

Public Document Pack

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TO: **EVERY MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD**

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND the Meeting of the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead to be held in the **Council Chamber - Town Hall, Maidenhead** on **Tuesday, 24 April 2018 at 7.30 pm** for the purpose of transacting the business specified in the Agenda set out hereunder.

Dated this Monday, 16 April 2018



Managing Director

Rev Swift will say prayers for the meeting.

A G E N D A

PART I

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence

2. **COUNCIL MINUTES**

To receive the Part I minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 February 2018.

(Pages 9 - 32)

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of interest

(Pages 33 - 34)

4. **PETITION FOR DEBATE**

A petition containing 1,583 signatories was submitted to the Council on 29 March 2018. In accordance with the provisions of the Council's Constitution, it was requested by the lead petitioner that the petition be reported to, and debated at, a full Council meeting. The petition reads as follows:

We the undersigned petition The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to ensure that redevelopment plans for the York Road area include a replacement community centre

Details can be viewed on the link below: <http://petitions.rbwm.gov.uk/save-the-centre/>

The Constitution provides for a maximum time of 30 minutes to debate such petitions; this can be overruled at the Mayor's discretion.

In accordance with the Constitution, the order of speaking shall be as follows:

- a) The Mayor may invite the relevant officer to set out the background to the petition issue.
- b) The Lead Petitioner to address the meeting on the petition (5 minutes maximum)
- c) The Mayor to invite any relevant Ward Councillors present to address the meeting. (Maximum time of 3 minutes each for this purpose)
- d) The Mayor to invite the relevant officer to provide any further comment.
- e) The Mayor will invite all Members to debate the matter (Rules of Debate as per the Constitution apply)

(Pages 35 - 38)

5. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive such communications as the Mayor may desire to place before the Council
(Pages 39 - 40)

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- a) **Lars Swann of Clewer South ward will ask the following question of Councillor Rankin, Lead Member for Economic Development, Property, Communications and Deputy Finance:**

What help can the council give to help save The Swan pub in Clewer village?

(A Member responding to a question shall be allowed up to five minutes to reply to the initial question and up to two minutes to reply to a supplementary question. The questioner shall be allowed up to 1 minute to put the supplementary question)

7. PETITIONS

To receive any petitions presented by Members on behalf of registered electors

for the Borough under Rule C.10.

(Any Member submitting a petition has up to 2 minutes to summarise its contents)

8. APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

To consider the above report
(Pages 41 - 44)

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

To consider the above report
(Pages 45 - 58)

10. ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD ELECTORAL REVIEW -
SUBMISSION ON DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

To consider the above report
(Pages 59 - 82)

11. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

**a) Councillor Hill will ask the following question of Councillor Bicknell,
Lead Member for Highways and Transport:**

When Oldfield School was proposed to be built on Braywick Park a roundabout on Braywick Road with crossing points was deemed necessary at the entrance. Now with a busy leisure centre approved for construction and a school in the pipeline why is no roundabout being planned?

**b) Councillor C Rayner will ask the following question of Councillor
Bicknell, Lead Member for Highways, Transport & Windsor:**

What are the arrangements for the upcoming Royal Wedding in Windsor and why there has not been wider consultation of ward councillors and the Tourism Development Forum, given the event will affect everybody living in the Royal Borough?

**c) Councillor E. Wilson will ask the following question of Councillor
McWilliams Principal Member for Housing:**

The Local Government Ombudsman has recently upheld a complaint regarding a homelessness application to this Council. Will the Principal Member for Housing explain how he intends to respond to this decision?

**d) Councillor Carroll will ask the following question of Councillor S
Rayner, Lead Member for Culture and Communities:**

Could the Lead Member please explain to me the process being followed and action being taken to reinstall the much admired traditional steel railings in Grenfell Park, Boyn Hill, which were recently removed without Lead and Ward

Member consultation and which has caused understandable upset amongst many of my residents?

- e) **Councillor Bhatti will ask the following question of Councillor Rankin, Lead Member for Economic Development, Property, Communications and Deputy Finance**

The Swan plays a vital part in the life and social interaction of the Clewer North community. Please can the lead member give reassurances that all options will be considered in making this site an asset of community value and that the lead member would be happy to discuss the issue with my local residents?

- f) **Councillor Brimacombe will ask the following question of Councillor McWilliams, Principal Member for Housing:**

What is the publication date for the promised 'Affordable Housing' paper and will it address in detail all of the ten questions from RRAG, plus questions (under topics of Money, Products, Policy and Ratio) asked by me for the (cancelled) February Councillor briefing? Specifying to Council any questions that Cllr McWilliams considers will be too difficult for him to answer.

- g) **Councillor Brimacombe will ask the following question of Councillor McWilliams, Principal Member for Housing:**

On 4th February 2018 Councillor McWilliams tweeted that he would shortly hold a public meeting on Affordable Housing, which did not take place. The scheduled 19th February Councillor briefing was cancelled. Does Cllr McWilliams have any plans at all to consult with anybody regarding Affordable Housing and if so, then who, when and how, and if not, then why not?

- h) **Councillor Hill will ask the following question of Councillor N. Airey, Lead Member for Children's Services:**

Oldfield School pupils only got 40% of their 1st choice places with only 2 girls out of 7 going to Newlands. Why, when you knew all the class sizes, gender mix and likely 1st place choices did you do nothing for Oldfield school children?

- i) **Councillor Majeed will ask the following question of Councillor McWilliams, Principal Member for Housing:**

The RBWM was found at fault by the Local Government Ombudsman in dealing with one of our vulnerable homeless residents suffering from mental health issues. It was not just Housing who had let this individual down but also Adult Services, so why was the LGO complaint report 16-003-062 not sent to the Adult Services & Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel?

- j) **Councillor Majeed will ask the following question of Councillor Targowska, Principal Member for HR, Legal and IT:**

Residents have been put on the vexatious list. Can you please inform Council how many residents who have a democratic right to question the council have been excluded by being placed on the 'vexatious list', on what grounds have these decisions been made and by whom, and what is the appeal process, if any?

k) Councillor Jones will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Lead Member for Planning and Health:

Could the Lead Member for Planning give Full Council and residents an update on the progress of the Borough Local Plan and likely timescales for approval.

l) Councillor Da Costa will ask the following question of Councillor McWilliams, Principal Member for Housing:

At the last Council meeting, in relation to the Homelessness Strategy you said, “the council would be consulting widely, including forming a fully formalised Homelessness Forum”. What progress has the Council made on the Homelessness Strategy, who has it consulted with so far (individuals and organisations) and, how many times has the Homelessness Forum met?

(The Member responding has up to 5 minutes to address Council. The Member asking the question has up to 1 minute to submit a supplementary question. The Member responding then has a further 2 minutes to respond.)

12. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

a) By Councillor Dudley

This Council:

- i) Is concerned that The Pubs Code Adjudicator is failing to tackle the financial unbalance suffered by tied tenants in its borough and around the country.
- ii) Notes that the case of The Barley Mow demonstrates clearly that, in its current format, the secondary legislation is not fit for purpose, as it is clearly unable to offer tied tenants a simple and easy path to severing their tied terms, as was the intention of Parliament.
- iii) Requests the Leader of the Council to write to Richard Harrington MP, urging him to take this issue to the Secretary of State, Greg Clark MP, copied to Theresa May MP, so he can take the necessary steps to make the legislation work, as a matter of urgency

b) By Councillor Carroll

I would like to thank our partner organisations for the critical work they do in providing access and support to victims, and providing crucial education and awareness on domestic violence and abuse.

This Council:

- i) Continues to robustly adopt a zero tolerance approach to any form of domestic violence and abuse, and strongly reaffirms our steadfast commitment to tackle domestic violence and abuse through our public health strategy, joint health and well-being strategy, and awareness campaigns;

- ii) Encourages anybody from any background who is suffering from the impact of domestic violence and abuse to come forward and get the help and support they need from the police, the council, health services or key partner organisations such as DASH, Victim Support or the 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline;
- iii) Resolves to promote awareness across the Borough to ensure residents understand what constitutes domestic violence and abuse and who they can go to locally to access support.

c) By Councillor Beer

This Council:

- i) Notes that the government has proposed that it confirms its provisional approval of a third Heathrow runway in the coming months.
- ii) Agrees urgent Borough publicity including public presentations to empower residents to inform MPs and Ministers of their objections to the inevitable and irreversible impacts on the housing crisis, infrastructure and the quality of life.

d) By Councillor Beer

This Council:

- i) Notes that there is evidence that the progression of the River Thames Scheme is in doubt as several riparian Councils cannot commit to its funding.
- ii) Urges the Government to fully fund the essential project as it is totally unjustified to burden a few communities to fund the safe disposal of water from such a vast catchment area.

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution:-

“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 14 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”

PRIVATE MEETING

14. MINUTES

(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)

To receive the Part II minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 February 2018.

(Pages 83 - 84)

COUNCIL MOTIONS – PROCEDURE

- Motion proposed (mover of Motion to speak on Motion)
- Motion seconded (Seconder has right to reserve their speech until **later** in the debate)
- Begin debate

Should An Amendment Be Proposed: (only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time)

NB – Any proposed amendment to a Motion to be passed to the Mayor for consideration before it is proposed and seconded.

- Amendment to Motion proposed
- Amendment must be seconded BEFORE any debate can take place on it
(At this point, the mover and seconder of original Motion can indicate their acceptance of the amendment if they are happy with it)
- Amendment debated (if required)
- Vote taken on Amendment
- If Agreed, the amended Motion becomes the substantive Motion and is then debated (any further amendments follow same procedure as above).
- If Amendment not agreed, original Motion is debated (any other amendments follow same procedure as above).

- The mover of the Motion has a right to reply at the end of the debate on the Motion, immediately before it is put to the vote.
- At conclusion of debate on Motion, the Mayor shall call for a vote. Unless the vote is unanimous, a named vote will be undertaken, the results of which will be announced in the meeting, and recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

(All speeches maximum of 5 minutes, except for the Budget Meeting where the Member proposing the adoption of the budget and the Opposition Spokesperson shall each be allowed to speak for 10 minutes to respectively propose the budget and respond to it. The Member proposing the budget may speak for a further 5 minutes when exercising his/her right of reply.)

AT A MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Maidenhead on Tuesday, 20th February, 2018

PRESENT: Councillors John Lenton (Mayor), Eileen Quick (Deputy Mayor), M. Airey, N. Airey, Alexander, Bateson, Beer, Bicknell, Bowden, Brimacombe, Bullock, Burbage, Carroll, Clark, Coppinger, Cox, Da Costa, Diment, Dudley, D. Evans, Grey, Hill, Hilton, Hollingsworth, Hunt, Jones, Love, Luxton, Majeed, McWilliams, Mills, Rankin, S. Rayner, Richards, Saunders, Sharma, Sharp, Sharpe, Shelim, Smith, Story, Stretton, Walters, Werner, D. Wilson, E. Wilson and Yong

Officers: Alison Alexander, Alex Drury, Louise Freeth, Andy Jeffs, Mary Kilner, Russell O'Keefe, Rob Stubbs and Karen Shepherd

231. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bhatti, Dr L Evans, Gilmore, Ilyas, Kellaway, Lion, Pryer, C. Rayner and Targowska.

232. COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That:

- i) **The minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 12 December 2017 be approved, subject to a note to be added that :**

Hurley & Walthams Neighbourhood Plan – correctly minuted that ‘In July 2017 Cabinet approved the plan to go to referendum, at which over 50% of the community said ‘yes’ to the plan.’ However turnout for the referendum was only 16%.

- ii) **The Part I minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Full Council held on 29 January 2018 be approved.**

233. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In relation to the item ‘Budget Report 2018/19, Councillor Lenton stated that his son was a director at Deloitte’s technical department, the council’s appointed auditor. This would have no impact on future audits.

234. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

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

235. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- a) **Richard Endacott on behalf of Helen Price of Park ward asked the following question of Councillor Lenton, the Mayor:**

Why are there prayers preceding a Council meeting?

The Mayor responded that the practice of saying prayers before a Council meeting had been a tradition and custom for most Council’s for many centuries. The practice of

saying prayers before RBWM Council Meetings had been applied since 1 April 1998 when the Royal Borough became a unitary Authority. The legal basis was given by the Local Government (Religious Observances) Act of 2015. The Royal Borough was a multi faith society and prayers could be, and had been, said by members of various faiths in the community. Future Mayors may wish to invite representatives of different faiths to say prayers before Council.

By way of a supplementary question, Richard Endacott commented that at the council meeting held on 29 January 2018 the prayers by Reverend Drake had included reference to wisdom, knowledge and understanding and that the work of the council would be pleasing in the sight of God. In view of what took place during the meeting, how would the Mayor assess the behaviour of council Members in relation to the prayers?

The Mayor responded that it was unlikely that God would wish to go into such detail of discussions at Council.

b) Carole Da Costa of Clewer North ward asked the following question of Councillor Dudley, Leader of the Council:

During a radio interview on the Andrew Peach show on 9 January 2018, Cllr Dudley stated that, "Everyone has been offered, high quality housing." He also said that he was going to visit the Southall unit. What Health and Safety Rating System does the RBWM use for its emergency housing including the Southall pay & sleep unit?

Councillor Dudley referred the question to Council McWilliams as Principal Member for Housing. Councillor McWilliams responded that all properties were inspected by a council officer before being used as temporary accommodation. This included checking that all the necessary certification was in place and the property was safe and suitable for use.

By way of a supplementary question, Carole Da Costa commented that the borough website displayed a link to the health and safety rating system. She had recently visited a family living in a band b where a heavily pregnant mother fell and fractured her leg due to cramped and overcrowded conditions. This was the least of her concerns when she had to take her two day old baby into the room with black mould growing up the walls and into their beds. Could the councillor explain why the housing paid for by the borough, far from being the high quality described did not meet the standards on the website, and did inspections include electrical wiring, water temperature and bathroom temperature?

Councillor McWilliams responded that the council's inspections met the national standards as required but if Mrs Da Costa had a specific case where she felt this had not been done then she could write to him with details and he would take it up with officers.

236. PETITIONS

None received

237. BUDGET REPORT 2018/19

Members considered the 2018/19 budget.

Councillor Saunders introduced the report. He stated that there was a growing maelstrom of councils, up and down the country, saying they desperately needed to increase their base council tax by the full 2.99%, plus the 3% Adult Social Care Levy. The council's innovative and prudent management enabled it to propose only a 1.95% increase in base council tax and the 3% Adult Social Care Levy. Residents would continue to pay the lowest council tax outside of London, and several hundred pounds less than neighbouring councils.

The borough's effective partnerships with councils and others, and the wider transformation programmes, enabled the council to continue to do more for less, protecting the needs of residents, particularly the vulnerable, and seeking to reward fairly the hard working council teams. The council had shouldered a rising demand to support more young and older vulnerable residents, with substantially more funding than raised by the Adult Social Care Levy and government grants, including the additional grant announced this month. The council was also allocating more to home to school transport for pupils with special needs and families on low incomes.

Protecting and enhancing generous benefits and reliefs to reduce Business Rates and the grants to community organisations had all been assured. Borough libraries continued to thrive, and all remained open and for more hours. A central grant had been secured to address the desperate needs of homeless residents. Significant investments in temporary accommodation at John West House and Braywick Lodge had attracted substantial government grant and the council expected to spend all of it by March 31, to help vulnerable residents and address the underlying causes of rough sleeping.

Time based parking charges for residents with Advantage Cards would not rise and, unlike neighbouring councils, resident parking permits remained free. Parking charges for season tickets and non-residents would increase, to half way between the current very low rates and the levels charged in comparable places outside the borough. Community safety continued to be a priority through the full funding of community wardens and the upgrade and expansion of CCTV coverage.

The council would continue to meet the huge demands for infrastructure investments in schools, roads, leisure centres and parking. This would facilitate the new full price, affordable and social rented homes in the submitted Borough Local Plan, the substantial regeneration of Maidenhead and Ascot, and the reinvigoration of Windsor ahead of the Royal Wedding. The council would continue to waive the council charge for arranging road closures for local community events where the Ward Councillors support the waiver, including for Royal Wedding street parties.

Councillor Saunders commented that, looking forward to coming years, there were many uncertainties. However, the council entered these challenging few years with finances fit for purpose. Revenue reserves remained significantly above the accepted minimum and the projected budget for 2019/2020 was currently balanced with a 1.95% increase in base council tax, no further Adult Social Care Levy, no use of reserves and assuming the dubious redistribution to other councils of Negative Support Grant was abolished.

