

**AT A MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held in the Desborough Suite -
Town Hall on Monday, 29th January, 2018**

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

Officers: Alison Alexander, Milly Camley, Alex Drury, Chris Anderson, Louise Freeth, Andy Jeffs, Mary Kilner, Russell O'Keefe and Karen Shepherd

220. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burbage and Saunders

221. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Dudley stated that he would not participate in the debate or vote on item 4 (Motion on Notice) but he reserved his right to make representations as appropriate.

Councillors D. Wilson, Kellaway and Love declared personal interests in the items 'Broadway Car Park' and 'York Road Site Proposal' as members of the Maidenhead Town Partnership Board and the Partnership for the Rejuvenation of Maidenhead.

Councillor Stretton declared a personal interest in the items 'Broadway Car Park' and 'York Road Site Proposal' as a member of the Partnership for the Rejuvenation of Maidenhead.

Councillor Hunt stated that she came to the meeting with an open mind therefore the fact she owned a property in Maidenhead town centre had no bearing on the matters to be discussed relating to the items 'Broadway Car Park' and 'York Road Site Proposal.'

Councillor Hill stated that he owned a property in Maidenhead town centre which was rented out. It was not on the map for the York Road Site Proposal but he would leave the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the Broadway Car Park item.

222. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

a) Ewan Larcombe of Datchet asked the following question of Councillor Targowska, Principal Member for HR, Legal and IT:

Can you please explain in simple terms what Councillor Dudley has done to bring the council and councillors into disrepute?

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Councillor Targowska responded that she understood that the question had originally been directed to Councillor Stretton but as Councillor Stretton did not hold a relevant Cabinet or Chairman position as required by the constitution for public questions, it had now been passed to her to answer. The question referred to the motion put forward alleging that Councillor Dudley had brought the council and councillors into disrepute because of statements on Twitter and a letter to the PCC during the week commencing 1/1/18. Councillor Targowska stated that unfortunately she was unable to make any comment on the motion or give her personal feelings at this stage in the proceedings as the motion had yet to be put forward. She believed that Councillor Stretton would putting the case for her motion to the meeting during the debate.

By way of a supplementary question, Mr Larcombe commented that it was indicative of the way that the council operated that there was a rule that meant he could not pose the question to Councillor Stretton. Elected to represent a Maidenhead ward, Councillor Dudley had highlighted an issue that singlehandedly tarnished the name of Royal Windsor and had attracted global media attention. In his opinion Councillor Dudley not only brought reputational harm to Royal Windsor but the entire borough. Royal Windsor would recover over time but he felt that that an apology was insufficient. He felt that councillors failing to declare a prejudicial interest and trying to defend the indefensible would only prolong the argument, attract further criticism and reinforce the rotten borough image. He asked Councillor Targowska what she thought.

Councillor Targowska responded that she was Chairman of the Constitution Sub Committee and highlighted that a full review of the constitution was underway. She welcomed comments on the review either at the meeting in April 2018 when it would be presented, or by direct email.

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

In your letter to Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld you state that TVP "*...made a verbal commitment to fund 50 per cent*" of the £2.5m Windsor security measures. You state, however, that TVP left the full cost to RBWM. Was their verbal commitment given to you personally, and what reasons did TVP give RBWM for subsequently withdrawing their £1.25m verbal offer?

Councillor Dudley responded that RBWM Officers and Members, including himself, were advised at a meeting held in the spring of last year, that Thames Valley Police wanted the support of key partners to install integrated and permanent Hostile Vehicle Mitigation measures, following the rapid deployment of the temporary National Barrier Asset immediately after the Westminster attack in March 2017.

Following to the Westminster attacks and others in Europe, TVP and the Met Police reviewed their assessment of the risks and threat levels for Windsor, due to the regular events in the town including the Guard Change, which involved large numbers of residents, visitors, military and security personnel.

TVP Officers confirmed they would be applying for a contribution from TVP resources and it was proposed that they were seeking financial support from the council and other partners to meet the costs on a shared 50/50 basis. At that time it was expected that the permanent scheme would cost in the region of £1.9m.

Council officers had worked with TVP on this basis, along with the Royal Collection Trust which managed the visitors to the Castle, to develop the details of the long term

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mitigation measures to replace the temporary ones currently deployed in Windsor town.

As Leader of the Council, he had requested officers take forward the appropriate measures to extend the protection the permanent and integrated proposals would provide, to include increased protection for castle visitors, provided by the additional temporary measures which were installed in October 2017. He had also asked that the main shopping area of Peascod Street be included, to maximise the benefit of the scheme to a larger area and for much longer periods of the day, and crucially for shoppers be they residents or tourists.

By September 2017 the costs of the revised permanent Hostile Vehicle Mitigation measures became clearer and he requested confirmation from TVP on their contribution level, as the core scheme was now estimated to cost £2.5m, £600,000 more than the original cost although some of this was a result of the increased protection for shoppers. At a board meeting to consider the way forward, TVP confirmed to RBWM they had no resource allocated for this scheme.

