

## ACCESS ADVISORY FORUM

MONDAY, 11 JUNE 2018

PRESENT: Angela Clark (Chairman), Lisa Hughes (Vice-Chairman), Sharon Carrigan, Helen Gregory Osbourne, Peter Haley, Liz Kelsall, Dominic Manley and Councillor Charles Hollingsworth

Also in attendance: Dean Yorke

Officers: Elaine Browne, Shilpa Manek, Gordon Oliver, Barbara Richardson, Andrew Scott and Ashley Smith

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of Absence were received from Tim Clare, Robin Pemberton, Greg Nelson and Vernon Nosal.

### CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Liz Kelsall and Helen Gregory-Osbourne for joining the Forum.

The Chairman welcomed Dean Yorke to the Forum.

The Chairman advised the Forum that both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman would both be attending the Borough Local Plan Public Enquiry on 26 June 2018.

The Vice Chairman informed the Forum that they had conducted a survey of blue badge users of where they parked in the borough. This would be presented later in the Forum.

### MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last forum on Monday 19 March 2018 were **Unanimously Agreed** by the Forum.

### MATTERS ARISING

#### 4.1 Experience of the Royal Wedding for people with disabilities.

Experience of the Royal Wedding for people with disabilities. Andy Scott updated the Forum on the experience that people with disabilities had at the recent Royal Wedding. The access was limited and many roads were closed but additional transport was put on. There were no real complaints. There were some initial teething issues but these were resolved. There were three sites along the long walk, where there was access for people with disabilities.

The Chairman read out comments from Forum member Tim Clare who had attended the day in one of the public wheelchair areas along the Long Walk. His comments along with other members who attended include the following :

- Getting to the Long Walk - all pavements were very busy and the roads were closed and therefore, were clear. It was very difficult for wheelchair users to use the pavements. Maybe the roads could have been used.
- Many people were in the disabled viewing area - this maybe, should have been policed better.
- From the disable viewing area, you could not see the screen or hear the service.
- The toilets were very far from the disabled viewing area.
- It was difficult for children in wheelchairs to access the disabled viewing area's and then if there, they could not see the screen.

Andy Scott informed the Forum that this was an unusually large event, the first in Windsor and many lessons has been learnt for next time.

#### 4.2 Update on the Windsor Guildhall access audit and Public meetings at the Guildhall.

Elaine Browne updated the Forum on the Windsor Guildhall access audit and the future of public meetings at the Guildhall. The points that Elaine Browne highlighted were as follows:

- The process to make alterations to the Guildhall in Windsor was very long.
- It was difficult getting planning permission.
- York House in Windsor was currently undergoing refurbishment.
- Alternate venues with suitable access were being investigated for meetings.

The Vice Chairman pointed out that there were many examples of planning permission being granted for listed buildings to improve their accessibility for users with disabilities. It was a good opportunity to look for venues that can provide a hearing loop as well as level access for people with limited mobility. The inaccessibility of the Guildhall is preventing people from attending or participating in council and private meetings, events and functions. This may be an important factor in the Guildhall's reported declining usage by hirers. The Vice Chairman expressed disappointment that the Council had not made any progress in identifying alternative venues that would enable people with disabilities to access and hear public meetings.

The Forum were informed that residents, or others, who would be speaking at a public meeting were being asked if they had any accessibility requirements. The Forum felt that residents with disabilities should be able to attend public meetings/events without having to check or tell someone that they were attending.

Liz Kelsall suggested using a school in Windsor as an alternative, accessible, venue for public meetings.

The Chairman informed Elaine Brown that at the last Forum it was indicated that the Access Consultants report, received at the start of December 2017, was going to be progressed. The options for a lift to the first floor had been explained and it was agreed that option two was the most feasible and cost effective. The Forum asked about the progression of option two.

The Forum stressed, once again, that Windsor Guildhall should not be used for public meetings until accessibility for people with disabilities is improved and believe its continued use is discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010.

The Chairman requested that Elaine Browne attend the next meeting in September with a further update with more details about the way forward.

