Members should move away from the panel table to a public area or, if they wish, leave the room. If the interest declared has not been entered on to a Members' Register of Interests, they must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any licence to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

A Member with a DPI should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations on the item: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Prejudicial Interests

Any interest which a reasonable, fair minded and informed member of the public would reasonably believe is so significant that it harms or impairs the Member's ability to judge the public interest in the item, i.e. a Member's decision making is influenced by their interest so that they are not able to impartially consider relevant issues.

A Member with a Prejudicial interest should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations in the item: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Personal interests

Any other connection or association which a member of the public may reasonably think may influence a Member when making a decision on council matters.

Members with a Personal Interest should state at the meeting: ***'I wish to declare a Personal Interest in item x because xxx'. As this is a Personal Interest only, I will take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.***

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Agenda Item 4

RURAL FORUM

THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bateson (Chairman), David Evans (Vice-Chairman), David Coppinger and David Hilton

Also in attendance: Councillor Samantha Rayner, Louise Warbrick (Thames Valley Police), Tim Parry (Community Council for Berkshire), Paul Rinder (Rinder Ltd), Richard Copas (Copas Farms), Michael Craig (Forest Green Farm), William Emmett (Hornbuckle Farm), Andrew Randall (Randall Farms), Pauline Watts (How Lane Farm), Phil Watts (How Lane Farm), Phil Mortimer (Fairacres Farm), Annie Keene (Applehouse Farm), Alan Keene (Applehouse Farm and Bisham Parish Council Chairman), James Copas (Copas Farms), David James (C Farms) and Barbara Story (Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council).

Officers: Harjit Hunjan, Arlene Kersley, Shilpa Manek, Kevin Mist, David Scott and Helen Steward

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. All attendees introduced themselves.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Colin Rayner, Jane Jennings, NFU, John Emmett, Simon Rinder and Russell Watts.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were **Unanimously Agreed**.

ORDER OF ITEMS

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that the order of items on the Agenda be changed.

UPDATE FROM THE FARMING COMMUNITY (20 MINS)

An update was received from Mr Nick Philp, the potential impact of BREXIT and the farming world. Presentation attached with minutes.

Points discussed after the presentation included:

- Why the production has gone down over the years, is it a result of more imports? The Forum was informed that it was cheaper to produce milk and pig meat abroad, potentially prices could increase once out of Europe.
- Comparison to New Zealand farming. The Forum was informed that New Zealand farming was very different, they had a no-nonsense policy with no red tape and bureaucracy.

- The Forum was asked what they thought were the views of the Agriculture Minister, the Forum felt the decision lay in the Prime Ministers hands. The word “trading” had been used many times by the Prime Minister, now it was time to see what that meant.
- Councillor Samantha Rayner asked the Forum, how RBWM could help the farmers. It was suggested that it would be really helpful to raise awareness to residents of farmers using HGVs and working at night, due to efficiency and effectiveness.
- It was noted that there was a risk that a commonly used herbicide (glyphosate) could be banned as it was thought to have carcinogenic properties. This herbicide was used widely and banning it would significantly effect every industry and would have a major impact on the agriculture production.
- Rural economy and planning.

The Forum thanked Nick Philp for a very interesting and informative overview of the issue.

ACTION: Update at next meeting

RBWM LAND OWNERSHIP (20 MINS)

Kevin Mist, Head of Communities & Economic Development gave a presentation on Ockwells Country Park. See attached presentation.

Points discussed after the presentation included:

- Hay collection from Ockwells Country Park was this being considered for ‘set aside’.
- What were RBWM future plans to buy more land for more public parks, Maidenhead Golf Club. Kevin Mist advised that he was not aware of loss of any Public Open Space in the borough and Maidenhead Golf Club was not public open park space.
- Councillor Samantha Rayner explained that a good opportunity arose to buy the land so it was bought. The borough did not go specifically looking to buy land.
- Councillor Hilton advised the Forum that some opportunist land had also been bought in Ascot. It was always on a case by case basis.
- The demand for footpaths was enormous in the rural areas of the borough, this had been recognised and was being addressed.
- The budgets for maintenance were discussed and considered to be based on our wider management of public open space expenses.