The prudently projected cash receipts from innovative development partnerships in Maidenhead would, in all reasonable circumstances, pay for all the investments and provide the opportunity to pay off all debt, including that inherited 11 years previously,

and fully fund the pension fund deficit. The future would not necessarily unfold precisely as had been forecast and projected, but the council had the integrity, agility and commitment to adjust its plans to accommodate future perils and pressures.

The administration was about delivery, and the budget was about fairness and focus, in particular:

- having the determination to spend where needed, to enhance the quality of residents' lives, especially vulnerable residents;
- having the competence to plan and deliver substantial funds for residents, from the regeneration of Maidenhead;
- and having the vision to reinvest those funds with fairness and focus, in schools, parking, leisure facilities and much needed affordable and social housing.

Councillor Jones, as the Opposition spokesperson on the budget, thanked officers for their hard work to produce the budget, and she expressed her thanks to Councillor Saunders for bringing a draft budget to scrutiny at the end of 2017. She also thanked both the Head of Finance and Councillor Saunders for the discussions she had had with them.

Councillor Jones stated that in the seven years that she had been presenting the response to the budget, this had been the hardest analysis to undertake. The restructuring, outsourcing, partnerships and moving of departments with service areas had made comparison with previous years impossible. The budget before members was technically competent for the next year. However she wished to draw attention to some areas of concern.

The 18/19 budget balanced and it allowed for service demand increases. In the report summary it set out that to balance the budget the council would need to make another £5.4m of savings in 18/19. She had been told that the £5.4m expected savings to be made had been pronounced achievable by officers, although there was £100,000 on page 149 that was a 'one off' saving that would have to be found again in following years as it had been taken off the base budget.

The report said that Advantage Card holders would not be affected by parking charges. She highlighted that Advantage Card holders who found it cheaper to buy a season ticket then there would be an increase. People who normally parked in car parks that did not have the machines that could take Advantage Cards, then there would be an effect until those machines were installed.

The report heralded that the council would maintain the street wardens (previously called community wardens). Councillor Jones wondered if this could be a nod to their expanding role and highlighted that the commitment by the administration was to double the community wardens.

The council did offer a range of services at ten Children Centre locations, unfortunately the range in some locations this was decreasing year on year. The council must ensure that the still concerning use of agency social workers did not continue to impact negatively on resources; she had been told that entering the AfC partnership would resolve this issue. Law and governance must be adequately resourced, and she looked for reassurance that this was dealt with. Schools were under pressure to cut costs, smaller schools (of which Windsor had many) had

already cut as much as they could and still delivered the education borough children deserved, but the impact would be felt. Despite this drastic underfunding the council still required its schools, even those who could not use the program, to repay the Apprenticeship Levy.

Councillor Jones explained that in 2011, when she joined the council, there had been 8 members of Cabinet. In 2018 there were 19 in the extended Cabinet: Cabinet Members, Deputy Lead Members and Principal Members, paid a total of £203,000 per annum. Councillor Jones asked, given the amount of outsourcing, joint partnerships with councillors paid to sit on boards and the reduction of in-house services, how could this situation be justified?

Assumptions had been made that could significantly impact the financial position going forward. Policy decisions taken in preceding years had an effect as did decisions taken for activity in the future. The background to the budget was the policy decision to push forward with Maidenhead regeneration, to borrow to facilitate development, with the express desire to pay back borrowing with capital receipts from development of council owned land. The council was looking at borrowing reaching £230m in 2020, reducing to a net debt of £4m in 2025. Councillor Jones asked where were the capital receipts coming from? Obviously the four Joint Venture sites in Maidenhead would bring in receipts, but developing brown field sites was expensive and there was some major infrastructure such as the leisure centre and multi-storey car parks to provide. The most significant receipt that would consolidate the financial situation was from the development of Maidenhead Golf Course. To enable this the site would need to be removed from Green Belt protection by acceptance of the Borough Local Plan (BLP). If the site was not removed from the Green Belt then extraordinary circumstance must be proven to allow development. If the BLP was not accepted or was delayed then the council would not receive those receipts and would have £133m of debt by 2025 and interest of over £5m per year that would have to be serviced by council tax.

To put that into context, Council Tax for a band D in 2010/11 was £1054, in 2018/19 it would be £1008. Comparatively, since 2010 Band D council tax had reduced by £46 per year or 90p per week, that meant that the council would have approximately £55.5m less to invest in the future of the borough over those 9 years

It had been highlighted that the borough had the lowest council tax outside of London. However the neighbouring authority, Bracknell, had a current Band D council tax of £1194, £186 more than the borough per year. If the council had levied as Bracknell, it would have had an extra £79.3m over those 9 years. Bracknell's decision had enabled them to ensure adequate infrastructure was in place that enabled development and a brand new town centre. The policy decisions taken by the administration were to reduce council tax, take a photo outside the town hall with a big banner, and had not left anything to pump prime the regeneration.

This meant the council needed the estimated £287m receipt from Maidenhead Golf Course to pay back the borrowing or it would be left with a large debt. For every affordable unit the council stipulated would be in the development the receipt would diminish. The full effect of providing adequate truly affordable housing was unknown, therefore how could the council be sure of the receipt?

Councillor Jones recommended that the council did not commit to any more major infrastructure projects until it was sure that the BLP was secure.

The budget set out a 4.95% increase to the Band D collection amount, from £961.46 to £1008.16. It was down to each individual councillor whether they were happy with the risk of an unsuccessful BLP and the resultant £133m debt. She had been told that the council was committed to all its capital expenditure included in the budget but had also been told that Plan B, should the receipts not be forthcoming, was that the council would 'cut its cloth accordingly.' The detail of how this would be achieved was not in the budget.

Councillor Jones stated that it was a technically competent budget for the next year, but she questioned if the council, over the years, had built the foundations to ensure that it could deliver the aspirations promised by the administration, underpinned by a deliverable and stable financial position. She wished she could be more positive about the future position but whatever the outcome of the budget debate the council was not talking about options that would make any significant difference to the underlying risk going now forward. Councillor Jones was therefore unsure how she would vote as it was unclear if voting for the budget was for this year, or to accept the risk going forward. This was a question every councillor had to think about.

Councillor Sharma commented that councils up and down the country had to walk a tight rope to meet public demand in times of fiscal austerity. There would be tough decisions and smart choices. The budget would deliver focus and innovation. The budget was a reflection of the Conservative vision to serve residents and to continually improve the quality of lives of borough residents. The council was doing its best to fulfil the hopes and dreams of residents and would continue to do more. It was keeping the vulnerable safe and the elderly warm. It was helping and supporting local businesses to survive and prosper. There was continued investment in schools and a number of ambitious transformation schemes including the golf club, the waterways and support for Crossrail. In Windsor £2.6m had been allocated to improve the fabric and appearance. £2.3m had been allocated for highways and infrastructure investment in 2018/19. Social and affordable homes that were much needed were top of the Conservative agenda. There was a successful and efficient bus network to meet the needs of residents. The council had focussed full attention on plans and policies to work for the resident. The budget lay the foundation for the future growth and prosperity of the borough.

Councillor Hilton commented that given the difficulties many councils faced across the country, the budget was remarkable. Northamptonshire had recently issued a section 114 notice; the first council to do so in 20 years. A recent article had stated that at least 10 other councils were in a state of preparedness to also issue such a notice. 95% of councils were proposing to increase council tax, many to the maximum level allowed of 5.59%; not so in the borough that was proposing a 4.95% increase. Eight out of ten councils lacked confidence in the sustainability of local government finance. 75% of councils had had to use reserves to balance their budget. The Lead Member was confident there would be no need to do this in the borough in the next year. The majority of councils stated that the greatest demands came from children's services. Of the 101 councils who had released their proposed budget, 57 were planning to reduce children's services. In contrast the borough was proposing to improve the offer to young people through Achieving for Children (AfC). There were a number of examples where the borough continued to support services that other council's struggled to maintain: parks and gardens, a brand new leisure centre, libraries were flourishing, full funding for the Intensive Family Support Service, funding to keep bus routes open. The council was rightly proud that council tax in the borough was the

lowest outside London, which had been achieved by prudent management. The quality of services was the underlying theme of the budget. Councils needed to employ a degree of innovation, which required a high level of political leadership. This administration had such political leadership. He thanked all officers and councillors who had worked to transform the council to a more efficient partnering organisation that allowed this budget to come forward.

Councillor Richards joined the meeting at 8.10pm

Councillor Hunt commented that the budget was a budget for everyone. In Hurley and the Walthams a few years ago the council had purchased a piece of land to help prevent unauthorised usage. That land was now open space and the budget included funding for a playground area following a local consultation. The budget gave people what they wanted.

Councillor Hill stated that the budget was predicated on a measure of debt loading. In 2018/19 the debt was forecast as £141m, peaking at a quarter of a billion in 2023. This would then be followed by land sales, if they came off. Many were in his ward. Oldfield was suffering from overdevelopment, with up to 9500 dwellings in 15 years. The golf club had originally included 960 dwellings but this was now up to 2000. There was a profound lack of real infrastructure delivery including transport links. With this budget Maidenhead was at risk of becoming a high rise dormitory town. Oldfield ward residents had many times asked to be heard, however the leadership had ignored their plight. The key beneficiaries would be the developers who stood to make stellar profits. Councillor Hill commented that he viewed the budget as insanely speculative and a deplorable way to run the borough finances. He asked the leadership to think again and find another way.

Councillor S Rayner commented that she was delighted to offer the funding to the Hurley and Walthams play area. As many councils were closing libraries, the borough was keeping them open longer. A further £435,000 had been allocated for structural and internal improvements. Continued investment had brought more resident services into the libraries. She was thankful for the hard work and dedication of staff. In 2018/19 the council proposed to invest £540,000 in an upgrade of slides at Windsor Leisure Centre. The first phase of Braywick Leisure Centre was underway. This would transform the cultural and sporting opportunities in Maidenhead, paid for by the St Cloud Way development.

Councillor Rankin referred to Members of the Opposition who had raised questions about the significant capital investments to which the Royal Borough was committing. To build a borough for everyone, development was needed. However, too often development was embarked upon and completed without the necessary infrastructure in place. The budget invested significantly, in a focussed manner, to ensure that necessary infrastructure was indeed in place. The council would invest around £350m by 2025 in education, transport, leisure and other infrastructure to fully support the Borough Local Plan and the regeneration of Maidenhead. This included expanding schools, enhancing the transport infrastructure, a CCTV upgrade, state-of-the-art leisure facilities and enhancements to the buildings where residents used community services. The budget provided the necessary infrastructure to transform the borough over the next 10 years. Councillors Jones and Hill had raised the sustainability of this proposal. In Councillor Rankin's view, it was unsustainable not to get the infrastructure in place ahead of development. Councillor Saunders has clearly articulated how

conservative and credible expectations of capital inflows would meet this requirement, and further honour the commitment to borough staff by funding their pensions, and cover the borough's longer term debt. Through efficiency and careful financial planning, the council continued to ensure delivery of the services most valued by residents, and was ready to transform the borough in the next 10 years.

Councillor N. Airey commented that the budget reflected the council's aspirations to ensure that all children and young people in the borough were able to flourish and achieve the very best outcomes, regardless of their background. She was passionate that borough children and young people had access to the best services, whether that be in universal services such as their schools and education, sports and leisure, or time spent in borough children's and youth centres; or whether that be the more vulnerable youth who needed additional support from Children's Services and other directorates across the borough to meet any additional needs.

Councillor N. Airey stated that 2017-18 had been a big year for Children's Services. In August, the council joined with Achieving for Children, a significant step for the service and the valuable staff, and a step taken to help secure long-term positive outcomes for residents. At the same time, there were extremely high numbers of children in need, and particularly children on child protection plans. This was now 88 children but at one point had been over 150. These high numbers required additional social workers, independent reviewing officers, increased legal costs, and multi-agency meetings to take families through process. For that reason, and due to some members of staff unfortunately being on long-term sick leave, the council had had to maintain its use of agency staff to ensure appropriate cover within social care. However, she wanted to assure Members and residents that officers in Achieving for Children and in the Commissioning team worked closely to carefully manage the budget and to monitor the workload to ensure the right level of investment and staffing was in place.

The council continued to invest in recruiting foster carers beyond the original scope, using in-year investment within existing budgets in order to continue the work to help give children in care the best placements and to also assist in driving down ever-increasing placement costs. Furthermore, the council was one of the first councils in the country to implement the council tax exemption for care leavers, and went further, backdating this to 1 June 2015. Additionally, the council had maintained discretionary services for children and young people despite many local authorities around the country having long-since cut these, and would continue to do so in the 2018-19 budget. These services included universal children's and youth centre provisions which were run across the borough, and the Youth Voice, Youth Choice annual budget of £20,000 which was run by young people, for young people.

In relation to Councillor Jones's point, Councillor N. Airey explained that there had been a reduction in a session at the Old Windsor Children's Centre, based on a reduction in demand. As a hub centre, this required two members of staff to be available, and there were only three families who wished to use the session. Therefore, instead of running the session at the centre, the families were offered transport to another centre they may wish to use to ensure those three families did not miss out on services, but that staff time was also used wisely. The council continued to invest in the school estate across the borough, to ensure young people could receive their education in excellent facilities, and was completing the over £30m schools expansion programme undertaken since 2016. She clarified that about thirty schools in the borough were still maintained and therefore RBWM undertook their

payroll so the apprenticeship levy applied. It was not that these schools could not access the benefits, the issue was scalability for small schools. The council was working on a small school strategy to assist schools in collaboration. Since a question had been raised last year the Director of Children's Services had met with the Oxford Diocese to see how schools could share an apprentice such as a caretaker.

The Home to School Transport base budget had increased by £296,000 to ensure that those pupils with special needs and families on low incomes could access the right education safely and appropriately. There had also been significant investment in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Service, including £450,000 from the Better Care Fund split over the next three years and investment agreed at the Schools Forum from the high needs block.

The impact of the budget on borough children and young people was not limited simply to the Children's Services budget itself. From the £540,000 on new water slides at Windsor Leisure Centre to the £22,000 for school crossing patrols, the budget was set to see young people thrive, and enjoy living safely in this great borough. The budget continued the council on the trajectory of delivering ever-improving services for residents who, for the most part, could not yet vote, were least likely to respond to consultations, whose voices the council had to work extra-hard to ensure were heard in council life and policy-making, and who could be some of our most vulnerable and for whom, in some situations their interactions with the borough could be the difference between life and death.

Councillor Carroll commented that he was pleased the council was seeking the full 3% adult social care precept so the council could ensure services for the most vulnerable residents were provided. There was an urgent need for a national debate on how adult social care would be funded across the country. The borough would contribute to the upcoming Parliamentary inquiry. In relation to public health it had been decided to use a portion of the precept along with the Better Care Fund to invest in preventative services. This would essentially offset reductions in public health spending that had been forced on the council due to the reduction in national grant funding. This helped keep the council's public health budget neutral, unlike other councils.

Councillor Grey commented that he was overjoyed by the investment of £775,000 for the replacement of outdated machines in borough car parks. The new machines would enable payment by a variety of methods. The skilful increase in fees and charges meant no increase to residents. Even with the increases proposed, the borough was still 50% cheaper than neighbouring boroughs. Councillor Grey highlighted £1.3m investment in CCTV which backed up the efforts to address anti-social behaviour. He announced that an additional six Community Wardens and a Warden Supervisor (a total of seven) would be funded. This would be at no extra cost to the taxpayer through clever use of internal funds. The waste contract would be up for renewal in March 2019. The weekly bin collection would remain when 78% of other councils were moving to two or four weekly collections. The residents of Datchet were thankful for funding for Christmas tree lights and a heavy duty electricity box. The public riverside area had been transformed and another £70,000 allocated to maintain the 150 year old storm drains in the village.

Councillor Werner stated that the budget was fundamentally based on £133m of debt moving to £241m. The future of the borough's finances rested on risk and were predicated on the sale of the golf club. There was also a risk that the BLP would not

be approved as the employment areas were not big enough, there had been last minute changes, and the consultation had been flawed. All were agreed there would be a period of uncertainty. This was a 'gamblers budget' and each councillor needed to decide if they were a gambler. Councillor Werner felt the report summary was flawed as he referred to efficient and careful planning yet was based on speculative investment. A council tax of 1.95% plus the 3% precept was above inflation therefore broke a manifesto commitment. The proposed savings were not guaranteed. Advantage Card holders would be affected if they had a season ticket. Seven Community Wardens had been promised but the manifesto commitment was to double the number. He was pleased with the CCTV upgrade, for which he had 'walked over hot coals' and fought for. Councillor Werner felt the budget could be called a 'gamblers budget,' a 'debt budget' or a 'risk budget; in any case he did not support it.