**ACTION: Invite Elaine Browne to the next Forum for an update.**

#### 4.3 AAF and Planning Applications feedback.

Ashley Smith, Deputy Head of Planning, stressed the need to promote accessibility in terms of planning. This included public transport, entrance access, parking and street furniture. Planning had the role of weighing up the overall balance and encourage developers to take all these access points into consideration in the pre-development stage. The Borough's position was that if 5% of 20 units followed the accessibility policy, then the needs were met.

The Chairman pointed out the small scale developments were more of a concern. What reassurance can the forum have that the planning had considered and made suggestions to the developers about accessibility?

Ashley Smith explained that it depended on what had been raised in the report. Planning could not prescript an application and this would normally be covered by the buildings regulations.

The Vice Chairman read out to the forum 2014 guidance from Central Government to Local Planning Authorities.

“Good design can help to create buildings and places that are for everyone. Planning can help break down unnecessary physical barriers and exclusions caused by the poor design of buildings and places.

Inclusive design acknowledges diversity and difference and is more likely to be achieved when it is considered at every stage of the development process, from inception to completion. However it is often mistakenly seen as a Building Regulations issue, to be addressed once planning permission has been granted, not at the planning application stage. The most effective way to overcome conflicting policies and to maximise accessibility for everyone is for all parties to consider inclusive design from the outset of the process. This is particularly important when considering historic buildings and conservation, and highways. Thinking at the design stage about how the completed building will be occupied and managed can overcome many barriers experienced by some users. Too often the needs of users, including disabled people, older people and families with small children, are considered too late in the day.”

The Vice Chairman highlighted that the number of new homes built to Accessible and Adaptable standards in the Borough Local Plan considered that only one in twenty people had accessibility issues but the actual figure would be one in five people.

The Vice Chairman summed up by informing the Forum that of the 103 planning applications scrutinised in detail, she had sent fifteen comments to Planning, four of which were positive comments.

#### 4.4 Maidenhead Town Centre Regeneration.

Barbara Richardson updated the Forum on the four main sites of development, York Road, St Clouds Way, Reform Road and West Street. The following specific points were highlighted:

- York Road – access issues had been considered in a lot of detail. The Town Hall frontage would have full wheelchair access. A lot of work had been done on curb heights, 5% of the development's car parking would be blue badge parking with all national space standards applied which was more than the national average.
- St Clouds Way – the public consultation would begin on 21 July 2018 for both residential and community usage. This site would remain as it was until the Magnet Centre had moved to the Braywick site and this had been delayed due to archaeological ruins found on Braywick site by three months.
- The Maidenhead Golf site was in its final stages now and would be selected before the end of July 2018.

Barbara Richardson continued to inform the Forum that all the sites would have a major impact on the town centre parking and the people in and around the town centre. There was a Forum in place that meet monthly where all the different developers met and discussed issues to do with the redevelopment. A formal presentation was going to be presented to PRoM and this could be shared at the next Forum.

**ACTION: Invite Barbara Richardson to give the Forum a presentation on Maidenhead Town Centre Regeneration.**

Barbara Richardson informed the Forum about the permanent car parking in and around the town centre. There would be many changes in the next year. The Broadway car park would start work by January 2020 with completion due at the end of December 2021. ShopMobility had been considered and would be relocated once all the moves and changes had taken place.

The Vice Chairman pointed out that no review had been undertaken for the accessibility of the current housing stock and there was no forum to feed this information. Barbara Richardson informed the Forum that Liz Ferguson from Optalis was currently doing work looking at young people and their needs, specifically in the next five years.

Peter Hayley, ShopMobility, suggested it would be useful to have all the moves and changes with dates in the minutes.

**ACTION: Barbara Richardson to provide all change/move dates.**

Peter Hayley stressed that it was very important to have a central location for ShopMobility and it would be preferred to be moved only once. ShopMobility had met with the designers to comment on the final design, all the suggested ideas had been agreed. Barbara Richardson informed the Forum that this was only to stage 2 and that now there were new developer's in place.

Other points that were raised by the Forum included:

- Toilets in the car park
- Changing places facilities
- Park and ride, this option had not been considered.
- Access to library and town hall would remain the same.