ACTION: Report further updates back at a future Rural Forum

RURAL CRIME (20 MINS)

Inspector Louise Walbrick, Thames Valley Police, introduced herself to the Forum and explained that if there were any specific questions, she could take them away and respond via email directly.

Points highlighted included:

- Currently looking at 100 offenses in the current year.
- There had been a rise in theft of tools and hare coursing locally.
- Training was being given to all officers to help manage the accurate recording of crimes and support to the rural community
- In February 2017, a week of action had taken place refreshing rural crime activity. Tool marking kits had been purchased and officers had gone to farms to use them to help protect equipment.
- The Forum asked ‘what is considered as rural crime?’ Some of the examples included theft from sites, the hunting act, criminal damage, burglary of dwelling, on farm and from out farm buildings, theft of plant, damage of land and damage to animals. Mr Emmett highlighted that fly tipping was also a major problem. The Inspector advised that the police could not prosecute for fly tipping but could work with council to prevent and pursue the offenders.

- Mr Rinder gave the Forum a list of events and examples of actions that had taken place on farms in the area with respect to hare, deer and sheep coursing. A local resident patrol team had been put together to try to prevent the incidents taking place. Public awareness had been raised of the local issue and now great feedback was received from the public. Police had been very helpful but if there was no evidence, it was not taken forward.
- The penalty for hare coursing may involve a custodial sentence and any dogs could be removed or destroyed.
- The closing of or restriction of access along different public rights of way was discussed as this could reduce vehicular access and may deter offenders.
- The Royal Estate was also suffering hare coursing.
- Only one/two hares were typically taken per surveillance session, however prize money could be very substantial.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND THE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN (20 MINS)

Jenifer Jackson, Head of Planning updated the Forum on the development process of the Borough Local Plan. The first stage had now completed and all 7000 issues from residents were currently being considered by officers. The next stage was Regulation 19 once approved by Council. Currently the infrastructure was being considered and Planning was working very closely with the Housing team.

Helen Steward, Housing Enabling Officer on Affordable Housing addressed the Forum explaining her role. The role bridges the gap between frontline housing services and the planning system to translate housing need into new housing delivery. The main aim is to improve the availability of affordable housing and diversify the types of housing available to meet the needs of more people, taking into consideration the recently published Housing White Paper, funding and national trends.

Arlene Kersley, Rural Housing Independent Advisor has worked with RBWM for the previous 11 years. There were 11 RBWM Parishes deemed to fall in what are defines as rural parished areas, however the current definition/order were due to change shortly. The housing in these 11 areas involves additional restrictions in relation to sale of the properties. Rural exception sites were discussed since the borough currently only had two and more were required. The legislation on this was currently changing. Community Land Trusts were discussed where communities could come together to create a trust.

Points discussed by the Forum included:

- Forum members were happy to hear the passion in the new team.
- There was a significant disconnect between housing need and availability of suitable housing for farm workers.
- Farm workers should be considered as key workers.
- Currently, housing was provided on farms but new workers could not afford housing in the area.
- The borough had an aging population and therefore the borough needed youngsters to stay within RBWM to provide an aging workforce.

ACTION: Confirm current list of the 11 rural parished areas with the minutes.

RURAL FARM WALK (10 MINS)

The Chairman advised the Rural Forum that the Rural Walk was due to be on Monday 12 June 2017 at 6pm at Stroud Farm, Holyport, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 2LJ. There would be a tour round the farm followed by a BBQ.

ACTION: Clerk to advise all Members of the Council to 'hold the date'.

ACTION: Farming Association to personally invite Ward Councillors and their partners in May 2017.

Tim Parry, Chief Operating Officer, Community Council for Berkshire, highlighted the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership is inviting owners of new and established businesses based in rural Berkshire to find out more about how they can apply for a share of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).
If you would like to attend the event on 14 March, please click on the link below to book your place. Please be aware that places are limited.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/thames-valley-berkshire-lep-eafRD-workshop-tickets-31876681011>

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of the next Rural Forum are :

- Monday 6 November 2017 at 5.30pm in the Council Chamber, Maidenhead
- Tuesday 6 March 2018 at 5.30pm in the Guildhall, Windsor

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, finished at 8.00 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....