Councillor Brimacombe thanked the Lead Member and officers for the early work on the budget and for keeping all 14 libraries open, including investment in stock and buildings. However he wished to highlight a number of issues. The total forecast debt at the end of the year was £141m; of this £62m was new debt and operational running costs of £86m. Therefore the extra debt was equivalent to 73% of the annual cost base taking the total debt to 164% of the annual cost base. He was not disputing the need for expenditure but wished to highlight that a 1% increase in council tax was usually referred to as being worth £750,000. A ten year repayment figure of £6.3m per annum plus interest would require an additional 8.4% extra on council tax for ten years. This would equate to a £77 increase per annum on a Band D property. The budget did not seek to pay down any of the debt, but push it forward against future speculative sales of council land. The opportunity cost was the retention of the land for truly affordable rented housing stock for local residents whilst meeting house building quotas and a future sustainable revenue stream for the council. The risk was the number of variables in land deals. Another issue was whether it was right for council tax payers now to receive free benefits at the expense of future generations, in terms of the permanent loss of assets sold to pay down debts and the cost of a missed opportunity for a truly affordable housing stock. Whilst the budget was technically sound, the underlying policy and risk was less so.

Councillor Burbage highlighted the cut in precept by Datchet Parish Council and also that of Hurley. Unfortunately the biggest percentage increase was the bill for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Thames Valley Police at 7.5%. Councillor Burbage asked if, given the maximum the PCC could add was £12, had the borough offered a view to the PCC on this proposal?

Councillor Smith highlighted that the majority of the developments in the town were joint venture enterprises so criticism could not be both that developers would receive all the benefits and that the budget was speculative. The borough's Band D charge was 9% lower than the London average and 23% below the national average and 26% below the Shire average.

Councillor D. Evans highlighted that there was no increases in parking charges at the Nicholson's car park for those with an Advantage Card, and an increase from £2 to £2.10 for visitors. In Reading a similar car park would cost £4. Many of the members of Cabinet had had responsible careers and jobs in business and were therefore able to weigh up the risks and make careful, thought out decisions. Those who spoke about borrowing concerns were rejecting the regeneration of the town to provide much needed affordable housing and social housing. The council was also investing in the

Waterways scheme and the station forecourt. Provision for temporary car parking had also been made whilst the rebuilding of the Nicholson's car park took place. The budget underpinned the regeneration of Maidenhead.

Councillor Da Costa thanked officers and Councillor Saunders for the open discussions at an early stage on the budget. He was concerned with the flawed policy rather than the workings of the budget. The budget was predicated on ambitious development plans through to 2026. He used Bracknell Forest as a benchmark. If the borough had followed Bracknell it would have collected £20m more in council tax this year and in previous years. If you looked to the end of the £430m capital programme, the extra money collected would amount to £400m which would almost entirely pay for the capital investment. The major concern was about debt and project risk. If the golf club development did not work it could result in a loss of green belt land, no affordable housing and substantial debt.

In relation to homelessness and rough sleepers Councillor da Costa commented that in 17/18 £140,000 had been included. The Council then received £1.1m that was all used on temporary accommodation, a total budget of £1.54m. In 18/19, excluding the Flexible Housing Support Grant (FHSG), the budget for homelessness dropped to £423,000. He had been told that all of the £1.2m FHSG for next year would also be used for temporary accommodation. Therefore the budget had failed in terms of homelessness and rough sleepers. In December the Leader had stated that 80 families were in temporary accommodation. At the Windsor Town Forum the previous week this figure was reported to have risen to 120 families. The cost of private landlord accommodation was £100-£140 per night. Councillor Da Costa asked if £3.7m of unspent developer contributions allocated for affordable housing had been considered. He therefore questioned if a budget of only £423,000 was realistic. If the BLP failed or was delayed there would also be a loss of developer contributions. The numbers did not add up and the budget was therefore wishful thinking by the administration.

Councillor Dudley thanked all officers in the council without whom the budget would not be possible. The distinction was clear: a good Conservative council or high tax socialism. Resident had worked hard for their money and already paid tax on it. Councillor Werner had said he had walked over hot coals for CCTV. Councillor Dudley highlighted the Monitoring Officer's decision in relation to a breach of the code of conduct by Councillor Werner involving the release of information relating to CCTV cameras. Councillor Dudley highlighted the commitment to maintain the weekly bin collection and the investment in combatting anti-social behaviour. An Inspector had already been allocated for the BLP, with an enquiry expected for May or June and adoption in August. He accepted that certain capital expenditure could not take place until the de-risking phase had been completed. A number of Members had spent the last two days in meetings with representatives from five major developers, who had all been very positive about the golf club opportunity. Economic vibrancy was needed to enable the council to protect vulnerable residents. Local democracy would be addressed by the boundary review; the recommendations from which were due on 6 March 2018. As a result there would be less councillors and therefore a reduction in the cost of local democracy.

Councillor Jones commented that Members were present to discuss the budget. She felt she had put her points across fairly and clearly and that personal attacks were not needed.

Councillor Bicknell commented that the Opposition view was pessimistic and proposed taxing residents to the maximum. There had been no mention by Councillor Da Costa of the 40 families that had been rehoused recently. The council had brought forward £2.6m from next year's budget to undertake works in Windsor town centre, which would host two royal weddings in 2018. Attempts were being made to smarten up the hostile vehicle mitigation barriers. Resurfacing would take place in Thames Street and Castle Hill, alongside paving works. Councillor Bicknell highlighted a number of other investment proposals in the budget: £3m for infrastructure and road repairs; £100,000 for electric vehicle charging points; £450,000 in Dedworth; increased parking bays in Sunningdale; £4.5m for Maidenhead station forecourt. He concluded by stating this was a value for money resident focussed budget.

Councillor Bateson highlighted that £300,000 had been allocated for grants to voluntary organisations. She expected all wards would benefit in some way. This was important when other councils were reducing their grant funding.

Councillor E. Wilson explained that when he had been elected a ward councillor the area was unkempt with broken road signs and lights not working. At a Cabinet meeting last year he had highlighted the need for a ring-fenced budget for Dedworth and Clewer. The budget included £450,000 for the area, thanks to Councillors Bhatti, Pryer, M. Airey and Dudley.

Councillor McWilliams commented that he was excited to see funding for Thriftwood Farm. Three areas of Green Belt had been defended in the ward. He referred to a Liberal Democrat leaflet advocating 50% of houses on the golf club to be truly affordable. If 50% was allocated as social housing the development would be completely unviable. There was a need to be clear with residents as to what was realistic. The BLP committed to 30% affordable housing. He was pleased that the Homelessness Strategy set out in 2017 was fully funded.

Councillor Beer commented that Datchet had been favoured by a substantial property bequest a few years previously that yielded a good income and therefore enabled a reduction in the precept. He commented that Old Windsor had paid for its own Christmas lights. He did not feel the budget was a budget for everyone as the proposals for affordable housing were abysmally low and there was very little affordable rented accommodation included. The SHLAA report said that Maidenhead should provide 76% of affordable housing as rented properties. This equated to 434 houses out of an annual figure of 712, equating to 61%. The council was aiming at 30% on the largest sites; given this would not apply to smaller sites the 30% figure would not be achieved. He expected the Planning Inspector to pick this issue up and therefore the BLP would be put in jeopardy.

Councillor Saunders stated that he wished to reflect on Councillor Jones' plea and he was more than happy to speak to her in the rational and reasonable way she had commented on the budget. He was genuinely grateful for the Opposition's acknowledgement of the technically competent budget, and the personal support which officers and he had provided to facilitate scrutiny of the budget over the last four months. He would investigate further the £100,000 of savings Councillor Jones suggested may be in doubt. He fully respected Councillor Jones' concerns about the uncertainties over the next eight years. The investment in the budget was funded without reference to the Maidenhead Golf Club receipts, so there should be no

meaningful concern about the budget being approved. He had discussed with Councillor Jones the expectations for further investment beyond next year and the clear commitment to re-phase and adjust the investment to match the latest deliverable receipts from the Maidenhead developments.

Councillor Hill had labelled him as insane for his budget. As the council's Mental Health Champion he queried the dubious slander. He had a well-known sub clinical bipolar condition, and he regretted those with a contempt for mental health challenges might ignorantly label this as some form of insanity. He would nonetheless devote whatever time Councillor Hill requested to discuss the cash projections, so he may reflect on its sanity. Councillor Saunders stated that the comments by Councillor Beer were just wrong. If Councillor Da Costa had asked his questions before the meeting he hoped he could have answered them. Councillor Werner had heard many budgets, but he had not listened. The additional debt in the budget of £63m and the debt added of £22m, and maybe some of the £57m inherited eleven years ago, was all scheduled to be repaid from reliable contracted cash receipts, without reference to the golf club development. Those jibing about gambling and risk overlooked the fundamental demand from residents. Investment in infrastructure was needed before adding new housing. This required a council prepared to invest in that infrastructure, and be competent enough to finance it securely. The alternative was no new infrastructure and no new housing, social, affordable or otherwise. More people with nowhere to live. Those dismissing the budget had no faith in Maidenhead and were condemning residents to an underfunded, underserviced and unloved future. The budget backed the borough, backed Windsor, Ascot, the Sunnings and believed in Maidenhead.

Councillor Jones requested clarification after the meeting as to the context of the word 'insane' used by Councillor Hill. Councillor Dudley commented the reference was insensitive. Councillor Hill responded that he had not alleged that Councillor Saunders was insane; he had said that 'the budget was insanely speculative'.

Councillor Saunders proposed an amendment to the recommendations to remove line CV33 in the capital programme, Appendix J.

It was proposed by Councillor Saunders, seconded by Councillor Dudley, and:

RESOLVED: That Council notes the report and approves the:

- i) Detailed recommendations contained in Appendix A which includes a Base Council Tax at band D of £933.42, including a 1.95% increase of £17.85.**
- ii) Adult Social Care Precept of 3% (an increase of £28.85 on the £45.89 precept included in the 2017/18 budget) to be included in the Council's budget proposals, making this levy the equivalent of £74.74 at band D.**
- iii) Fees and Charges contained in Appendix E.**
- iv) Capital Programme, shown in appendices I and J, for the financial year commencing April 2018, subject to the removal of line CV33.**
- v) Prudential borrowing limits set out in Appendix L.**
- vi) Business rate tax base calculation, detailed in Appendix P, and its use in the calculation of the Council Tax Requirement in Appendix A.**

- vii) **Deputy Director and Head of Finance in consultation with the Lead Members for Finance and Children's Services is authorised to amend the total schools budget to reflect actual Dedicated School Grant levels.**
- viii) **Responsibility to include the precept from the Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authority in the overall Council Tax charges is delegated to the Lead Member for Finance and Deputy Director and Head of Finance once the precept is announced.**

(42 Councillors voted for the motion; Councillor M. Airey, N. Airey, Alexander, Bateson, Bicknell, Bowden, Brimacombe, Bullock, Burbage, Carroll, Clark, Coppinger, Cox, Diment, Dudley, D. Evans, Grey, Hilton, Hollingsworth, Hunt, Lenton, Love, Luxton, McWilliams, Mills, Muir, Quick, Rankin, S. Rayner, Richards, Saunders, Sharma, Sharp, Sharpe, Shelim, Smith, Story, Stretton, Walters, D. Wilson, E. Wilson and Yong. 3 Councillors voted against the motion; Da Costa, Hill and Werner. 3 Councillors abstained: Beer, Jones and Majeed.

Members congratulated Councillor Burbage on the birth of his son Henry.

Councillor Burbage left the meeting at 9.26pm

238. APPROVAL OF THE UPDATED PAY POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2018/19

Members considered the updated Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19.

Councillor Coppinger introduced the report in the absence of Councillor Targowska. He explained that the policy demonstrated the faith the council had in its employees. The Localism Act required the council to annually review and publish its policy by the end of March. The policy had been updated to reflect the chief officer structure, the pay ratios and the median and mean average salaries. Changes would still be required in relation to exit pay arrangements when government guidance was published.

603 people were now employed by the council and the pay multiples had reduced from 12 to 8.31; this was as a result of shaping the workforce to meet the needs of the borough. The council used market comparability to ensure it was not over or under-paying key roles.

It was proposed by Councillor Coppinger, seconded by Councillor Bicknell, and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Council notes the report and:

- i) Approves the updated Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19.**
- ii) Notes that further revisions will be required to the statement following the implementation of the Government's reforms to public sector exit pay arrangements.**

239. POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS

Members considered the political balance and allocation of seats on the Standing Panels/Forums which had been reviewed following the resignation of Councillors Hill, Majeed and Brimacombe from the Conservative Group.

It was noted that the following Councillors had formed a group for administrative purposes called 'Not the Administration' (NTA): Councillors Jones, Beer, Werner, Da Costa, Hollingsworth, Stretton, Hill, Majeed and Brimacombe.

It was noted that, as a result of the resignations, the following vacancies (Conservative seats) have arisen: Employment Panel, Berkshire Pension Fund Panel.

The changes in political balance has resulted in three seats formerly held by the Conservative Group being allocated to NTA.

Councillor E Wilson commented that he understood the administration to be the members of the Cabinet only, therefore he questioned the name of the new group.

Councillor Jones stated that all nine members of NTA were individual councillors and not a group. Each decided how they wished to vote and had individual views, which they were quite happy to express with others. Councillor Hill commented that the arrangement had been made to satisfy local government law. The system was set up for a classic two party system. Councillor Dudley suggested that if NTA was not a group, the Opposition Leader should waive her Group Leader allowance. Councillor Jones responded that it was an administrative group of politicians. She still had to attend meetings with the Managing Director and senior officers and administer the group of individuals. Councillor Stretton commented that the name was suggested by a legal officer as being the one thing that connected all nine councillors. The group held meetings, debated issues and then entered the chamber and voted with their conscience.

It was proposed by Councillor Dudley, seconded by Councillor Bicknell, and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That:

i) Councillor Majeed (NTA) be appointed to the Licensing Panel, Councillor Hill (NTA) be appointed to the Borough-wide Development Management Panel and Councillor Stretton (NTA) be appointed to the Local Plans Working Group.

ii) Councillor Walters be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Maidenhead Development Management Panel

240. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

a) Councillor E. Wilson asked the following question of Councillor Bicknell, Lead Member for Highways and Transport:

Will the Lead Member advise the role of the Traffic Commissioner in dealing with changes to the Number 2 bus that runs through Dedworth?

Councillor Bicknell responded that all new or changed bus services had to be registered with, and agreed by, the Traffic Commissioner prior to the services being authorised to commence. Cessation of services were also required to be advised to the Traffic Commissioner.

First Buses contacted the Traffic Commissioner on 4 December 2017 to advise they were de-registering the number 2 service. The timescale for this process required 56 days' notice, which would mean the service stopping on 30 January 2018. Reading

Buses applied to the Traffic Commissioner to take on this service on a commercial basis in early January 2018, thereby retaining the service following the withdrawal of First Buses. Reading Buses applied for this to be done as a short notice application, which was used in emergency situations, so they could start the route as soon as First Buses stopped, meaning that there would be no gap in service for customers. The Traffic Commissioner contacted both the Royal Borough and Slough Borough Council for comments on this application, which both council's supported.

Courtney Buses also applied to register the number 2 service as a commercial operation on 12 January 2018, also under a short notice application. This was refused as the Traffic Commissioner only permits one such application from an operator under this process, which had already been granted to Reading Buses. Courtney Buses was going through the full 56 day notice process to start a Monday to Saturday operation on the 11 March 2018.

Courtney Buses had applied to the Traffic Commissioner to operate early morning and late evening services (Monday to Friday) and an all day Sunday Service on the number 2 route. This was in addition to the core times being operated by Reading Buses. This application was submitted under a short notice application to ensure customers were provided with an enhanced service. Similarly, both the Royal Borough and Slough Borough supported this application which was approved enabling the new service to commence on the 30 January 2018.

In addition, Courtney Buses applied to operate a very similar service to route 2 (operated by Reading Buses) in direct competition as a short-notice application. This required approval by the Traffic Commissioner and was declined as there was no technical requirement why the registration should be approved at short-notice as there was little detriment to the customer as an equivalent service operated by Reading Buses was in place. However, legislation encouraged competition and the Traffic Commissioner had approved the operation of the service following the 56-day registration period.