Since that time, much more recently TVP had confirmed they could have a small amount of funding available to contribute to Hostile Vehicle Mitigations measures, approximately 10% of the revised core scheme, but on the basis that their identified funding was not required for any other protection work in Windsor associated with state events.

By way of a supplementary question, Mr Hill commented that the motion concerned the letter to the PCC and a number of tweets. In the December tweets, Grace Witherden of the Maidenhead Advertiser had linked to an article interviewing a specific named homeless man and then Councillor Dudley had stated the council had received reports about this man and proceeded to make an allegation. Mr Hill felt this was an example of sensitive data which covered allegations and offences. He therefore asked if Councillor Dudley believed it was appropriate to make such comments in a tweet and would he be self-referring to the ICO?

The Monitoring Officer advised that Mr Hill's supplementary question did not arise directly out of the original question or reply, however Councillor Dudley agreed to respond.

Councillor Dudley responded that the council had received reports, which had been corroborated in the Sunday Times, about a shift pattern that operated around River Street car park. Two individuals put in an Advantage Card number and helped people exit the car park, taking money in receipt. A large number of residents had contacted him about this and it had been reported to TVP, alongside a number of further reports since he had highlighted the issue.

223. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Councillor Stretton introduced her motion:

'To pass a Motion of No Confidence in the Leader of the Council following events during the week commencing 1/1/18, instigated by statements on Twitter and a letter to the Police & Crime Commissioner by Cllr Simon Dudley, that have brought the council and councillors into disrepute.'

She had been asked why she was tabling the motion given that the Conservative Group had voted to overwhelmingly support the Leader in a private Conservative meeting the week before and therefore there was little likelihood of success. She had tabled the motion as it was the right thing to do in an open and democratic forum. The Leader had leaked the results of the group vote. Three of the seven dissenters had subsequently left the Conservative Group and the rest had been whipped to support the Leader.

The motion, whilst citing events on twitter and the PCC letter, was not directly related to the subject of homelessness. It related to the fact that the Leader had used council resources including council letter-headed paper and had stated that the views expressed were of himself and his fellow councillors. The letter had given the impression that his personal views were those of the council as a whole and had brought the council into disrepute nationally and internationally. The debate would be about Councillor Dudley's character and whether councillors had confidence in him to lead the council. The Monitoring Officer had told her that she had informed the Leader that there should not be any attempt to move to a debate about homelessness and the Conservative Group should be advised as such. The recent events were the last in a litany of events from when Councillor Dudley had first become Leader. She hoped that councillors who had supported Councillor Dudley in private would also do so in the public meeting so that residents could hear.

Councillor Jones seconded the motion.

Councillor Dudley made representations before the debate began. He highlighted a copy of the letter that was available via his Twitter account and encouraged all to read it. The intent was very clear to separate the issues of homelessness and anti-social behaviour and to seek action by TVP in relation to anti-social behaviour. He also referred Members to a 30 minute interview with BBC Radio Berkshire which dealt with a number of issues. He categorically disagreed with the motion and believed it had been driven by personal issues.

Councillor Brimacombe stated that the motion was about an excess of judgement and the use and abuse of power. There should be no whitewashing or clinging to party politics or personal patronage. If the councillors heard sufficient evidence, they should support the motion. The council did not routinely publicise private, professional correspondence on its website. The publication of the letter was a deliberate act by the Leader; to do so before the PCC had received it was bad manners. This amounted to a serious error of judgement and gross interference in the process. Whatever his intentions, his actions were deliberate and inexcusable. Councillor Brimacombe commented that the separation of powers underpinned good governance, therefore the Leader should not have influence over Overview and Scrutiny Panels. He was accountable to the Panels rather than the other way around. Councillor Brimacombe referred to an email sent by the Leader to the Chairman of the Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel in March 2017. The Monitoring Officer advised that this was a matter that had been referred to her that had yet to be determined, and therefore was not appropriate for discussion in relation to the motion. Councillor Brimacombe stated that the issues he had wished to raise were evidence of a pattern of behaviour by the Leader that had led to the motion of no confidence.

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Councillor Jones stated that she believed the wider issues were relevant for discussion as the motion had been brought *following* the events of the week commencing 1 January 2018 but were not limited to these issues. Councillor D Evans commented that it would not be useful to break it down word by word and requested a liberal approach to the motion for openness and transparency. The Monitoring Officer stated that the motion dealt with events of the week commencing 1 January 2018 therefore it was natural justice that Councillor Dudley had the opportunity to consider the allegations.