The Vice Chairman concluded that the online survey that she had conducted had had 52 responses and would give some good data for the council.

**ACTION: Vice Chairman to share the data with Barbara Richardson and Neil Walter.**

#### 4.5 St Marks/ Courthouse Road Junction.

Councillor Hollingsworth informed the Forum that money from the annual capital budget this year would now be used for this project. The scheme options had been shared with the ward members and a public consultation would be carried out shortly.

**ACTION: Further update required at next Forum.**

#### 4.6 Maidenhead Station Forecourt.

Gordon Oliver informed the Forum of the following points:-

- The Service Level Agreement had now been signed with Network Rail, allowing them to be formally engaged on the project.
- Significant progress had been made with the design of the forecourt, including landscaping, drainage and lighting.
- A recent meeting had taken place with Crossrail and it had been confirmed that Maidenhead would not be a high risk site, so security bollards would not be required, there would be ticket office expansion, increasing the number of ticket barriers, the ticket barriers would also be expanded on Shoppenhangers Road, there would be a new lift and stairs to platform 1.
- The designs were now complete for the A308 / Queen Street junction which would have a banned right turn for vehicles and enhanced crossings.
- Discussions were ongoing with the developers of The Landing regarding converting Broadway to 2-way so traffic can exit from Nicholsons Car Park straight onto Frascati Way.
- The platform heights would remain as they were now, they would not be altered.

Gordon Oliver continued that designs should be completed by December 2018 and it is hoped that works will be substantially completed by the time CrossRail starts operation by December 2019.

**ACTION: An update to be provided at the November Forum.**

#### 4.7 Equality and Diversity Policy RBWM draft consultation.

Rachel Kinniburgh provide the Forum with a progress update. Rachel Kinniburgh thanked the Forum for all their feedback and informed them that the reviewed policy had been agreed on the 24th April at Full Council. Rachel Kinniburgh continued informing the Forum that the webs ite page had been refreshed, the website would

show the progress reports from 2014 to 2018. Rachel Kinniburgh requested that she update the Forum every six months.

**ACTION:- Update at November Forum.**

Rachel Kinniburgh also informed the Forum of the Access Policy review that was due to begin soon. This was being conducted by the Library and Resident Services Team. All feedback would be welcomed. The Vice Chairman, Lisa Hughes expressed interest in getting involved with the Access Policy review. The Vice Chairman asked if any further progress had taken place for the complaints process, but this was still being considered.

**ACTION: Provide update at next meeting.**

Update on Taxi Licensing.

The Chairman read out Greg Nelson's update about taxi licensing as he could not be present at the Forum. The update read that the proposed changes to Hackney carriage and private hire driver policies which would have the edge t of formally adopting sections 165 to 167 of the Equality Act 2010 had been drafted and sent to all Hackney carriage and private hire drivers as part of the required consultation process. Greg Nelson would be presenting a report to the Licensing Panel on 3 July 2018 recommending that the Panel agree the proposed changes to Hackney carriage and private hire driver policies, subject to any amendments made as a result of the consultation process, which would have effect of RBWM formally adopting sections 165-167 of the Equality Act 2010. The Panel also delegated to officers the actual implementation of sections 165-167 of the Equality Act 2010.

Greg Nelson also provided a draft timetable of implementation subject to the outcome of the Licensing Panel on 3 July 2018. Greg Nelson would then provide an update to the Chairman.

The Vice Chairman informed the Forum that she would be attending the Licensing Panel.

4.8 Raising the profile of AAF.

The Chairman handed around the leaflet that she had designed and asked the Forum for comments.

**ACTION: Send the leaflet to the clerk to begin discussion with the Communications Team.**

ITEMS

5.1 Using Direct Payments to employ a PA

Vernon Modal had sent apologies for the Forum but had sent through plenty of information for the Forum members. The Chairman requested that Vernon Nosal give an update at the next meeting.

Liz Kelsall informed the Forum that on asking parents since the last meeting, the majority were using Enable Payroll for direct payments to PA.

**ACTION: Invite Vernon Nosal to the next meeting.**

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Panel Members noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting, which began at 11.15 am, finished at 1.15 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....