In essence, Reading Buses submitted the application first which was approved at short-notice to maintain services to customers following the withdrawal of First Bus.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor E. Wilson commented that in the eyes of the resident it was the council that licensed and run bus services. He asked the Lead Member to consider putting a brief note on the website to explain the situation.

Councillor Bicknell responded that he would be happy to do so.

b) Councillor E. Wilson asked the following question of Councillor Bicknell, Lead Member for Highways and Transport:

Can the Lead Member for Highways advise what surveys are undertaken on bus punctuality in Dedworth?

Councillor Bicknell responded that all vehicles used for the various bus services had Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) equipment on board that tracked the vehicles. The equipment enabled the bus operators to monitor the punctuality of the services to check whether bus services were running late or early. In the longer-term this information could be used to inform timetable and route changes to improve

punctuality. In the short-term, the information enabled communications to be issued to update passengers. This was in addition to the real-time information which was displayed on the roadside displays.

The data was collated and used by the bus companies to provide the Royal Borough with punctuality figures on a quarterly basis, to monitor and manage the levels of service being provided against the published time tables. Punctuality data could also be requested by the Traffic Commissioner to monitor service performance

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor E. Wilson asked if the data was available to members of the public.

Councillor Bicknell responded that it was not currently available but he could ask the operators if they would be prepared to publish it on the website.

c) Councillor Hill asked the following question of Councillor D Evans, Lead Member for Maidenhead Regeneration and Maidenhead:

The Community Centre in York Road, Maidenhead is a valuable Community Asset used by countless residents each week. Why as part of the York Road Regeneration Project is the Community Centre being demolished and not re-instated as vital Community Asset as part of the Regeneration Project?

Councillor D. Evans responded that he wished to assure residents that the council was committed to ensuring the vital services the centre provided continued going forward. A meeting had been held with Members and officers to get a better understanding of the services provided. The council was committed to ensure the activities continued after redevelopment, however he was not wedded to the bricks and mortar.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Hill asked for more specifics about where the services would go. It was very important they stayed in central Maidenhead or a similar location as lots of people who used the centre had no transport.

Councillor D. Evans responded that the site was in the third phase of development therefore there was plenty of time to make the right decision. A number of options would be looked at including the upgraded Desborough Suite. There was no imminent threat to services on the site.

d) Councillor Da Costa asked the following question of Councillor McWilliams, Principal Member Housing and Communications:

Can you tell me how many rough sleepers were offered accommodation during the period 1st December 2017 to 1st February 2018, and of those, how many were offered out of borough accommodation?

Councillor McWilliams responded that between 1 December 2017 and 13 February 2018, 40 people had been offered Severe Weather Emergency Protocol assistance. Of that 40, 31 had emergency accommodation. 5 people have been accommodated in Borough and 26 out of Borough in Slough, Southall and Reading. The remaining 9 people did not want SWEP assistance. This assistance was refused before the placement address was known.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Da Costa commented that the council received £1.1m of FSG in 2017/18 which was entirely used to fund temporary accommodation. It was set to receive a further £1.2m in 2018/19. Given the purpose was to support the full range of homelessness services including employing a Homelessness Prevention or Tenancy Support Officer, did the Principal Member feel the council's Homelessness Strategy failed to plan for residents' needs and could he give a timeline for the new plan, including when third parties, stakeholders and councillors would be consulted, and how much money would be made available to provide all the services needed and procure decent accommodation locally.

Councillor McWilliams responded that he would shortly give an update on the strategy. In relation to the budget the Lead Member had stated if Councillor Da Costa had detailed questions he would be happy to sit down and explain it to him.

e) Councillor Da Costa asked the following question of Councillor Dudley, Leader of the Council:

The recent public record of the Audit and Performance Review Panel shows: 2 meetings held, 3 meetings withdrawn or cancelled. This means no oversight since September 2017 and until the end of February 2018 (a 5 month gap). Are you content with this, and if so why, or do you see it as a missed opportunity?

Councillor Dudley responded that he understood, due to a small number of items to be considered on the agenda, that there had been a number of cancellations of the Audit and Performance Review Panel. One of the meetings set for the year, at the end of September, was only included tentatively to deal with any problems completing the annual accounts. He was pleased to say there had been no reason to need to use this meeting. Much oversight of the council's activities were also carried out by robust overview and scrutiny panels on a regular basis. However, he had asked that the Head of Finance produces an annual timetable which would include all of the expected items that would be brought forward during the year. The Chair of the Panel would review the timetable at the beginning of the financial year and in advance of each panel meeting.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Da Costa commented that the Panel was a key scrutiny as it had the power to review anything. Its pivotal role was augmented by the major changes in the council and ambitious plans for the future. Councillor Dudley effectively appointed the Chairman therefore was responsible for their performance. Was he content that the Chairman had been receiving the Special Responsibility Allowance since May but had only chaired one meeting and had not produced an agenda for other meetings.

Councillor Dudley responded that a constitutional review was underway to ensure the council was running in the most efficient way with the most appropriate allocation of resources. Councillor Luxton did a fantastic job as a chairman, but she could only chair when there were things coming on to the agenda which needed to be debated, not to have a talking shop.

f) Councillor Bowden will ask the following question of Councillor McWilliams, Principal Member for Housing and Communications:

Will the Principal Member for Housing give an update on his plans to update the Homelessness Strategy?

Councillor McWilliams responded that he firmly believed that just one person without a roof over their head was one too many, and it was vitally important that the most vulnerable people in society were helped to get their lives back on track. That was why the borough had a strong offer, including going above and beyond its SWEP duties and commissioning a range of accommodation and support services.

The council had listened to what local residents and stakeholders had to say about the recently published Rough Sleeping and Anti-Social Behaviour paper. It had been agreed that the council needed to be clear on not conflating two issues, so the decision was taken to split the paper into a specific paper looking at anti-social behaviour, which was a behaviour based approach, and an update to the adopted Homelessness Strategy, which was people centred.

Under the existing Homelessness Strategy, the Council had a strong record of prevention: it had helped hundreds of families to avoid homelessness, whether through offering interest free loans to secure private rented accommodation, having officers attend court with tenants who were being evicted, providing assistance to those struggling with their mortgage, or mediating parents who could no longer accommodate their grown child. Housing options advice and support was being delivered seven days a week through the Library and Resident Service Hubs, where each person was given a personal housing plan which set out needs and next steps for that individual and weekly information surgeries were held in partnership with local charities.

The council also had a strong record in providing support services for the factors that contributed to homelessness and rough sleeping. In 2017 the council commissioned Resilience, following the great work Councillor Carroll and officers carried out with the Drugs and Alcohol policy, to provide advice, support, treatment and recovery for anyone experiencing alcohol or drug problems in the borough; the council had helped to establish Brighter Berkshire; CAB were funded to provide advice on a range of matters including housing, debt, financial and employment advice at their offices in Maidenhead and at the library in Windsor, whilst Bracknell CAB provided support at Ascot Library;

In terms of supply, the council commissioned specialist accommodation for residents. This included 25 flats in Maidenhead for young people/adults, where skills learning and support services were provided. There were 17 flats in Windsor which were used as temporary accommodation and had on-site support staff available to assist with the residents' needs. In 2017, the council opened John West House, a 24/7 shelter, where support and skills learning were provided; and a new facility with intermediate living spaces to enable people to move from emergency housing to sustainable housing and living solutions. He was delighted that the council had recently submitted the Borough Local Plan with the firm aim of achieving 30% affordable housing on all eligible sites, providing for a long term supply solution.

The Allocation Policy, which was due for review in 2018, would draw on best practice and the council was awaiting updated guidance from the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government. Further details would follow, however the aspiration was to have the new allocation policy in place in the autumn. Despite all of the great work, there was always more the council could do to support some of our borough's most vulnerable residents.

Homelessness, particularly those who were rough sleeping, was a multifaceted and complex issue with no single solution or short-term fixes. Only with a long-term plan to provide each individual with the support they needed could the council ensure it gave appropriate assistance to each person, as no case was exactly the same as the next. It was also the case that no one institution, whether it be the local authority, the police or local charities, had all the answers or the solutions. Only by working together in partnership could the council help society's most vulnerable.

Councillor McWilliams was proud to say that in taking forward the approach to supporting homeless people including rough sleepers, the council would be consulting widely, including forming a fully formalised Homelessness Forum bringing together all the key stakeholders in the local area to work on the approach, contributing to the updating of the homelessness strategy. Invitations would be going out shortly.

The council was making a big open offer to partners and stakeholders: come and talk to us and together let's help find sustainable solutions and reinforce our shared commitment to supporting rough sleepers. In the light of the council's aspiration to listen to views and consult widely, it would be updating the homelessness strategy in the autumn thereby giving the time and opportunity to deliver the best for the most vulnerable residents

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Bowden asked if the council recorded the details of individuals who refused SWEP and the reasons why?

Councillor McWilliams responded that he was sure the information was available if Councillor Bowden wished to ask officers.

Councillor Hunt left the meeting at 10pm

241. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Councillor N. Airey introduced the motion. She highlighted that, two weeks previously, the UK had celebrated that on 6 February 1918, the Representation of People Act granted some women in the UK suffrage for the first time. The law said that women over the age of 30 who were registered property occupiers (or married to one) could now vote. That was 8.5 million women - or about 2 in 5. However, had Councillor N. Airey been alive 100 years ago, she would have been one of the 3 in 5 who still did not have the right to vote, never mind the opportunity to be elected. In 100 years, society had come a long way for which she was very grateful, but there was more to do.

The Plan International UK report 'The State of Girls' Rights in the UK' posed the question, 'What is the current state of girls' rights in the UK?' and concludes that the answer was clear: not equal. By exploring the real experiences of girls in the UK, the report found that whilst the UK may be the fifth-richest country in the world, it was failing its girls, and failing to meet international standards set out in human rights frameworks and the United Nation's new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The report also compared girls' rights in the UK at local authority level, which showed that young women had different experiences depending on where they lived. Geography played a significant part, and whilst the borough was not in the worst 10 local authorities to be a girl, it was not in the top 10 either. It was known that access to excellent education, public health services, living in a safe environment free from the

fear of harm, and more, were all essential factors for young people to thrive. The borough held to the vision that a person's background, family income, ethnicity, postcode or any other circumstance should not be a limiting factor in their future outcomes or wellbeing.

The purpose of the report was that policy makers and decision makers could recognise the reality of the state of girls' rights in the UK was not where it both could and should be, and then act. She was bringing the motion to Council so that the borough could make a difference on its own patch and aspire to be the very best local authority to be a girl in the UK. This was something Councillor Airey wanted to ensure happened from the grassroots and not just top-down. Therefore, the motion sought to redress the balance in RBWM, and to establish a Girls' Policy Forum.

The aim for the Girls' Policy Forum was that it fed into policy making, not after the event, so the council was proactively seeking to listen to girls where previously their voices had not been heard. She requested that the first meeting of the Girls' Policy Forum should appoint a 'Girls' Rights Champion' as the report recommended. She invited any girl aged 0-18, and those with LDD up to age 25, to be a part of the forum, and the motion requested that the Leader writes to all schools, colleges and youth groups to invite them to appoint a representative.

Councillor N. Airey stated that she looked forward to the day where an evidence-based report stated that both young men and women had equal and excellent input and outcomes, and a motion such as was proposed was not needed. However, in the interim, she was delighted to put forward the motion which sought to enable the council to do what it could to help promote the voices of young women, and for them to be able to enjoy all the rights that living in the borough and the country afforded, in equal measure to their male counterparts.

Councillor Saunders highlighted a number of statistics from the report including:

- 94% of sexual assaults in schools were committed by males; 66% of victims were female
- 89% of rape cases were committed to females; 23% were aged 15-19 and 16% aged 10-14.
- 1 in 3 UK teenagers had received a sexually explicit text message from other children
- Half of 11-18 year olds could name a friend involved in sexting
- 30% could describe the adverse effects of sexting
- Two thirds of sexting was directed at girls.

Councillor Saunders commented that girls were increasingly at the sharp end of the ever more connected world. They were victims of abuse were amplified by the pressures and stress of limited aspirations, limited voices and an inheritance and legacy of mostly innocent but outdated older prejudices. He supported the motion to ensure girls in the borough had the clear, unambiguous and confident voice they deserved.

Councillor Diment commented that the report set out that girls' rights were compromised by poverty, gender inequality, poor education, ignorance and stereotypes. The UN Sustainable Development Goals focussed on girls rights to be free from violence, to have a voice, and choice and control in their lives alongside a

quality education and the skills and support they needed. She supported the establishment of a Forum to ensure young girls got the best support possible as they transitioned to adulthood. She supported the creation of a Girls Right's Champion to work with the existing groups to ensure all could reach their potential and no one was left behind.

Councillor Quick commented that this was a genuine opportunity to pass a motion and follow it up with work that could make an enormous difference. In doing do this would also help older female relatives who could see what was possible. There were pockets of deprivation in the borough and the aspirations of girls could be seriously low in these areas. The number of female councillors, MPs and business leaders was pitifully low, not through a lack of ability or intelligence. She suggested a report back to Council to demonstrate what had been achieved.

Councillor Dudley highlighted that the local MP and current Prime Minister had previously been Minister for Women and Equalities. His 21 year old daughter would fully support the motion. There were not enough women in the council chamber, in Parliament or in top professions.

Councillor Jones thanked Councillor N. Airey for bringing the motion and making her aware of the report. She offered her time and personal support if needed.

Councillor Brimacombe also offered his support. The modern world meant every girl faced problems that were difficult to shift. Girls needed help and support. He referred to the Corporate Parent role held by all councillors and suggested a report should come back to Council to show the body with highest authority in the council supported the actions.

Councillor N. Airey commented that she appreciated the offers of support. She hoped the first meeting of the Girls' Forum could be held within 6 weeks. She would bring reports back to Council and to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel to ensure the council was held to account.

It was proposed by Councillor N. Airey, seconded by Councillor Saunders, and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That this Council:

- i) Notes the Plan International report 'The State of Girls' rights in the UK' and the increasing coverage of issues where women experience a different climate to men.**
- ii) Notes its leadership role and establishes a new 'Girls' Policy Forum', operated by our youth services, so that the voices of young women and girls play an active role in shaping life in the Royal Borough.**
- iii) Asks the Leader to write to the schools and youth groups in the Borough to make them aware of the Forum and appoint representatives, and to commit to taking the views of the Forum into consideration when making decisions.**

242. CONTINUATION OF MEETING

At this point in the meeting, and in accordance with Rule of Procedure Part 4A 23.1 of the council's constitution, the Mayor called for a vote in relation to whether or not the meeting should continue, as the time had exceeded 10.00pm.

Upon being put to the vote, those present voted in favour of the meeting continuing.

243. 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 13 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

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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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Report Title:	Maidenhead Community Centre Petition
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	NO - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor David Evans, Lead Member for Maidenhead Regeneration and Maidenhead
Meeting and Date:	Council 24 April 2018
Responsible Officer(s):	Russell O'Keefe, Executive Director
Wards affected:	Oldfield

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REPORT SUMMARY

1. A petition containing 1,583 signatures has been submitted to the Council stating “We the undersigned petition The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to ensure that redevelopment plans for the York Road area include a replacement community centre.” Maidenhead Community Centre (MCC) operate a range of community services from a building located in York Road, Maidenhead. The building is currently leased to the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) who allow MCC to utilise and run the building. The Council is currently negotiating with RVS over surrender of the lease.
2. Subject to reaching agreement with RVS, the site would be in phase 2 of the York Road development with an estimated start on site in October 2020. The York Road development will include new and improved community and cultural space.
3. The Council along with its joint venture partners Countryside has been in detailed discussions with MCC and other stakeholders over the future cultural and community provision. These discussions have gone well and are ongoing. Subject to the Council reaching agreement on the lease surrender with RVS and with MCC on the detailed future arrangements, there is a great opportunity for MCC to play a key role in the future provision of community and cultural services in the new development at York Road.

1 DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Council notes the report and agrees to:

- i) **Continue and complete discussions with Maidenhead Community Centre on the detailed arrangements for the future provision of community and cultural services in the York Road development.**

2 REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 A petition containing 1,583 signatures has been submitted to the Council stating “We the undersigned petition The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to ensure that redevelopment plans for the York Road area include a replacement community centre.”