Councillor Walters commented that to get things done you needed a strong leader. He did not always agree with Councillor Dudley but that was politics. He had been unceremoniously sacked as Vice Chairman of the Planning and Housing O&S Panel and he would prefer a more collaborative and collegiate approach. It would be in the interest of the Leader to show a more human side of his nature, which Councillor Walters believed existed. The letter should not have been written in such an inconsiderate manner and it had been unfortunate to have referred to the Vagrancy Act, but it was the law of the land. Councillor Dudley had apologised for his actions, which had made him unpopular with certain sections of the population. Genuine efforts had and would be made to resolve the issue. The removal of councillor Dudley would just be a gesture and would do nothing to help the homeless.

Councillor Hilton referred to an article in the Daily Telegraph called 'Let's Visit Windsor' that referred to people who lived by the castle. The Monitoring Officer advised that the discussion should focus on the motion before Members and not widen to discuss homelessness in general.

Councillor Stretton stated she would withdraw the motion and bring back a re-worded motion to the next meeting.

Councillor Dudley commented that he was happy to have an open debate and would prefer that it was not extended for another month.

The Monitoring Officer advised that Councillor Brimacombe had referred to a separate issue that was being dealt with as part of a wider investigation, therefore was outside the remit of the debate. The Leader would have anticipated a debate about his actions relating to the letter and subsequent tweets. It was not appropriate to raise other issues in the interests of natural justice. In relation to homelessness there should not be a wider debate other than issues relating to the content of the letter and tweets.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.30pm and reconvened at 8.35pm.

Councillor Pryer left the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer advised that, as per Part 2C14.8 of the constitution, the withdrawal of a motion once seconded required the agreement of the meeting.

Councillor Stretton stated that she disputed the motion had been politically motivated. In fairness to Councillor Dudley, if he had not been aware of where the debate would go, she would withdraw the motion and bring it back to a future meeting. Councillor Jones stated she would rather sort the issue out at the meeting but agreed to second the withdrawal.

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Members then voted on whether the motion should be withdrawn. On being put to the vote, a majority of Members did not support the motion and therefore the motion fell and the debate continued

9 Councillors voted for the motion: Councillors Beer, Brimacombe, Da Costa, Hill, Hollingsworth, Jones, Majeed, Stretton and Werner. 40 Councillors voted against the motion: Councillor M. Airey, N. Airey, Alexander, Bateson, Bicknell, Bullock, Carroll, Clark, Coppinger, Cox, Diment, D. Evans, Gilmore, Grey, Hilton, Hunt, Ilyas, Kellaway, Lenton, Lion, Love, Luxton, McWilliams, Mills, Quick, Rankin, C. Rayner, S. Rayner, Richards, Sharma, Sharp, Sharpe, Shelim, Smith, Story, Targowska, Walters, D. Wilson, E. Wilson and Yong. 3 Councillors abstained: Councillors Bhatti, Bowden and L Evans.

On resumption of the debate, the Mayor stated that as he and the Deputy Mayor were neutral they would not take part in the debate but could decide to take part in the vote at the end.

Councillor Hilton highlighted that the letter sent to the PCC included details of what the council had done to protect homeless people including DAAT support and extending the SWEP operation. The letter expressed frustration at TVP not engaging to resolve the issue. The council was a supporter of the police and funded two PCSOs. He found the letter to be wholly acceptable and felt that bringing the motion brought greater risk to the council's reputation than anything in the letter. The council was fortunate to have two or three councillors with considerable experience, including Councillor Dudley. The council was in the process of making decisions key to the future of the borough and Councillor Dudley was key to this process, including keeping a tight control of finances. He had every confidence in Councillor Dudley and none in the motion.

Councillor Jones commented that she had been astounded that the letter had been put in the public domain before the PCC had had a chance to respond. The letter had stated that the situation was totally unacceptable to himself and all councillors. She did not agree with the letter or the tweets or the way the discussion had been handled and Councillor Dudley did not speak on her behalf. There had been global coverage of the statements in the letter including an epidemic of rough sleeping, tourists being marched to cashpoints, and a large number of people begging in Windsor that were not actually homeless. All the statements were un-evidenced. She had asked for the evidence that the individual circumstances of each individual had been assessed and was told it was not available. Councillor Jones asked how the Leader could have sent the letter with only the approval of the Deputy Leader. There were 57 democratically elected members of the borough who individually had to ensure their actions were not to the detriment of the council.

Councillor Jones explained that in November 2017 she had expressed concern to the Managing Director about compliance in the Overview and Scrutiny process. The Peer Review had also highlighted the issues but attitudes had not changed. This attitude had led to the tweets and communications, the Royal Family being involved in negative publicity, and an impression of a lack of communication between the council and TVP. Potentially it could lead to protest groups targeting 19 May 2018, which would put pressure on the council, TVP and the security services. There was also a risk of abuse to council officers. The incidents had damaged the reputation of the borough in the eyes of the world. It was not an unfortunate slip of the tongue but a result of the culmination of power. She asked fellow councillors if they were willing to

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allow this culture to affect the whole borough. Councillors had been elected to make decision in the best interest of the whole council.

Councillor Hill stated that his view was that Councillor Dudley should have resigned a few weeks ago to avoid further embarrassment and negative press for the borough. To many residents Councillor Dudley was a superficial, quick fix, shoot from the hip leader with no team spirit. In his view he did not deliver and destroyed confidence. The letter was unsanctioned and placed on the borough website on Councillor Dudley's instruction without other councillors being aware. He had taken a lot of calls as Maidenhead Chairman and had been put in an awful position. Both local MPs had criticised the situation. A petition on change.org had received 274,500 signatures. The Conservative Party was once again being called the 'nasty party,' something the Prime Minister had worked hard to change. All sorts of protests had been arranged for Windsor. The policing costs would escalate and the good work done by local charities would be lost in negative publicity. The Conservative brand locally had taken massive damage and had brought the leadership into disrepute. The motion should have been thrown out and brought back at another time but Councillor Dudley directly controlled patronage through special responsibility allowances of 22 councillors and indirect patronage over 34. He encouraged Councillors to vote Councillor Dudley down and put residents first.

Councillor Bicknell commented that it was a shame the public arena was being used to assassinate an individual. No-one in the room could stand up and say they had never made a mistake. Councillor Dudley may have been guilty of some clumsy remarks but the underlying problem of rough sleepers was very difficult. The motion said all councillors had been brought into disrepute: he had not been brought into disrepute. All the agencies needed to get round a table to address the issue. It was frustrating and this could cause people to speak and write in a clumsy fashion. Councillor Dudley's intentions were clear and honest. He did not support the motion.

Councillor Rankin stated that his central Windsor residents were in attendance to see how he would vote. He supported Councillor Dudley's leadership, including his work on the BLP, Maidenhead regeneration and Holyport College.

Councillor Werner commented that he had been a councillor since 1993 and had seen both good and bad leaders. On this occasion he completely disagreed with Councillor Dudley's comments in relation to the use of the Vagrancy Act to deal with homeless people. He was proud to have been brought up in the borough and to serve as a councillor. Councillor Dudley had done his best to destroy the reputation of the borough which had been built up over so many years. He had been Trump-like in his Twitter use and had written a letter asking the police to deal with numerous offenders in Windsor via the Vagrancy Act. It was a good example of how bad leadership of a council could be. The borough's reputation had been tarnished in the national and international press. The two Conservative MPs had criticised the leadership of the borough. The Royal Family had become involved, particularly as Prince Harry was a champion of mental health issues and a defender of former servicemen. It was 15 months from the next local elections and lots of voters would be questioning how they would vote given what had happened.

Councillor E. Wilson commented the debate was not of the quality usually experienced in the chamber. Councillor Dudley had raised an issue of genuine concern to the people and businesses of Windsor and had written to the police to ask for their help in

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solving the issue. It had been a mistake to mention the royal wedding. In Windsor people wanted the problem sorted for good, not just for the wedding. A proper debate was needed on the subject; it was not about a single letter. It was important that the council showed it was capable of doing the right thing in the right way.

Councillor Da Costa stated that the action had not been taken lightly, but for the good of the many. In calling for a no confidence motion, councillors did not seek to attack the individual, but address poor behaviours. Sometimes, when poor behaviours were repeated over and over again, it became necessary to deal with the individual. The fundamental point was that Councillor Dudley's actions had already alienated head teachers, schools, police, and residents. Hundreds of thousands of people had signed petitions. His latest actions had been a worldwide sensation, causing the narrative 'the British wealthy looking down on the poor, at a time of national celebration'. This had made headlines across the world, putting the reputation of Royal Family, Windsor and the UK at risk. The negative publicity was already having an the impact on tourism; the streets of Windsor being deserted and shop owners using this as a reason for absence. The police had suffered increased levels of abuse because of the tweets.

Councillor Dudley had given anarchists and anti-monarchists an excuse to escalate action already planned for the royal wedding. He had been disowned by the Prime Minister Theresa May, who could not align herself with such behaviour. The council needed to draw a line in the sand and move away from the negative pall that had been cast. The borough could not move on with Councillor Dudley in place as leader. It might seem like a thankless task but it was the right thing to do; every vote to approve the motion was a vote closer to sorting out the mess. The Opposition was there to help the administration and to work for the good of residents. The Opposition would suspend any arguments about policy for a few weeks whilst the ruling group elected a new leader. The opposition would not kick the administration in the press for doing the right thing; the problem was councillors doing the wrong thing. The Opposition did not respect the Leader's behaviour.