- 2.2 Maidenhead Community Centre (MCC) operate a range of services from a building located in York Road, Maidenhead. The activities provided include yoga, fitness, music, martial arts, church services and a café.
- 2.3 The Council is the freeholder for the land and building which covers an area of approximately 1,254 metres². The land and building is leased by the Council to the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS). There are 65 years remaining on the lease. RVS have allowed MCC to utilise and run the building.
- 2.4 The Council has been in negotiations with RVS over the surrender of the lease. Subject to reaching agreement with RVS, the site would be in phase 2 of the York Road development with an estimated start on site in October 2020. The York Road development will include new and improved community and cultural space. The Council along with its joint venture partners Countryside has been in detailed discussions with MCC and other stakeholders over the future cultural and community provision. These discussions have gone well and are ongoing.
- 2.5 Subject to reaching agreement with RVS over surrender of the lease, and MCC on the detailed future arrangements, there is a great opportunity for MCC to play a key role in the future provision of community and cultural services in the new development at York Road. This would mean MCC can continue to provide their current services and potentially others in new, improved facilities.
- 2.6 If agreement was not reached with RVS over surrender of the lease then the land and building from which MCC operate would be excluded from phase 2 of the York Road development.

Table 1: Options

Option	Comments
To continue and complete discussions with MCC on the detailed arrangements for the future provision of community and cultural services in the York Road development (Recommended)	Subject to the necessary agreements, this will allow MCC to play a key role in the future provision of community and cultural services at York Road in the new development.
To not continue and complete discussions with MCC.	This would mean MCC would not be able to potentially play a key role in the future provision of community and cultural services at York Road in the new development.

3 KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The key implications are set out in table 2.

Table 2: Key implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
To complete negotiations with RVS over surrender of the lease for the land and building at York Road	Not completed	Completed by June 2018	Completed by May 2018	N/A	30 June 2018
To complete discussions with MCC on the detailed arrangements for the future provision of community and cultural services in the new York Road Development	Not completed by August 2018	Completed by August 2018	Completed by July 2018	Completed by June 2018	31 July 2018

4 FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 There are no financial implications from this report.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications from this report.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
The Council does not reach agreement with RVS over surrender of the lease for the land and building	Medium	The land and building would be excluded from Phase 2 of the York Road development	Low

7 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 There are no impacts from this report as negotiations and discussions are ongoing.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 As part of developing the site proposal for York Road a range of consultation and engagement, including public consultation events in September 2017 and January 2018, has been carried out with residents, businesses and stakeholders including community and cultural groups.

9 TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1

Table 5: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
April – June 2018	Continue and complete negotiations with RVS over surrender of the lease for the land and building at York Road.
April – August 2018	Continue and complete discussions with MCC on the detailed arrangements for the future provision of community and cultural services in the York Road development.

10 APPENDICES

- 10.1 There are no appendices for this report.

11 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 There are no background documents for this report.

12 CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date issued for comment	Date returned with comments
Councillor David Evans	Lead Member for Maidenhead Regeneration and Maidenhead	14/4/2018	16/4/2018
Alison Alexander	Managing Director	14/4/2018	14/4/2018
Russell O'Keefe	Executive Director	14/4/2018	
Andy Jeffs	Executive Director	14/4/2018	
Rob Stubbs	Section 151 Officer	14/4/2018	
Nikki Craig	Head of HR and Corporate Projects	14/4/2018	
Louisa Dean	Communications	14/4/2018	

MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Since the last Council meeting the Deputy Mayor and I have carried out the engagements detailed below.

Meetings

- Royal Albert Institute Trust
- Samuel Lewis Old Age Pension Fund
- Windsor Talking Newspaper AGM
- Spoores Merry Rixman Foundation
- Pooles & Rings charities
- International Twin Town Partners AGM
- Berkshire Trefoil Guild Annual Meeting

Schools/Clubs/Community

- Get Berkshire Active Awards Dinner
- Chairman of South Bucks Annual Reception
- Hungerford Star Dinner
- Hosted mayoral reception for the Royal Borough's ceremonial wardens
- Visited Manor Green Special School
- Hosted mayoral reception for Royal Borough schools
- Windsor and Eton Society Annual Dinner
- Attended funeral of Windsorian and Baker Ernest Duffey
- Lions Club of Windsor 56th anniversary dinner
- Numerous media interviews regarding the Royal Wedding
- Citizenship Ceremonies
- Eton Dorney Specialist School
- Berkshire Community Foundation presentation evening
- Hosted Fashion Show in Daniels, Windsor in aid of the mayoral charities – Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service, Berkshire Community Foundation and Thames Hospice
- Women's World Day of Prayer service
- The Magistrates Court Mock Trial Competition
- Police Food Academy Banquet
- Mayor of Runnymede's Charity Ball
- Soroptimists Conference
- Led the Commonwealth Flagraising and commemorated the centenary of the end of World War I with the single commemorative act (candle lighting)
- Launched the reminiscence boxes at Boyn Grove, Maidenhead
- Attended the final session of the WAMCF interfaith dialogue
- Hosted a Tudor Banquet in aid of the mayoral charities – Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service, Berkshire Community Foundation and Thames Hospice
- Visited Sandown Park Care Home, Windsor to join the celebrations for their recent "outstanding" rating
- Get Berkshire Active School Games Winter Festival
- Queen's Award for Voluntary Service reception
- Braywick Heath Nursery 21st anniversary celebrations

- Old Maidonians Association Annual Dinner
- War Horse fundraising dinner
- Art Beyond Belief event
- Re-opened the refurbished Toby carvery at Stafferton Lodge, Braywick
- Attended the Swearing In of the new High Sheriff
- Churchmead School prizegiving
- Royal Ascot street collection permit draw
- Strive Graduation Ceremony
- Started the Maidenhead Easter Ten race
- Churches Together in Windsor Windsor Good Friday Service
- Attended the morning Easter Sunday service at St Mary's Borough Church, Maidenhead
- Soroptimists lunch
- Attended the Royal visit and luncheon at King George VI Day Centre, Windsor
- Unveiling of VC paving stone for Grenadier Guards Captain Thomas Pryce, Kidwells Park, Maidenhead
- 100th anniversary celebrations for the RAF – church service in the Windsor Parish Church, march past at the Guildhall and reception in Victoria Barracks
- Sikh Festival of Vaisakhi, Maidenhead
- Visited the Ascot Racecourse Spring Garden Show
- Presented prizes to the winning school children for the Cox Green Village May Fayre poster competition
- War Horse memorial artefacts service of blessing at Holy Trinity Garrison Church, Windsor
- Attended the Royal opening of Phase 2 at Lynwood Village, Sunninghill
- Thames Valley Police Commendation Ceremony
- Fired the first cannon to mark the 92nd Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen, Long Walk, Windsor
- Visited the Royal Celebration as part of National Care Home Open Day, St Marks Care Home, Maidenhead
- Electric Eels Presentation Evening
- National Scout Service and Parade
- Maidenhead Scouts St George's Day Renewal of Promise
- Rotary Club of Windsor St George Annual St George's Day Dinner

Concerts/Show

- Azure Theatre School 10th anniversary show
- Windsor and Eton Choral Society concert
- Manor Green School "Fabulous Fables"
- Riverside Players "A Bunch of Amateurs"
- "Chance to Dance" special needs dance showcase
- Windsor and Maidenhead Symphony Orchestra concert
- Windsor School Sport Partnership gym and dance show
- Cantorum Choir concert
- Maidenhead Music Society concert

Report Title:	Appointment of Statutory Officer
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	NO - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor Targowska, Principal Member for HR, Legal and IT.
Meeting and Date:	Council 24 April 2018
Responsible Officer(s):	Alison Alexander, Managing Director and Head of Paid Service
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

The report requests approval for the statutory appointment of Monitoring Officer.

1 DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Council notes the report and appoints:

- i) **Mary Severin as the Council's Monitoring Officer.**

2 REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 On the 12 March Employment Panel approved a new proposed management structure for Legal and Governance Services including the splitting out of the Monitoring Officer duties from the Head of Legal and Governance.

Role of Monitoring Officer

- 2.1 The Monitoring Officer is a statutory appointment and serves as the guardian of the Council's Constitution and the decision-making process. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for advising the council on the legality of its decisions and providing guidance to councilors and officers on the Council's Constitution and its powers. The role has a responsibility to report breaches and possible breaches of the law or maladministration to the Council.
- 2.2 The Monitoring Officer works closely with the Council's Managing Director to assist in the role of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct and probity within the Council.
- 2.3 There are six functions of the Monitoring Officer as set out in the constitution:
1. **Maintaining the Constitution:** The Monitoring Officer will maintain an up to date version of the Constitution and ensure that it is widely available for consultation by Members, staff and the public.
 2. **Ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making:** After consulting with the Head of Paid Service and Chief Finance Officer, the Monitoring Officer will report to the Council or to Cabinet in relation to an executive function if he or she considers that any proposal, decision or omission would give rise to unlawfulness or if any decision or omission has given rise to maladministration. Such a report will have the effect of stopping the proposal or decision being implemented until the report has been considered.

3. **Proper Officer for access to information:** The Monitoring Officer will ensure that Cabinet decisions, together with the reasons for those decisions and relevant Officer report and background papers are made publicly available as soon as possible.
4. **Advising whether Cabinet decisions are within the budget and policy framework in accordance with the requirement under the Budget and Framework Rules:** The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer will advise whether decisions of the Cabinet are in accordance with the budget and policy framework.
5. **Providing advice:** The Monitoring Officer will provide advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, maladministration, financial impropriety, probity and budget and policy framework issues to all councillors and will support and advise councillors and officers in their respective roles.
6. **Contributing to corporate management:** The Monitoring Officer will contribute to the corporate management of the Council, in particular through the provision of professional advice on the lawfulness or probity of any matter.

2.5 If approved Mary Severin will formally take up the role of Monitoring Officer from the 25 April 2018.

Table 1: Options

Option	Comments
To approve the statutory appointment of Monitoring Officer	Allows the Council to continue to meet its statutory requirements
The recommended option.	
To not approve the statutory appointment of Monitoring Officer.	The Council would have to appoint other people into these roles.
This is not a recommended option.	

3 KEY IMPLICATIONS

Table 2: Key implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Statutory officer appointed and commence duties.	Appointment not approved	25 April 2018	N/A	N/A	25 April 2018

4 FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Section 5 (1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 places a duty on the Council to appoint one of its officers to the statutory position of Monitoring Officer and provide that officer with such staff and resources which, in that person's opinion, is necessary to allow them to carry out their duties.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
The council does not appoint a statutory Monitoring officer	Council is not fulfilling its statutory responsibility.	An experienced officer is recommended for the position.	Low

7 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 None

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 The proposal and appointment of Monitoring Officer were agreed by Employment Panel on 12 March 2018.

9 TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Table 4: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
25 April 2018	Appointment of Monitoring Officer.

10 APPENDICES

10.1 None

11 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 N/A

12 CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date issued for comment	Date returned with comments
Lisa Targowska	Principal Member	20/03/2018	20/03/2018
Alison Alexander	Managing Director	16/03/2018	20/03/2018
Russell O'Keefe	Executive Director	20/03/2018	03/04/2018
Andy Jeffs	Executive Director	20/03/2018	03/04/2018
Rob Stubbs	Section 151 Officer	20/03/2018	20/03/2018
Elaine Browne	Solicitor	20/03/2018	20/03/2018
Louisa Dean	Communications	20/03/2018	20/03/2018

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Non-key decision	Urgency item? No
Report Author: Nikki Craig Head of HR and Corporate Projects.	

Report Title:	Equality and Diversity Policy
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	NO - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor Targowska – Principal Member for HR, Legal and IT
Meeting and Date:	Council - 24 April 2018
Responsible Officer(s):	Alison Alexander, Managing Director
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

- 1 In April 2011 the Equality Duty, created under the Equality Act 2010 came into force, requiring public authorities to demonstrate that they are considering the needs of all individuals, including employees, in the course of decision-making and delivery of services.
- 2 In addition, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires public authorities to publish equality objectives, at least every four years and information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty on an annual basis relating to the authority's role both as service-provider and employer if it has more than 150 employees.
- 3 This report sets out how the council will meet its statutory responsibilities through the adoption of a refreshed Equality Policy and equality objectives for the period 2018-2022. In addition, it proposes that the council adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism in line with the commitment from the UK Government.

1 DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Council notes the report and:

- i) Approves the draft Equality Policy, see Appendix A.
- ii) Approves the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of anti-Semitism, see point 3.5.

2 REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 In April 2011 the Equality Duty, created under the Equality Act 2010 came into force, requiring public authorities to demonstrate that they are considering the needs of all individuals, including employees, in the course of decision-making and delivery of services. Its three aims are to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 2.2 The following characteristics are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.
- 2.3 To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of the Equality Duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires public authorities to publish equality objectives, at least every four years and information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty on an annual basis relating to the authority's role both as service-provider and employer if it has more than 150 employees.

Equality objectives and monitoring arrangements

- 2.4 The council last published its equality objectives in 2014; the proposed refreshed Equality objectives for the period 2018-22 are available on the council's website ([here](#)). Progress against these objectives will be reported to the Principal Member for HR, Legal and IT, Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Access Advisory Forum on a six-monthly basis. A progress report against the existing equality objectives is available on the website ([here](#)).

Equality Policy

- 2.5 As part of this review of the council's responsibilities, the existing Equality Policy has been reviewed and a proposed new draft policy is set out at Appendix A for approval and immediate adoption. Consultation on the draft policy has taken place with officers and the Access Advisory Forum.

IHRA definition of anti-Semitism

- 3.5 A key development since the council's existing Equality Policy was drafted is the adoption of a [working definition of anti-Semitism](#). Whilst police forces already use a version of the IHRA definition, the UK Government announced on 11 December 2016 that it will sign up to the definition and guidelines and other local authorities have since independently adopted the same in 2017. It is proposed that the council adopts this definition.

Table 1: Options

Option	Comments
Do nothing.	The council will not be compliant with its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010.
Approve draft objectives, revised policy and adoption of IHRA definition of anti-Semitism.	This will ensure compliance with the council's obligations under the Equality Duty as a public authority and ensure a proactive approach to advancing the equality agenda.
This is the recommended option.	

3 KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Failure to meet our Equality Duty could make the council vulnerable to legal challenge and/or judicial review. The key implications are set out in table 2.

Table 2: Key implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Meet statutory responsibilities under the Equality Duty	Upheld legal challenge and/or judicial review	Compliance with the Equality Duty without successful legal challenge			31 March 2022

4 FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Failure to meet our Equality Duty could make the council vulnerable to legal challenge and/or judicial review.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The risks identified are set out in table 3.

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risk	Uncontrolled	Controls	Controlled
The risk that the council does not meet its legal obligations under the Equality Duty.	High	Refreshed policy and objectives and monitoring arrangements adopted	Low

7 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 The adoption of the refreshed Equality Policy and the council meeting its obligations under the Equality Duty will deliver a positive impact across the whole community, including the council workforce, and contribute to the council's vision of building a borough for everyone where residents and businesses thrive and there are opportunities for all.

7.2 The equality impact assessment completed in relation to this policy is available on the council's website ([here](#)).

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Consultation has taken place with:

- Principal Member for HR, Legal and IT.

- Senior Management Team.
- Access Advisory Forum.
- People Forum.

9 TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 The timetable for implementation is at table 4.

Table 4: Implementation timetable

Stage Details	Dates
Approve and adopt refreshed Equality objectives, Equality Policy and IHRA definition of anti-Semitism.	24 April 2018
Publication of all documentation to website.	25 April 2018

10 APPENDICES

The appendices to this report are:

- Appendix A: Draft Equality Policy.

11 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 None.