Councillor Da Costa commented that all councillors were elected to represent people. He hoped that some Conservatives would break the whip and dare to stand up for what they were elected for, and for what was right. It was time for change. The motion did not deny the right of the Conservative group to form an administration. If it passed, the Conservative Group would choose Councillor Dudley's replacement from within their own ranks. In light of the recent internal vote of confidence, Councillor Da Costa commented that in front of the electorate and the press, by voting against the motion, councillors would in effect be endorsing Councillor Dudley's letter to the PCC, and supporting his actions and tweets. If councillors did not vote for the motion, they would be approving publically embarrassing Prince Harry and bringing national and international awareness of the borough's issues with homelessness. If councillors did not vote for the motion, it would indicate they did not wish to build bridges with councillors who were forced out over policy differences. If councillors did not vote for the motion, they would be in favour of Councillor Wilson being fired over the local plan, which alienated half the residents. If councillors did not vote for the motion, they would be endorsing the breach of electoral commission rules during the Clewer North election, the aggressive behaviours towards Lowbrook school and the reallocation of S106 funds from all of the schools to Councillor Dudley's pet project in Holyport.

By voting against the motion councillors would be endorsing the Leaders' use of Twitter where he often attacked local residents, neighbouring councils, the homeless

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and one of the council's key partners TVP, whilst allowing Councillor Grey to make a bumbling attempt at defending his actions on national TV and radio.

Councillor McWilliams commented the letter was right in that it drew attention to an important issue. However it was not communicated in an effective way afterwards. Councillor Dudley went on the radio and apologised. The council now needed to move on. He asked whether it would be better to pretend the issues did not exist. The policy decision was the right one. If a Leader made a fundamentally incorrect policy decision this this would be an issue. A Leader should not be removed if the correct policy decision was made even if it was communicated in the wrong way.

Councillor Majeed commented that by his actions, Councillor Dudley made Windsor notorious on the world stage, embarrassed the Royal Family, the Prime Minister, the residents, Members and officers. He had shown a complete lack of capacity to deal with sensitive issues, for example commenting on the letter before it had been delivered. He should have done the right thing and resigned as Leader already. Councillor Majeed explained that he had resigned from the Conservative Group the previous week and was supportive of the motion of no confidence. His support was not a personal issue but related to Councillor Dudley's ill-suited role as Leader. This was one of the reasons he had refused to join the Cabinet when a position had been offered. He was putting the interests of the borough before self-interest. Councillor Dudley did not have the character of a good leader. The recent events had caused national and international embarrassment for residents and the Royal Family. It was the job of councillors to serve all residents and honour the privileged position held. All had made mistakes in their lives. However this, along with other concerns and a catalogue of mistakes, could not be forgiven. All councillors who opposed the motion supported the process by which the letter was sent and the comments by the Leader. In a democracy opposing views should be allowed. People had different views on the issue of homelessness but this was about the actions of Councillor Dudley. Instead of an approach via Cabinet, the Opposition or other Members, it was typical of Councillor Dudley's character to decide to tweet himself.

Councillor Lion commented that Councillor Dudley had taken down the fence around the town hall and allowed homeless people to sleep on the lawn.

Councillor Bateson echoed the comments of Councillor E Wilson and McWilliams about the issues in Windsor. She felt Councillor Dudley had dealt with it well other than some of the words used, for which he had apologised. It was his reputation on the line., It was inevitable there would be different views in different political parties. Councillor Dudley had done some fine things in the 20 months he had been Leader.

Councillor Smith commented that there were 3500 doors in Councillor Dudley's ward, many of whom had stickers stating they did not buy at the door. Councillor Dudley was able to sell ideas. Votes in council were by default free votes, for example in relation to the golf club and the Local Plan. The council was working to create necessary housing for residents and was in the process of finalising the Borough Local Plan including affordable housing. Councillor Smith stated that he had voted against Councillor Dudley on a number of occasions. He would be voting to show his confidence in Councillor Dudley as in his assessment, he was likely to do more things right than others.

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Councillor D. Wilson commented that it was right the motion was discussed and that Councillor Dudley had a right of reply otherwise it could be construed as a witch-hunt. The contents of the letter included reference to housing for all parts of society; it was clear that the letter had a compassionate and caring tone. Councillor Dudley had already apologised on Radio Berkshire and this should be the end of the matter.

Councillor Dr L Evans commented that her professional life had been spent in governance and advanced leadership. Governance in terms of behaviour at the meeting had been poor. Being a leader was not about being popular or always sitting in the background saying nothing in case you came up against someone who disagreed with you. Leadership required guts and presence. Councillor Dr L Evans had immediately responded to Councillor Dudley's tweets to ask whether it had been wise. He should not have been working whilst on holiday but still had residents in his mind whilst he was away. This was not someone who did not care.

Councillor M. Airey stated that he did not believe the letter and tweets were sufficient to bring a motion of no confidence. Allegations had been made that voting against the motion would mean councillors were implicitly agreeing with everything that Councillor Dudley had said. He had been a signatory to a letter to the press that stated he did not agree with the wording of the tweets or the content of the letter. In life you would not always agree with everything; it was a matter of core integrity.