12 CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date issued for comment	Date returned with comments
Cllr Targowska	Principal Member for HR, Legal and IT	28/02/18	28/02/18
Alison Alexander	Managing Director	11/04/18	12/04/18
Russell O'Keefe	Executive Director	11/04/18	12/04/18
Andy Jeffs	Executive Director	11/04/18	12/04/18
Rob Stubbs	Section 151 Officer	11/04/18	12/04/18
Nikki Craig	Head of HR and Corporate Projects	11/04/18	12/04/18
Louisa Dean	Communications	11/04/18	12/04/18
Rob Stubbs	Head of Finance	11/04/18	12/04/18
Hilary Hall	Deputy Director Strategy & Commissioning	11/04/18	12/04/18

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Key decision	Urgency item? No	To Follow item? No
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The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Equality Policy

April 2018

“Building a borough for everyone – where residents and businesses grow, with opportunities for all”

Our vision is underpinned by six priorities:

Healthy, skilled and independent residents

Growing economy, affordable housing

Safe and vibrant communities

Attractive and well-connected borough

An excellent customer experience

Well-managed resources delivering value for money

CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Responsibilities under the law
- 3 Equality in service provision
- 4 Equality in Employment
- 5 Monitoring

Frequently used acronyms

FTE	Full time equivalent
RBWM	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Supporting documents

- Council Plan 2017-2021
- Customer Plan
- People Plan
- Service Plans 2018-2019

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is a diverse place with a vibrant cultural mix. Whilst this brings many benefits including different experiences, skills, cultures and approaches to life, it is important to acknowledge that this can mask inequalities in society.
- 1.2 The Royal Borough's vision is to build "a borough for everyone". By valuing diversity and ensuring equality, residents and visitors alike will benefit from strengthened local communities where all people have the opportunity to participate and to reach their full potential.
- 1.3 As a major employer and service-provider, the Royal Borough plays an essential role in improving life opportunities for people who are disadvantaged, vulnerable or have protected characteristics. The Royal Borough is committed to promoting equality by knowing its community and understanding its changing needs. It will:
- Provide appropriate, accessible and effective services and facilities to all sections of the community without prejudice or bias.
 - Provide clear information about services in a variety of formats.
 - Identify appropriate representative groups of residents and work in partnership through consultation, and involve community representatives in decisions.
 - Through systematic reviews, ensure that policies and practices address any potential or actual discrimination and disadvantage, and monitor services to ensure they do not discriminate and identify where improvements can be made.
 - Achieve greater consistency in the council's approach to equality in the delivery of services.
 - Ensure that action is taken to identify groups within the community who have specific needs in relation to council services.
 - Ensure that equality considerations are addressed within service audits.
 - Monitor the provision of services against performance indicators.
 - Ensure that contractors, suppliers, volunteers and partners are aware of the council's position on equality and fulfil their obligations to provide services that are in line with that position.
 - Act promptly and appropriately in response to any complaints about the way services are delivered by ensuring that customer complaints are dealt with sensitively and fairly.
- 1.4 The Royal Borough believes that residents have responsibilities as well as rights, and in order to achieve "a borough for everyone" residents need to:
- Treat each other with dignity and respect.
 - Challenge discrimination and harassment.
 - Report illegal or anti-social behaviour.
 - Support the council and other organisations to address inequalities.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE LAW

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society and sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone. The Act brings together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. The characteristics protected under the Act are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.
- 2.2 In April 2011, the Public Sector Equality Duty, created under the Act, came into force. The Equality Duty requires public authorities to demonstrate that they are considering the needs of all individuals, including employees, in the course of decision-making and the delivery of services. The three aims of the Equality Duty are to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 2.3 To ensure transparency and assist in the performance of the Equality Duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities to:
- Publish equality objectives, at least every four years, from 6 April 2012.
 - Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty on an annual basis, from 31 January 2012, and relating to the authority's role both as service-provider and employer if it has more than 150 employees.
- 2.4 The Royal Borough meets its duties by:
- **Publishing equality objectives, at least every four years:** delivery of the council's vision and associated strategic priorities as set out in the Council Plan is supported by a suite of corporate plans, strategies and service plans containing objectives aligned to achievement of the vision. Consideration of how equality may be promoted is a key consideration when formulating objectives, and achievement of these objectives is published every four years.
 - **Publishing information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty on an annual basis and relating to the authority's role as both service-provider and employer:** the council publishes an Annual Report at the end of each municipal year and this includes a statement outlining the council's progress against its existing equality objectives, supported by relevant performance and workforce diversity data.

3 EQUALITY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

- 3.1. Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) are a tool to ensure that due regard is given to equal opportunities when making a decision. EqIAs should be carried out whenever a service, policy or function is planned, changed or removed and should cover the impact on both the workforce (employment) and customers/public (service delivery). A good EqIA helps to:
- Assess any potential impacts, positive and negative, in a proportionate way and with relevance.
 - Ensure that decision-making includes a consideration of the actions that would help to avoid or mitigate any negative impacts on particular protected groups.
 - Make decisions that are justified, evidenced and relevant, and identify any mitigating proposals.
 - Prioritise expenditure in an efficient and fair way.
 - Have a record showing that the potential impacts have been considered and that decisions are based on evidence.
- 3.2. EqIAs are public documents and are published on the Royal Borough website.
- 3.3. If residents believe that the council is in breach of its commitment to equalities, they can make a complaint using the council's complaints procedure.

4 EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT

- 4.1. The council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity to all in employment so that there is no unfair discrimination against any job applicant or employee for any reason.
- 4.2. As a recruiting employer, the Royal Borough will:
- Ensure vacancies are advertised in line with legislation.
 - Ensure the council's recruitment and selection guidelines are adhered to.
 - Only consider applicants for jobs on the basis of their relevant experience, qualifications, skills and abilities unless there is an exception under relevant legislation.
 - Aim to create a workforce which is representative of the local population.
- 4.3. The Royal Borough will take all measures possible to make reasonable adjustments in order to provide employment to applicants with disabilities who meet the minimum requirements for the post and prove to be the best candidate for the post.
- 4.4. As an employer, the Royal Borough will
- Ensure that all employees receive fair and equal treatment in relation to their employment, regardless of whether they are part time, full time, permanent or temporary and what level or occupation they are within the authority.
 - Promote a working environment where every employee is treated with respect regardless of occupation or level within the organisation.

- Ensure that promotion, training or any other benefit is on the basis of aptitude and ability.
- Encourage and help all employees to reach their full potential, within the resources available.
- Treat all employees fairly in relation to transfers, redundancy and the operation of the grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- Ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination and harassment and will act promptly on any complaints of discrimination or harassment in an appropriate manner.
- Develop and adhere to an equal pay policy and publish details of the gender pay gap in line with relevant legislation.
- Wherever possible, make reasonable adjustments and retain, in suitable employment, employees who become disabled or unable to undertake their duties due to illness.
- Ensure that all employees are aware of their personal responsibility to follow and support this policy.

4.5. Any employee who has a concern regarding the application of this policy should use the council's grievance procedure. Any prospective employee wishing to raise a complaint should do so using the council's complaints procedure.

5 MONITORING

Service delivery

- 5.1. The council has a statutory obligation to provide information about provision and use of services. The use and impact of services will be monitored to:
- Assess how well the service meets the needs of its users and identify gaps.
 - Improve the opportunity for service take up.
 - Better target resources to meet needs.
 - Feed equality data analysis into the departmental service planning process.
 - Demonstrate continuous improvement

Employment

5.2. The council incorporates equal opportunities monitoring within its recruitment procedures and monitors grievances and complaints as part of its routine HR performance reporting.

Document Name	Equality Policy <i>Ref: EP_2017-01</i>		
Document Author	Strategy Officer		
Document owner	Deputy Director Strategy and Commissioning		
Accessibility	This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.		
File location			
Destruction date	N/A		
How this document was created	Version 1	Draft for consultation.	Nov 2017
	Version 2	Draft for Principal Member sign-off	February 2018
	Version 3	Council approval	April 2018
Circulation restrictions	None		
Review date	April 2019		

Report Title:	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Electoral Review – Submission on Draft Recommendations
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	NO - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor McWilliams - Principal Member for Housing and Communications Councillor Dudley - Leader of the Council
Meeting and Date:	Council – 24 April 2018
Responsible Officer(s):	Alison Alexander - Managing Director and Returning Officer
Wards affected:	All

www.rbwm.gov.uk



REPORT SUMMARY

1. In September 2017, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) stated that it was minded to recommend a future council size for the Royal Borough of 43 members from May 2019.
2. The LGBCE ran its phase of public consultation from September to December 2018, inviting representations on how ward boundaries could be drawn to accommodate 43 members.
3. On 6 March 2018, the LGBCE published its draft recommendations for the Royal Borough based on the evidence received during the first public consultation. It recommended that there should be 42 members representing the Borough and proposed a pattern of nineteen wards, four fewer than there are now.
4. From 6 March until 7 May 2018, the LGBCE are running a second phase of public consultation and inviting comments on its draft recommendations. The Royal Borough's Electoral Review Working Group (ERWG) have formulated a response to the draft recommendations, supporting the drawing of wards in some areas and proposing alternative ward boundaries where appropriate. This report sets out the ERWG's recommendations to Full Council to amend the boundaries of 3 new wards, as set out in the draft recommendations.

1 DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- i) **Agrees that the Royal Borough's representation on the electoral review draft recommendations be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.**

2 REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Royal Borough submitted its Stage Two report on warding patterns to the LGBCE on 15 December 2017 as part of the first phase of public consultation. The LGBCE received fifty-five submissions in total in response to their consultation on ward

boundaries. The evidence outlined in the fifty-five submissions was used by the LGBCE to inform the formulation of their draft recommendations.

- 2.2 On 6 March 2018, the LGBCE published its draft recommendations and proposed a revised future council size of 42 members representing nineteen wards. They will be accepting comments and representations on their draft recommendations during a nine-week consultation period which runs until 7 May 2018. The Royal Borough has been encouraged to engage in the second phase of public consultation and to make a submission in the same way as it has done at earlier stages of the review. This is the most effective way for the Borough to influence the outcome of the review.
- 2.3 The cross-party Working Group that was assembled for Stages One and Two of the review reconvened to discuss the details of the draft recommendations. The Group, after considering comments from individual ward councillors on specific areas of concern, have formulated counter-proposals to the LGBCE’s draft recommendations for 3 wards in Windsor which they believe better reflects and protects established community identities. The ERWG is recommending to register support of the draft recommendations proposed for the wards in Maidenhead constituency and to present two alternative warding patterns in relation to three wards in Windsor; Ascot & Sunninghill, Clewer East and Great Park & Old Windsor.
- 2.4 The two alternative warding patterns are referred to as Option A and Option B. Option A is the preferred option as it better reflects community identities. Under this pattern Ascot and Sunninghill would return a ward -16% under the average number of electors per councillor, Clewer East would sit at +25% and Great Park & Old Windsor would sit at -25%.
- 2.5 Option B delivers better electoral equality but the case for defending community identities is less robust. Under Option B, Ascot & Sunninghill would return a ward -16% under the average number of electors per councillor, Clewer East would sit at +9% and Great Park & Old Windsor would sit at -13%.
- 2.6 It is proposed to offer the LGBCE two alternative solutions which may both be considered for adoption. It has been observed that other local authorities have provided more than one mapping option when making representations to the LGBCE for their own electoral reviews. This is standard practice and following a similar approach allows the Royal Borough to show how both the importance of delivering electoral equality and community interests have been given equal weighting.

Table 1: Options

Option	Comments
Support the cross-party member Working Group draft recommendations report which proposes changes to 3 wards in Windsor via Options A and B, and supports the boundaries drawn for Maidenhead.	This option proposes altering 3 wards in Windsor with no changes proposed for Maidenhead. With Option A, 3 of the wards will exceed the average number of electors per councillor at 2,829. With Option B, 2 of the 3 wards would exceed the variance.
The recommended option	
Reject the cross-party Member Working Group draft	If the Borough’s submission were to be rejected by Full Council, the LGBCE

Option	Comments
<p>recommendations report which proposes changes to 3 wards in Windsor via Options A and B and supports the boundaries drawn for Maidenhead.</p> <p>Not recommended</p>	<p>would not receive a formal representation and RBWM would be unable to influence the formulation of the LGBCE's final recommendations which are due to be published in July 2018. Furthermore, the LGBCE would use the evidence of other submissions received from parish councils and members of the public etc. to shape their final recommendations.</p>

3 KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The LGBCE committed to conduct an electoral review of the Royal Borough and to conclude the process by summer of 2018. The changes brought about by the outcome of the review will take effect at the next scheduled local elections in May 2019. There is no feasibility to suspend or defer the process now that a commitment to undertake the review has been made and the LGBCE have indicated that the Royal Borough's new electoral arrangements will take effect for the next scheduled local elections on 2 May 2019.
- 3.2 Stage One of the review (the determination of council size) concluded in September 2017 when the LGBCE announced its provisional recommendation on future council size. Stage Two (warding pattern boundaries) commenced on 26 September and will conclude on 10 July 2018 once the final recommendations on the Royal Borough's future warding patterns have been published. The review in its entirety will complete by the end of 2018, when the Statutory Order to legally formalise the new electoral arrangements has been made.

Table 2: Key implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Draft recommendations report prepared for Full Council and submitted to the LGBCE.	After 7 May 2018 deadline set by the LGBCE.	By 7 May 2018 deadline set by the LGBCE.	Before 7 May 2018 deadline set by the LGBCE.	Before 30 April 2018	Final recommendations published in July 2018. Statutory Order made by end of 2018.

4 FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising as a direct result of this report. However, it should be noted that as the number of elected members will reduce by 25% at the next scheduled elections (the reduction of fourteen members), there will be efficiency savings from May 2019.

4.2 The draft recommendations report proposes alternative warding arrangements for 3 wards for consideration for the LGBCE. These are the Royal Borough’s recommendations and the LGBCE may or may not decide to adopt these alternative patterns. The LGBCE will consider all of the evidence submitted to them during the second phase of consultation and each consultee’s representation will be considered on merit and the strength of the arguments presented. The final recommendations published in July 2018 may or may not partially or fully mirror the Royal Borough’s proposals. The final number of members and the corresponding ward boundaries will not be known until the final recommendations are published in July 2018, and the extent of the savings will be realised at this point.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The second stage of the electoral review has been conducted in accordance with the advice and guidance provided by officers at the LGBCE and written materials made available by the LGBCE on their website.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The risks identified are set out in Table 4.

Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
The draft recommendations report is not submitted by the 7 May 2018 deadline set by the LGBCE.	Medium	Report submitted to Full Council in April 2018 following agreed recommendation from the Working Group	Low
The warding pattern proposals outlined in the report are not supported by the LGBCE, and as a result, the LGBCE does not use the Borough’s alternative warding patterns to form its final recommendations in July 2018.	High	A compelling case is made to demonstrate how the alternative warding patterns best reflect community identity.	Low
The LGBCE approves an alternative pattern of wards supplied by another	High	RBWM’s submission on the draft recommendations report will	Low

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
stakeholder in the process, e.g parish council(s), political parties, member(s) of the public, community organisation(s)		demonstrate how the alternative patterns proposed by the Royal Borough are the best solution for addressing the preservation of existing communities and local ties.	

7 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 The reduction of the council size by 25% from 57 to 42 members will have a significant impact on the future structure of the organisation from May 2019. These implications were highlighted in the Stage One report on council size.
- 7.2 The LGBCE's draft recommendations propose improve electoral equality on the basis of 2,829 electors per councillor.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 On 12/13 March 2018, all Royal Borough members were invited to a briefing by officers on the detail of the LGBCE's proposed draft recommendations and were advised on how they could refer their views to a representative of the Working Group for consideration at a meeting of the group, or how they could make their own independent representation to the LGBCE where their views were not endorsed by the Working Group collective. In addition, all members were invited to a second briefing by officers on 16 April on the Working Group's agreed recommendation to Full Council on a response to the draft recommendations. Between March and April 2018, all members were sent copies of the working drafts of maps for Windsor for their comments.
- 8.2 The LGBCE do not provide definitive advice on how local authorities should approach consulting with their members as part of the Stage 2 process. They did however, advise that it is common practice for local authorities to use a cross-party Working Group to make recommendations to Full Council and that they supported the Royal Borough's adoption of this approach.
- 8.3 As facilitator of the review, the LGBCE consult with certain stakeholders directly as part of the wider public engagement strategy for promoting the review. Parish councillors, elected members, political parties and local organisations operating within the Royal Borough were contacted by the LGBCE and told how they could make their own representations on the draft recommendations, in the same way as the first consultation on warding patterns which ran from September to December 2017. RBWM is a consultee in the electoral review process and the administration of the review is facilitated by the LGBCE.

- 8.4 In order to maximise engagement of the review and to support the LGBCE, the Royal Borough reminded parish councils of the importance of making their own representations to the LGBCE during the consultation, and to register their approval of how the draft boundaries have been drawn where the parish councils supported them.
- 8.5 The LGBCE will publish all of the representations they received from March to May 2018 on their website in July 2018 when their Final Recommendations are published.