Councillor Beer stated that as Leader and Lead Member for Housing Councillor Dudley should not have sent such a tactless and unauthorised letter to the PCC to remove homeless sleepers from Windsor. The letter should not have been simultaneously released to the press. He asked why the letter had not been put past the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The Panel's meeting in October 2017 had been attended by the PCC, Chief Constable and Area Commander. A question in relation to rough-sleepers had been raised and the response, accepted by all, had stated that work was on-going and a report would be brought back at a later date. It had therefore been totally inappropriate for Councillor Dudley to jump in and ignore work already in progress. The due process was not followed. After the media descended on Windsor, several rough-sleepers were spoken to; none were beggars or were spending money on taxis home. He fully appreciated that Councillor Dudley was a hard-working leader but he should devolve some responsibility to his colleagues. This had been an example of going over the top and that was why the Opposition was so concerned. The issue had caused a lot of aggravation and harm to the borough.

Councillor Grey commented that it was a matter of interpretation; others sending the letter may have used different vocabulary or a different style. The letter had been prompted by residents, businesses and visitors to Windsor. The Leader had appealed to the police for help with some issues over which the council did not have power. Councillor Dudley had apologised for the vocabulary used. Councillor Dudley had stood up for residents, businesses and visitors. He questioned whether vocabulary was enough to remove a Leader who had done so much for the borough.

Councillor Carroll agreed with Councillor E. Wilson that the issue needed a proper debate. He had been contacted about the issue by a number of residents. There had been different views but not necessarily with the polarisation suggested. Comments included that Councillor Dudley should tweet less, be more sensitive to some issues, and not multitask whilst on holiday. However the key issues in the letter had been

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picked up. The reality was that the issue of homelessness was very complex. The issue of affordable housing had been put at the heart of Councillor Dudley's agenda when he became Leader. Councillor Carroll commented that the issue of mental health was a personal one for him as he had suffered from depression. Councillor Dudley had been very supportive during this time. His intention was genuinely decent and he had done nothing that would require him to be removed.

Councillor Coppinger commented that the motion was not about homelessness or bringing the borough into disrepute but about a group of councillors who would take any opportunity to attack the current leadership.

Councillor Jones asked whether Councillor Coppinger was able to evidence she had ever personally attacked any Member of the council.

Councillor Coppinger stated that the issue for him was whether councillor Dudley told the truth about the subject. The current administration had done more than any other to help the homeless. He referred to a Facebook comment from one of his residents about homelessness. Councillor Dudley did get it wrong when he tweeted but he had apologised for this.

Councillor Jones commented that it was not about politically attacking anyone, She always tried to take the correct route and always approached other councillors on Overview and Scrutiny before raising issues. She did not believe that personal attacks referred to by others had been evidenced.

Councillor Dudley stated that his intentions were clear in the letter and the interview. He requested a transcript of the comments made by Councillor Da Costa as he had referred to the misappropriation of public funds.

Councillor Stretton concluded the debate by stating that the reason she had brought the motion was because of concerns the council had been brought into disrepute. Councillor McWilliams had referred to a policy decision; it had not been his place to unilaterally make this decision. His role was to put forward policy and allow the council to decide. The letter had been written without any evidence and had not been discussed with other councillors other than the Deputy Leader. The letter was put on the website and tweeted about before it had been received by the PCC. If a letter was sent on RBWM paper and referred to fellow councillors, he should ensure all agreed. It was important that the council got its democratic processes back in order including the constitution and Overview and Scrutiny.

On being put to the vote, a majority of Members did not support the motion and therefore the motion fell .

(9 Councillors voted for the motion: Councillors Beer, Brimacombe, Da Costa, Hill, Hollingsworth, Jones, Majeed, Stretton and Werner. 43 Councillors voted against the motion: Councillor M. Airey, N. Airey, Alexander, Bateson, Bhatti, Bicknell, Bowden, Bullock, Carroll, Clark, Coppinger, Cox, Diment, D. Evans, L. Evans, Gilmore, Grey, Hilton, Hunt, Ilyas, Kellaway, Lenton, Lion, Love, Luxton, McWilliams, Mills, Quick, Rankin, C. Rayner, S. Rayner, Richards, Sharma, Sharp, Sharpe, Shelim, Smith, Story, Targowska, Walters, D. Wilson, E. Wilson and Yong. There were no abstentions.)

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Councillors Stretton, Majeed, Hill, Brimacombe, Ilyas, C Rayner, D. Sharp and Shelim left the meeting.

224. 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.

225. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

Members considered a reduction in the current 10% contribution towards council tax under the CTS scheme to 8.5% from 1 April 2018.

Councillor S. Rayner explained that if the proposal was approved, it would give people more money in their pocket. The borough would then have the lowest council tax outside London and one of the highest support levels. Of 72 respondents to the consultation on the proposal, 68% were supportive.

Councillor Dudley highlighted that the proposal would help the most vulnerable of working age. Councillor Werner stated he would support the proposal and highlighted that it had first been suggested by Councillor Jones. Councillor Dudley thanked Councillor Jones for first raising the issue.

Councillor Hunt left the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor S. Rayner, seconded by Councillor Dudley and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Council:

- i) Notes the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken with regard to the proposed change to the CTS scheme.**
- ii) Approves Cabinet's recommendation to reduce the contribution under the CTS scheme from 10% to 8.5% with effect from 1 April 2018.**

(Councillor Hunt abstained from the vote)

226. BROADWAY CAR PARK

Members considered the next steps for a replacement Broadway car park.

Councillor D Evans explained that he had originally intended to seek approval of a capital budget of £20m however having listened to representations made he had taken on board the view that he should seek to conclude negotiations on the preferred option, then come back to the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee and Council to approve the capital budget. Members noted that revised recommendations had been circulated. He proposed the revised recommendations be considered in Part II, with an additional recommendation to minute the decisions in Part I. This was seconded by Councillor Love. The debate in Part I then concluded.

Following the debate in Part II, Members agreed to minute the decisions in Part I:

It was proposed by Councillor D. Evans, seconded by Councillor Love, and:

RESOLVED: That Council notes the report and approves the recommendations of the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee:

- a. Approves that further work be undertaken to conclude Option 3 set out in the Part 2 Report.**
- b. Delegate authority to the Executive Director in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Maidenhead Regeneration and Maidenhead and in conjunction with the Lead Member for Finance to negotiate and implement an agreement for Option 3.**
- c. If Option 3 proves through negotiation to not be deliverable to progress Option 2 through a procurement process to be agreed.**
- d. Finalise a capital budget recommendation for the approval of the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee and Council.**
- e. The decisions be minuted in Part I**

38 Councillors voted for the motion: Councillor M. Airey, N. Airey, Alexander, Bateson, Beer, Bhatti, Bicknell, Bullock, Carroll, Clark, Coppinger, Cox, Diment, Dudley, D. Evans, L. Evans, Gilmore, Grey, Hilton, Hollingsworth, Jones, Kellaway, Lenton, Lion, Love, McWilliams, Mills, Quick, Rankin, S. Rayner, Sharma, Sharpe, Smith, Story, Targowska, Walters, D. Wilson, and E. Wilson. 2 Councillors abstained: Da Costa and Werner.

227. YORK ROAD, MAIDENHEAD – SITE PROPOSAL

Members considered a site proposal for York Road.

Councillor Rankin introduced the report by explaining that the proposals would set the standard for regeneration in Maidenhead, bringing the heritage heart to this site as envisaged in the Area Action Plan, bringing new restaurants and bars into the town centre by the riverside, the improvement of the public realm around the town hall as the new open space was integrated, as well as 261 new homes, 78 of which will be affordable. Of the 78, 36 would be shared ownership, 20 would be affordable rent, 14 would be rent to buy. Eight social rent units would also be included.

The council was making small but significant steps to fulfilling one of its strategic ambitions of delivering affordable housing. The plans had been presented at a well-attended public consultation the week before last, and the message Councillor Rankin had taken away from Maidenheadians was one of positivity and excitement that the rejuvenation of Maidenhead was underway.

If approved, the planning application would be submitted shortly and construction was hoped to start in December, with the first homes occupied in early 2020. As the council owned the site, it was ultimately the master of the destiny of what happened on the site. The council could decide the density, the level of parking provision, the numbers and composition of affordable housing, the amount of space allocated to public space and heritage, but all these decisions effected the size of the capital receipt that the council could receive.

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In the supplementary report Members could see the decisions that the JV Partnership Board had made and the value decisions that these would drive.

The Area Action Plan identified the site as a heritage hub and the council had committed to delivery. Members could see the investment in the Heritage Centre and Desborough suite investments of £1.7m. The council had made the commitment to build a borough for everyone and had made the choice to invest £1.1m in delivering social rent.

At the first public consultation, residents had made it clear that they were concerned about the level of on-site parking provision. The council had invested £2.6m. There were some who had suggest the council was operating as a developer seeking to maximise profit. The investments in heritage and culture, in parking, and in affordable including social rent, showed that this was not the case. Politics was about decisions and there were those who would have the council go further still. Councillor Rankin cautioned against this approach. At the public consultations, most public concern was about wider infrastructure: school places, public parking in the town centre, and leisure provision. The proposed strategy of developing the council's land holdings would enable the council to deliver the required infrastructure. The long term capital cashflows that demonstrated how the council could meaningfully deliver on the requirements.

Councillor Dudley stated that he had lived in Maidenhead for 25 years and had watched its sad decline. The town was now on the cusp of change through investment, including £1bn from the golf club site and the provision of 30% affordable housing.

Councillor Werner stated that he felt the proposals were a wasted opportunity. The council had land holdings yet only 8 social rented units would be available. He had only seen criticism of the proposals in relation to a lack of ambition, a lack of parking and insufficient affordable housing. The council needed to try harder, particularly with the golf club site.