9 TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Table 5: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
2 May 2018 following approval by Full Council on 24 April 2018.	Submit Stage Two warding pattern report to LGBCE.
8 May – 10 July 2018	LGBCE considers all of the representations they have received from March to May (second phase of public consultation).
10 July 2018	LGBCE publishes its Final Recommendations
1 October 2018	Polling district & polling places review commences
September 2018	LGBCE lays Statutory Order before Parliament.
November 2018	Statutory Order expected to be made
May 2019	New council size takes effect

10 APPENDICES

- 10.1 Appendix A: The RBWM Electoral Review Stage Two – Response to Draft Recommendations

11 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 The background documents to this report to Council are:
- Report to Full Council on 27 September 2016 requesting an electoral review
 - Report to Full Council on 27 June 2017 on future council size.
 - Report to Full Council on 12 December 2017 on future warding patterns.
- 11.2 All reports are available on the Council website.

12 CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Commented & returned
Cllr McWilliams	Principal Member	13/04/2018	Returned
Alison Alexander	Managing Director	13/04/2018	Returned

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Key decision	Urgency item? No
Report Author: Suzanne Martin, Electoral Services Manager, 01628 682935.	



Electoral Review

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Response to Draft Recommendations

April 2018

Contents	Page
1. Summary	1
2. Draft recommendations overview	1
3. RBWM's reactions to draft recommendations	2
4. Consultation	3
5. RBWM methodology for draft recommendations response	3
6. Proposed alternative warding pattern	5
7. Conclusion	14

Maps

Map 1 – Alternative Ward Pattern (Windsor – Option A)

Map 2 – Alternative Ward Pattern (Windsor – Option B)

Map 3 – Ascot & Sunninghill

Map 4 – Clewer East (Option A)

Map 5 – Clewer East (Option B)

Map 6 – Great Park & Old Windsor (Option A)

Map 7 – Great Park & Old Windsor (Option B)

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is in the process of reviewing the electoral arrangements for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). Any changes, through the review, will take effect at the next scheduled local elections on 2 May 2019.
- 1.2 An electoral review determines the number of elected members in the council, the number and naming of the new wards and their corresponding boundaries to accommodate the new number of elected members for these wards.

2. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The LGBCE ran a public consultation from September to December 2017 inviting comments on proposed warding patterns to the proposal for 43 members. The Commission used the evidence supplied during this consultation to inform the formulation of its draft recommendations, which were published on 6 March 2018.
- 2.2 The LGBCE's draft recommendations recommend that the Royal Borough should be represented by 42 members, 15 fewer than there are currently, and proposed a borough-wide warding scheme comprising 19 wards, see table 1. The recommended number of elected Members, 42, means that the average number of electors each councillor will represent from 2019 is 2,829.

Table 1: LGBCE's draft recommendations for RBWM

Ward	Electors (2023)	Cllrs	Electors Per Cllr	Variance from Avg*
Ascot & Sunninghill	7,381	3	2,460	-13%
Belmont	6,141	2	3,071	+9%
Bisham & Cookham	5,912	2	2,956	+4%
Boyn Hill	5,532	2	2,766	-2%
Bray	6,144	2	3,072	+9%
Clewer & Dedworth East	5,691	2	2,892	+1%
Clewer & Dedworth West	5,912	2	2,910	+4%
Clewer East	5,452	2	2,726	-4%
Cox Green	6,038	2	3,019	7%
Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury	8,481	3	2,827	0%
Eton & Castle	9,038	3	3,013	+6%
Furze Platt	6,083	2	3,042	+7%
Hurley & Walthams	5,190	2	2,595	-8%
Oldfield	6,006	2	3,003	+6%
Old Windsor	5,630	2	2,815	-1%
Pinkneys Green	5,931	2	2,966	5%
Riverside	5,727	2	2,864	+1%
South Ascot & Sunningdale	7,345	3	2,448	-13%
St Mary's	5,204	2	2,602	-8%
Total	118,838	42		

- 2.3 The draft recommendation of 19 wards means four fewer than current. Comprising eleven two-member wards in the Maidenhead constituency area and four two-member and four three-member wards in the Windsor constituency area. Five wards in Maidenhead will remain unchanged, all other existing wards will change. In addition it is proposed to create a new ward for the town centre of Maidenhead.
- 2.4 As part of the draft recommendations, the LGBCE are proposing to make consequential changes to three parishes' electoral arrangements; Bray, Old Windsor and Sunninghill & Ascot. The LGBCE does not have the power to change the external boundaries of the parishes, but has proposed alterations to the warding arrangements and distribution of seats within these parishes which need to occur as a direct consequence of amending the borough's ward boundaries.

3. RBWM's REACTIONS TO DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Whilst the Royal Borough has been keenly awaiting the publication of the draft recommendations and notes their detail with acute interest, it has been with an element of surprise to learn that the LGBCE has proposed a revised council size of 42 and has not been able to formulate a scheme on its original recommended figure of 43. Similarly, the Royal Borough has observed with interest that the LGBCE found that constructing a warding pattern under both a 42 and 43 member pattern for the south of the borough (the Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale area) particularly challenging due to the geographical constraints of the local authority's external boundaries; an experience that was shared by RBWM's Working Group in the process of devising the Borough's warding pattern proposal during the first consultation.
- 3.2 RBWM are pleased that the LGBCE have based the foundations of their warding scheme on the evidence supplied in the Royal Borough's submission and that as a result, the disruption to existing parish electoral arrangements is kept to a minimum.
- 3.3 The Royal Borough, does refute, however that the council submission deviated from the agreed electoral forecasts and suggests instead that a difference in methodology for constructing warding patterns accounts for the discrepancies of electorate figures between RBWM and the LGBCE.
- 3.4 RBWM is on the whole, satisfied with the warding scheme proposed for Maidenhead. This is due to the fact that the pattern very closely resembles the council's scheme and five wards in Maidenhead; Bisham & Cookham, Bray, Cox Green, Furze Platt and Hurley & Walthams remain unchanged, as recommended by the council. Where the LGBCE have digressed from the Royal Borough's scheme and proposed drawing boundary lines in the town centre elsewhere, it is noted that these deviations are relatively minor in nature, which have been proposed in order to deliver improved electoral equality.

- 3.5 The pattern proposed for the Windsor constituency area, however, is a greater cause for concern and is not supported by RBWM. Whilst the warding scheme proposed for the two Windsor wards north of the Thames is supported, (Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury and Eton & Castle wards), and two of the central Windsor wards (Clewer & Dedworth East and Clewer & Dedworth West), there are fundamental issues arising from the way in which the boundary between Ascot and Sunninghill ward and Old Windsor has been drawn and the knock-on effects with the neighbouring ward of Clewer East. The Royal Borough does not believe these boundaries support cohesive local government as they do not best reflect the communities they represent. As a result, the boundaries are not endorsed by the council and RBWM is making alternative proposals on how the Ascot & Sunninghill, Old Windsor and Clewer East boundaries should be drawn.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 RBWM has endeavoured to support the LGBCE in raising awareness about the draft recommendations since their publication in March 2018. The parish councils in particular, have been encouraged to respond to the LGBCE directly and to lodge their support of the proposals where relevant, so as to ensure that the LGBCE receives a balanced view on their recommendations and does not receive solely adverse comments on their draft warding scheme. As the draft recommendations do not affect the vast majority of parishes' existing electoral arrangements and the borough ward to which they relate, it is expected that the parishes will broadly favour the recommendations and it is hoped that they make submissions to the LGBCE to this effect.
- 4.2 The Royal Borough hopes that by maximising awareness of the draft recommendations and encouraging residents' engagement with the proposed changes, the LGBCE will receive a substantive amount of evidence from the public to support the assertion that the proposed division of Windsor is not in existing communities' interests. It is hoped that the evidence base for community identity put forward by the public regarding the Old Windsor and Ascot and Sunninghill area will complement the alternative warding pattern for the area proposed by RBWM.

5. RBWM METHODOLOGY FOR DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS RESPONSE

- 5.1 To formulate an alternative pattern of wards for submission to the LGBCE in response to their draft recommendations, the Cross-Party Working Group appointed for stages one and two of the review was reconvened. The Group consisted of the same members as at previous stages of the review.
- 5.2 The Working Group met three times between 6 March and 11 April in order to compose a recommendation to put forward to Full Council in April. Members of the Working Group requested that officers brief all 57 members on the detail of the draft recommendations in March, and share developing mapping options for alternative wards with all members. Feedback and suggestions from members about the developing patterns were collated by officers and presented to members for discussion at meetings of the working group.

- 5.3 The Working Group agreed to formulate a submission based on alternative patterns to address the problematic warding of Windsor and to express its support of the drafting of Maidenhead. The Group's strategy has been to propose a pattern of wards that prioritises the LGBCE's consideration of community identity, which has taken precedence over the need to improve electoral equality and ensuring that all wards fall within the 10% tolerance level recommended by the LGBCE in certain circumstances.
- 5.4 The Group has taken stock of the LGBCE's own admission that on occasions it is impossible to deliver both electoral equality and preserve community identities and that these two priorities can contradict one another more often than not. It can be inferred that it is the endorsement of this philosophy which has led the LGBCE to make final recommendations for other local authorities which exceed the 10% tolerance threshold, most notably in the electoral reviews of Cambridgeshire County Council and its Abbey ward at -16% and Chester and Cheshire West Council and its Blacon ward at -15%.
- 5.5 It is noted with interest that the LGBCE has proposed as part of RBWM's draft recommendations boundaries for Ascot & Sunninghill and South Ascot & Sunningdale wards which exceed the recommended tolerance levels at -13%. The Group believes that it is imperative at this stage of the review to defend the case for community identity and is prepared to offer an alternative pattern which exceeds the tolerance levels in specific alternative wards for Windsor using the same philosophy endorsed and subsequently applied by the LGBCE for other electoral reviews and for their draft recommendations of RBWM. RBWM has provided a compelling set of evidence to support its case in the interests of preserving existing communities.
- 5.6 That said, the Group has recognised the importance of balancing the preservation of community identity and the feeling of local ties with the delivery of electoral equality, and has strived to deliver alternative patterns that fall within the 10% tolerance level in the first instance. When calculating the future electorate of alternative warding patterns, the Group has used the LGBCE's forecasting methodology of electors to councillors by current polling district. (This differs from the methodology applied during the first consultation where the average of 1.79 electors to each property was applied to the whole of the local authority area.)
- 5.7 With a revised average of 2,829 electors per councillor under a scheme of 42 councillors, the following tolerance levels were observed by the Working Group when drawing an alternative pattern of wards.

Table 2: Ward elector target range

Balanced Pattern	Elector Target Range		
Draft Ward	-10%	0%	+10%
1-Member Ward	2,456	2,829	3,112
2-Member Ward	5,092	5,658	6,224
3-Member Ward	7,638	8,487	9,336

- 5.8 The Working Group has endeavoured to ensure that there is as little electoral variance as possible by geographical region across the borough. In Maidenhead, for example, the greatest electoral variance between neighbouring wards is 17%. (Belmont at 9% and St Mary's at -8%) Likewise it is acknowledged that in the south of the borough, electors will be considerably under-represented (Ascot & Sunninghill, South Ascot & Sunningdale and Great Park & Old Windsor wards) all falling below the 10% threshold. The geographical constraints of the south and the remoteness of some of these areas justifies the overrepresentation in these particular circumstances.
- 5.9 The Working Group has not focused on providing alternative names to those proposed by the LGBCE, mainly because the names selected in the draft recommendations are based on the council's submission which is welcomed. The exception to this is the alternative name proposed for the Great Park and Old Windsor area. The Working Group hopes that the LGBCE will take heed of the names suggested by the public during the second consultation stage, as local people are best placed to make suggestions on the names assigned to their own communities.

6. PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE WARDING PATTERN

- 6.1 RBWM is proposing alternative warding patterns for three of the nineteen wards proposed by the LGBCE in its draft recommendations. The changes relate to wards for Old Windsor, Ascot & Sunninghill and Clewer East. RBWM has composed two alternative warding patterns for Windsor in respect of these wards; Option A and Option B. RBWM has made the observation that other local authorities have proposed more than one scheme when drawing ward boundaries as part of the consultation processes in their electoral reviews, and is following suit in order to better influence and persuade the LGBCE of their views as a local authority.
- 6.2 The preferred option is Option A, which RBWM feels best defends and protects communities. It is noted, however, that the electoral variances between the altered wards in this pattern are considerable. In light of this, RBWM is proposing a second alternative option which it hopes the LGBCE will consider if it deems the electoral variances in its Option A too great to consider applying to its final scheme. The second pattern is referred to as Option B, which offers better electoral equality than Option A, but is weaker on the grounds of defending existing communities than Option A.
- 6.3 Both Options A and B return an alternative warding pattern for RBWM of 19 wards; 15 two-member wards and 4 three-member wards which accommodate 42 elected members from 2019. This is the same allocation of seats as proposed by the LGBCE.
- 6.4 The differences between each option are set out below. For both options, the same pattern for Ascot & Sunninghill is proposed. They differ only in respect of the boundaries between Clewer East and Great Park & Old Windsor.

Option A – Preferred Option

Ascot & Sunninghill (-16%)
 Clewer East (+25%)
 Great Park & Old Windsor (-25%)

Option B

Ascot & Sunninghill (-16%)
 Clewer East (+9%)
 Great Park & Old Windsor (-13%)

6.5 Table 3 below sets out the options for the borough-wide scheme in more detail.

Table 3: Proposed alternative warding patterns

Ward	Cllrs	Option A			Option B		
		Electors -2023	Electors Per Cllr	Variance from Avg*	Electors -2023	Electors Per Cllr	Variance from Avg*
Ascot & Sunninghill	3	7,105	2,368	-16%	7,105	2,368	-16%
Belmont	2	6,141	3,071	9%	6,141	3,071	9%
Bisham & Cookham	2	5,912	2,956	4%	5,912	2,956	4%
Boyn Hill	2	5,532	2,766	-2%	5,532	2,766	-2%
Bray	2	6,144	3,072	9%	6,144	3,072	9%
Clewer & Dedworth East	2	5,691	2,892	1%	5,691	2,892	1%
Clewer & Dedworth West	2	5,912	2,910	4%	5,912	2,910	4%
Clewer East	2	7,076	3,538	25%	6,191	3,096	9%
Cox Green	2	6,038	3,019	7%	6,038	3,019	7%
Datchet, Horton & Wrybury	3	8,481	2,827	0%	8,481	2,827	0%
Eton & Castle	3	9,038	3,013	6%	9,038	3,013	6%
Furze Platt	2	6,083	3,042	7%	6,083	3,042	7%
Hurley & Walthams	2	5,190	2,595	-8%	5,190	2,595	-8%
Oldfield	2	6,006	3,003	6%	6,006	3,003	6%
Great Park & Old Windsor	2	4,282	2,141	-25%	4,939	2,470	-13%
Pinkneys Green	2	5,931	2,966	5%	5,931	2,966	5%
Riverside	2	5,727	2,864	1%	5,727	2,864	1%

South Ascot & Sunningdale	3	7,345	2,448	-13%	7,345	2,448	-13%
St Mary's	2	5,204	2,602	-8%	5,204	2,602	-8%
Total	42	118,838			118,838		

An overview of the two alternative borough-wide schemes for Windsor can be viewed in Maps 1 and 2.

Maidenhead Constituency Area

Belmont – No changes

- 6.6 RBWM does not feel that the way in which the boundaries for this ward have been drawn by the LGBCE adversely affects the Belmont identity. The drafting of Belmont closely resembles its own warding submission where the North Town area is incorporated into Belmont from Riverside. RBWM accepts the way in which this ward has been drawn in the interests of delivering electoral equality.

Bisham & Cookham – No changes

- 6.7 RBWM fully endorses the LGBCE's proposal for no changes to the existing Bisham & Cookham ward boundary. The way the boundaries are currently drawn ensures that the ward will deliver good electoral equality in 2023.
- 6.8 RBWM supports the continued alignment of the borough and parish boundary lines where both Bisham & Cookham parishes lie fully within the borough ward boundaries. The continuation of this arrangement delivers the most effective local government.

Boyn Hill – No changes

- 6.9 RBWM supports the LGBCE's assertion that Boyn Grove Park which contains Boyne Hill Cricket Club and Boyn Grove Library should be integrated into the new Boyn Hill boundary. These entities clearly deliver services integral to Boyn Hill and should form part of the ward. As there are no electors represented in the park and transferring the area from Pinkneys Green into Boyn Hill does not have a negative impact on electoral equality for either ward, this further supports the case.
- 6.10 The proposal to use the railway line to mark the eastern boundary of the ward and to transfer Grenfell Park and its immediate environs to the new St Mary's ward is not challenged by RBWM as the communities that exist in this area are located in the town centre and it is a reasonable conclusion to reach that this area could be represented by the new St Mary's, a ward for the town centre.