Councillor Beer commented that as a Member of the Local Plans Working Group he generally approved of the proposals, however he had two concerns. Paragraph 2.7 referred to 30% affordable housing. The SHLAA had stated that 61% affordable housing was required and the majority in the rented sector. He had raised the issue before. The table of financial adjustments gave figures that were rounded to crude millions and one decimal point; therefore items 17 and 18 were not accurate in the supplement.

Councillor D. Wilson stated that he fully endorsed the long overdue proposals. It was an ideal opportunity to achieve 30% affordable housing made up of different types of tenure.

Councillor E. Wilson had previously commented that a strong Maidenhead was good for the whole borough and the proposals needed to be acted upon as soon as possible. He asked how the mix of tenures had been decided upon and also what the proposals were for the refurbishment of the Desborough Suite.

Councillor McWilliams highlighted that 54% of the homes the council was building were in or around the affordable rented elements. The borough had a number of large

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capital commitments. In terms of a long-term plan to prevent people becoming homeless, the homelessness strategy launched in 2017 worked alongside the Borough Local Plan and a Supplementary Planning Document. The joint venture was another important aspect. The proposals set out the number of different tenures needed to have a borough that worked for everyone. If only social housing was built it would not be possible to also build the infrastructure required.

Councillor D. Evans commented that Councillor Werner had shown he was a master of the political game but did not say how many affordable homes he would propose or what the trade-off would be for more social housing. If only social housing were provided, this would take £10m out of the £18.7m and would therefore not be available for school expansion, car parks or the leisure centre. The proposals before Members was the start of something Maidenhead had been crying out for 30 years. If approved, building works would start by the end of the year. It would be one of the first developments in the town centre to include affordable housing as a key component and would set a precedent for other developments. The proposals had been consulted upon. Members had spent time listening and talking to residents, who were overall in favour. Some raised the issue of parking but Members were able to explain the cost impact of extra parking and the choices that had to be made. In relation to the affordable element the decision had been taken to set the rate at the local housing allowance rate of 70%.

Councillor Jones applauded the redevelopment of Maidenhead but she was not convinced about the parking issue. The report compared Maidenhead to Reading, which she felt was a very different conurbation. She could not find information in the report in relation to access and traffic flows and how this would fit into the bigger picture. She would prefer more than 8 social rented units but understood the need for a balance. The report was very large to fully understand in just seven days. She suggested for future reports of a similar size that Members be provided with a briefing. At this point she felt unable to make a decision on the recommendations and would therefore likely abstain.

Councillor S. Rayner stated that she wholeheartedly supported the proposals. It was not a wasted opportunity but an exciting one. When her husband had been Mayor in 2012/13 they had both talked to many residents, many of whom said they were embarrassed by Maidenhead. The proposals were exciting from a culture and heritage perspective. The proposals for the Desborough Suite included an investment of £650,000. Consultation had been undertaken with several partners including users, all who wanted to see the Suite remain but with upgrades and a new entrance distinct from the Town Hall.

Councillor M. Airey commented that the proposals were part of a joined up vision for Maidenhead, looking at housing and other infrastructure provision. He looked forward to seeing how the future stages developed.

Councillor Rankin commented that the affordable housing provision was just the tip of the iceberg of the council's aspirations. Sites at Reform Road, West Street and the golf club were all in the pipeline. The proposals were indicative of the mix of tenures but would be subject to conversations with the council as the Planning Authority. The overall strategy was to revert capital receipts to the taxpayer by investing in infrastructure. He took on board the comments about ensuring Members were fully

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informed and would ensure informal briefings were provided, potentially via the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

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

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Council notes the report and approves the recommendations of Cabinet Regeneration Sub-committee to:

- i) Approve the emerging site proposal for York Road.**
- ii) Approve the appropriation of the site in the red line plan at Appendix A1.**
- iii) Delegate authority to the Executive Director and the Cabinet Members for Economic Development and Property and Maidenhead Regeneration and Maidenhead to enter into a development agreement with Countryside Properties (UK) Limited.**

(40 Councillors voted for the motion: Councillors M. Airey, N. Airey, Alexander, Bateson, Bhatti, Bicknell, Bowden, Bullock, Carroll, Clark, Coppinger, Cox, Diment, Dudley, D. Evans, L. Evans, Gilmore, Grey, Hilton, Hollingsworth, Kellaway, Lenton, Lion, Love, Luxton, McWilliams, Mills, Quick, Rankin, S. Rayner, Richards, Sharma, Sharpe, Smith, Story, Targowska, Walters, D. Wilson, E. Wilson and Yong. 1 Councillor voted against the motion: Councillor Werner. 3 Councillors abstained: Councillors Beer, Da Costa and Jones.)

Councillor Coppinger announced that the Borough Local Plan had been submitted. He thanked officers and Councillor D. Wilson for their efforts in this respect.

Councillors Luxton, Bowden and Yong left the meeting.

228. 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 items 9-10 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act