Bray – No changes

- 6.11 RBWM supports the LGBCE's proposal for no changes to the existing Bray ward boundary. It notes that the current ward will have good electoral equality in 2023 without further amending its boundaries.
- 6.12 Bray's ward boundary will remain coterminous with the parish council that shares its name, and it is believed that the continuation of this arrangement provides the

most effective governance at both levels. It is noted however, that the LGBCE proposes to redistribute the fifteen seats on the parish council across five parish wards, and the naming and drawing of these wards will be amended to reflect the outcome of a recent community governance review to bring the Fisheries area into Bray Parish. RBWM does not oppose the consequential changes proposed by the LGBCE as they are relatively minor and only affect the warding arrangements within the parish, the number of seats and the external boundary remains unaffected.

Cox Green – No changes

6.13 RBWM fully endorses the LGBCE's proposal for no changes to the existing Cox Green ward boundary. It notes that the current ward will have good electoral equality in 2023 without further amending its boundaries.

6.14 Cox Green's ward boundaries will remain coterminous with the parish council that shares its name, and it is believed that the continuation of this arrangement provides the most effective governance at both levels.

Furze Platt – No changes

6.15 RBWM supports the LGBCE's proposal for no changes to the existing Furze Platt boundary and accepts the proposal to keep the whole of the North Town area intact and to transfer all of it to the new Belmont ward. The ward already delivers good electoral equality and established communities which affiliate with the Furze Platt identity are retained within the ward.

Hurley & Walthams – No changes

6.16 RBWM fully endorses the LGBCE's proposal for no changes to the existing Hurley & Walthams ward boundary. It notes that the current ward will have good electoral equality in 2023 without further amending its boundaries.

6.17 As a result of no amendments to the ward boundary, the four parish councils that operate within the area (Hurley Parish, Shottesbrooke Parish, Waltham St Lawrence Parish and White Waltham Parish) will continue to operate under the framework of one borough ward. This continued arrangement delivers effective local government to the electors in this particularly rural area.

Oldfield – No changes

6.18 RBWM supports the LGBCE's recommendation for Oldfield ward as the boundary very closely resembles the council's own submission. RBWM accepts the LGBCE's decision to use the railway line as a prominent marker between Oldfield and St Mary's and respects the decision that the Oldacres and Farthingales area should be absorbed into the new St Mary's ward.

Pinkneys Green – No changes

6.19 RBWM supports the LGBCE's draft recommendations for Pinkneys Green and has no objection to Boyn Grove Park being transferred to Boyn Hill. As stated in paragraph 6.6, the area concerned shares a strong affiliation with Boyn Hill and

the transfer of this area has no impact on the delivery of electoral equality for either ward.

Riverside – No changes

- 6.20 RBWM supports the LGBCE's draft recommendations for Riverside ward and is pleased to see the adoption of its own proposal to use Ray Mill Road West as the divider between Riverside and the new Belmont boundary.

St Mary's – No changes

- 6.21 RBWM notes the LGBCE's alterations to the peripheries of the new town centre ward for Maidenhead in light of the LGBCE's perception that the ward contained too many electors. RBWM has no objection to the railway line being used as the boundary line between St Mary's and the Belmont and Boyn Hill wards on its western edge and agrees that the railway line serves as a strong marker between these wards.
- 6.22 Similarly, as stated in paragraph 6.17, RBWM does not object to Oldacres and the Farthingales transferring to the new St Mary's ward as this area is north of the railway line and has shared interests with other communities in the town centre.

Windsor Constituency Area Ascot & Sunninghill – (Map 3)

- 6.23 The proposed boundary of the new Ascot & Sunninghill ward is not supported by RBWM and it is therefore ardently opposed. It is felt that the warding pattern proposed for this ward is fundamentally flawed as it not only brings together communities which have no shared interests but also divides an existing community.
- 6.24 RBWM requests that the LGBCE gives serious consideration to reinstating the natural boundary of Virginia Water Lake to divide Ascot & Sunninghill from Windsor's Great Park to the north. The boundary has historically always been placed in this location and has been used prior to the last electoral review in 2002 to create the Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale area as a separate unit of RBWM. Furthermore, the northern boundary of Sunninghill and Ascot Parish is marked by Virginia Water Lake, which supports the assertion that the area north of the lake shares no affiliation with the Parish.
- 6.25 The Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale neighbourhood planning area is coterminous with the parish boundaries of Sunninghill & Ascot and Sunningdale. The borough ward boundaries should follow suit and respect these established communities. The fact that the Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale neighbourhood plan is now in place and will influence future development in the region, further supports the assertion that the communities within these boundaries share an affinity. It is significant that both the parish boundaries and the neighbourhood planning area do not extend to the Great Park; that is because this area does not share an affinity with the south and instead associates with Windsor.
- 6.26 If the draft boundary that the LGBCE are proposing for Ascot & Sunninghill ward were to take effect, the three councillors who would represent this ward from 2019 would have great difficulty in accessing all of the electors they represent. The

sheer geographical size of the ward would present a problem, which is further exacerbated by the predominately rural landscape of the Great Park. In order to travel from the Sunninghill and Ascot regions of the ward to the Great Park, it is necessary to cross local authority boundaries into Bracknell as Virginia Water Lake does not allow direct access from this direction.

- 6.27 It is in consideration of the comments outlined in paragraphs 6.22 to 6.24, that RBWM presents the same warding pattern for Ascot & Sunninghill as it did during the first consultation. The natural barrier of Virginia Water Lake is used as the northern ward boundary and the ward is separated from South Ascot and Sunningdale using the same, well-recognised boundary that was used to divide the southern area in half prior to the last electoral review in 2002. This arrangement would deliver a ward which is 16% under the average number of electors per councillor for a three-member ward. As the LGBCE have already made a recommendation that the ward will be under-represented at -13% with the inclusion of the Great Park, it is deemed to be of little consequence to slightly extend the tolerance by an additional three percent. This effect is outweighed by the importance of defending existing communities and is the appropriate solution.

Clewer & Dedworth East – No changes

- 6.28 RBWM is proposing no changes to the Clewer & Dedworth East pattern and accepts the changes that are being proposed by the LGBCE. RBWM is convinced that the decision to use Smiths Lane, Wolf Lane and Hemwood Road as the western boundary marker as suggested by a local resident during the first stage of consultation, is an effective way to draw the ward in the interests of community identities.

Clewer & Dedworth West – No changes

- 6.29 RBWM approves of the way in which the western boundary of the ward which separates it from Bray has been drawn as it remains coterminous with the parliamentary boundary. This factor alone supports the case for cohesive local government as there is a clear distinction between the two halves of the borough and ward boundaries should align with parliamentary boundaries as far as possible.
- 6.30 RBWM on the whole supports the draft recommendations for this ward. The LGBCE propose the addition of Washington Drive as a minor alteration to the council's submission, which is acceptable to RBWM.

Clewer East (Option A) – Changes proposed (Map 4)

- 6.31 RBWM is proposing significant changes to the Clewer East pattern proposed by the LGBCE. The significant change proposed to the composition of this ward relates to the transfer of the area known as the Boltons (Bolton Road and its immediate environs) from Old Windsor as proposed by the LGBCE in their draft recommendations, into Clewer East.
- 6.32 RBWM appeals to the LGBCE to bear in mind that the residents of the Boltons associate themselves with Windsor due to the fact that the area is in such close

proximity to the town centre. Residents of the Boltons have no affiliation with the Old Windsor identity that the LGBCE are proposing they embrace. The King Edward VII hospital and the Territorial Army centre located on Wood Close are both integral parts of the Windsor identity and should belong to a Windsor ward. These establishments have no affinity with Old Windsor.

- 6.33 RBWM's alternative pattern for Clewer East would see Trevelyan Middle School incorporated into the ward. This school is used by children of Windsor residents, which further strengthens the argument to include it in a Windsor-centric ward.
- 6.34 RBWM acknowledges that transferring the whole of the Boltons area into Clewer East returns a ward which is significantly over the recommended tolerance levels at +25%. The Working Group has deliberated long and hard on how to best resolve the conflicting issue of delivering both electoral equality and community interests in relation to the Windsor residents who are located in the Boltons. RBWM's preferred option would see the Boltons as a whole retained in the same ward as all of these residents use the services of central Windsor and identify strongly with this community. It is believed that the requirement to defend the Boltons' identity far outweighs the case for electoral equality.

Clewer East (Option B) – Changes proposed (Map 5)

- 6.35 In the interests of delivering better electoral equality than that proposed in Option A, Option B examines the possibility of splitting the Boltons between Clewer East and Old Windsor. Using the Bolton Road as the boundary line as a prominent A-road, electors located in the pocket north of the Bolton Road should be paired with Windsor, as geographically they are in closer proximity to the town centre. Residents to the south of Bolton Road, which includes the streets of Queen Anne's Road, Queen's Acre, Wood Close and Bourne Avenue, should be placed with Great Park & Old Windsor. It should be noted that RBWM does not endorse the splitting of the Bolton, but is proposing a compromise solution in recognition of the fact that Great Park & Old Windsor and Clewer East in Option A may not be supported by the LGBCE due to the scale of electoral variance.

Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury – No changes

- 6.36 Although the LGBCE propose drawing the boundary lines north of the Thames significantly differently to the suggestions of the borough council, RBWM supports the draft recommendations for this ward and proposes no further changes. RBWM respects the LGBCE's decision to base their recommendations on the evidence supplied by Datchet, Eton, Horton and Wraysbury parish councils during the first consultation and believes that the cases for retaining established communities as explained in their own submissions, serves as effective reasoning for how the LGBCE has composed its new wards. RBWM acknowledges, in particular, that the parishes of Horton and Wraysbury share a very close affinity and support their inclusion in the same borough ward alongside Datchet Parish.

Eton & Castle – No changes

- 6.37 RBWM supports the draft recommendations for this ward despite the fact that it bears little resemblance to the council's own representation. RBWM respects the views of Eton Town Council and Datchet Parish Council that they share no common identity and interests and should duly be represented by different

borough wards. RBWM is pleased to see that the LGBCE have consistently taken heed of the evidence base for community identity put forward by the parish councils and have applied this to their draft warding patterns. RBWM fully endorses the views of the parish councils in these areas and therefore supports the drawing of Eton & Castle ward.

Great Park & Old Windsor (Option A) – Changes proposed (Map 6)

- 6.38 In parallel with the comments discussed in paragraphs 6.22 to 6.26 in relation to the formation of Ascot & Sunninghill ward and paragraphs 6.29 to 6.31 for Clewer East, RBWM has serious concerns with the way in which the LGBCE's Old Windsor ward has been composed.
- 6.39 Great Park polling district (TA) which is proposed to join Ascot & Sunninghill ward is part of Old Windsor Parish Council. The proposal to split the parish council which currently has a coterminous boundary with its borough ward of the same name, between two borough wards, is an act in itself which runs contrary to the policy of keeping existing communities intact as far as possible. The half of the parish which is located in the Great Park shares no common ground with that of Ascot and Sunninghill.
- 6.40 The 238 electors who currently reside in the Great Park have a very close affiliation with Old Windsor and should remain in a ward with the community they perceive to be an integral part of. The residents of the Great Park consist mainly of employees of the Crown Estate who reside in Great Park village. When these employees retire and are inevitably required to leave the Crown Estate accommodation in the Great Park, the vast majority relocate to Old Windsor. Furthermore, the Crown Estate has natural and historic ties to Old Windsor. The original Windsor palace was located on the site of Old Windsor town and the Great Park was part of the palace's estate. It is for these reasons that the areas should remain unified.
- 6.41 There are major landmarks such as the Royal Chapel and Old Windsor Cemetery which define the Old Windsor identity and are located within the Great Park. These landmarks should be retained in the new Old Windsor ward and should not be transferred to Ascot & Sunninghill.
- 6.42 The Royal School located in the Great Park is attended mainly by Old Windsor children and is part of the Windsor school education system which is a three tier system. The Ascot school system is two tier and quite different to that of Windsor. It would therefore be undesirable for the Royal School to be located in an Ascot ward. The children of the school are known to take part in civic events held by Old Windsor parish council.
- 6.43 There is a more serious implication of placing the whole of polling district Great Park (TA) in the new Ascot & Sunninghill ward. The LGBCE have used the existing boundary lines of TA on its eastern edge which has resulted in the houses at Bear's Rails Gate falling on the Ascot & Sunninghill side of the border. This would present significant issues in relation to the voting arrangements in place for these electors at the time of an election. Electors in these properties currently vote in an Old Windsor polling station but under the revised arrangements would be

required to vote at an Ascot & Sunninghill polling station. Whilst it would be possible to create a new polling district to include partially or solely the Bear's Rails Gate electors and for a polling place to be designated in Old Windsor for this polling district, this is less than ideal and is not the recommended outcome.

- 6.44 RBWM is proposing an alternative warding pattern for the ward that sees the current boundaries of Old Windsor maintained. It is acknowledged that the current Old Windsor ward is too small to exist as a two-member ward in 2019 and too large to form a single-member ward, and must therefore, take in an additional number of electors to satisfy the new elector and councillor quota on a council size of 42 members. It is with this requirement in mind, that RBWM supports the LGBCE's proposal to extend the ward northwards to include part of the Home Park. The extension of the existing ward boundary, however, does not resolve the electoral equality requirement and the ward is considerably over-represented at -25%. Whilst the Working Group concedes that the LGCBE are unlikely to endorse this pattern in their final recommendations and will propose that more properties and electors form part of the new Old Windsor configuration, the Group hopes that the LGBCE will agree that the evidence base set out for keeping the Great Park with Old Windsor forms a robust case for the preservation of existing communities.

Great Park & Old Windsor (Option B) – Changes proposed – (Map 7)

- 6.45 The second option for the Great Park & Old Windsor ward sees the Great Park and Old Windsor united as in Option A, but proposes that the southern part of the Boltons is absorbed into the current Old Windsor boundary. As set out in paragraphs 6.38 to 6.42, RBWM has presented a comprehensive set of evidence to support its assertion that the Great Park belongs with Old Windsor which is why this proposal is evident in both patterns.
- 6.46 The suggestion to bring the southern half of the Boltons in to Great Park & Old Windsor is in the interests of delivering better equality only and does not satisfy the criteria of keeping existing communities intact. The ward would propose a more acceptable variance of -13%.

South Ascot & Sunningdale – No changes

- 6.47 RBWM fully endorses the drawing of the boundaries for this ward as it mirrors the pattern originally presented by the borough council. As outlined in paragraph 6.26, the boundary used to divide the south into two wards and create the separation between the new Ascot & Sunninghill and South Ascot & Sunningdale was the same boundary in place before the last electoral review in 2002.
- 6.48 A consequence of reinstating this boundary would mean that Ascot and Sunninghill parish would be divided between both Ascot & Sunninghill and South Ascot & Sunningdale wards. This is not perceived to be a considerable deviation from the existing electoral arrangements, as the parish currently straddles two borough wards; Ascot & Cheapside and Sunninghill & South Ascot. With this in mind, the boundary lines proposed by the LGBCE are therefore supported by RBWM.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 RBWM has welcomed the publication of the LGBCE's draft recommendations and is pleased to see that the evidence supplied in the borough council's first submission has been used as the basis for informing the mapping of their draft scheme.
- 7.2 RBWM believes that the draft pattern for the Maidenhead constituency area delivers effective electoral equality and is balanced well with the second requirement to preserve community identities and proposes no further amendments to this scheme.
- 7.3 With regards to Windsor, RBWM supports the compilation of five of the LGBCE's proposed wards but appeals to the LGBCE to give further thought to the formation of the remaining wards as they do not currently reflect shared community identities.
- 7.4 RBWM has proposed two alternative patterns which offer different warding patterns for the three wards in Windsor where it is felt that the LGBCE's draft recommendations for these wards do not currently reflect community interests and identities. Option A is very much RBWM's preferred pattern as it supports the retention of existing communities in the same ward. The fulfilment of this particular criteria should take precedence over the need to deliver strict electoral equality, and it is hoped that the LGBCE will be able to adopt some leniency in delivering electoral equality, as it has been able to do at other electoral reviews.

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