

## ACCESS ADVISORY FORUM

MONDAY, 25 MARCH 2019

PRESENT: Angela Clark (Chairman), Hughes (Vice-Chairman), Sharon Carrigan, Peter Haley, Robin Pemberton, Dominic Manley, Councillors Charles Hollingsworth and Philip Love

Officers: Rachel Kinniburgh, Shilpa Manek, Kevin Mist, Pankaj Vara and Sarika Varma

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Tim Clare. Barbara Richardson was unable to attend but Pankaj Vara had attended in her place. Greg Nelson had sent apologies and had prepared a written update which had been included in the Agenda Pack.

### CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed all to the Forum.

Pankaj Vara, Karen Shepherd, Kevin Mist and Sarika Varma were all presenting items to the Forum.

The Chairman also welcomed the residents that had attended.

### MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last Forum on 26 November 2018 were approved to be a true and accurate record of the meeting. This was proposed by Dominic Manley and seconded by Councillor Charles Hollingsworth.

**RESOLVED Unanimously: that the minutes of the Forum on 26 November were a true and accurate record**

### MATTERS ARISING

#### **4.1 Maidenhead Town Centre Regeneration**

Pankaj Vara, Head of Land and Acquisition, updated the Forum on behalf of Barbara Richardson. Pankaj Vara gave the following updates:

- York Road – Phase 1, Countryside had the planning permission to build 141 homes of which 61 would be affordable. Ten percent of all the parking would be disabled parking. Discussions were taking place with Maidenhead Community Centre and the Heritage Centre.
- Site 2, St Clouds Way – a second public consultation would take place later in the year. Discussions were taking place with the medical surgery. The Magnet Leisure Centre would only be demolished when the new Braywick Leisure Centre had been constructed. The target date for this was summer 2020. A temporary car park was in place at the Tenpin bowling site for staff and residents.

- The parking strategy for Vicus Way was being re-looked at.
- The new owners of the Nicholsons Centre held a Public Exhibition to understand from the public what their aspirations were for the town centre and Nicholson Centre so this could be considered by them. Until the new owners had reviewed their future plans for the Centre, the new Broadway car park would be delayed. Overall, the parking would not be reduced from what was available to the public.
- The overall blue badge provision was currently 81 spaces and after the redevelopment, this would increase to 146. In the temporary arrangements for the parking, five blue badge spaces were on the Landings site and Neil Walter, Parking Principal, was looking in to street parking provision.
- The proposed temporary Shopmobility move to West Street was discussed. Peter Haley updated the forum about a meeting in December between Barbara Richardson, Peter Haley, Angela Clark and Lisa Hughes. Blue badge parking during the regeneration was discussed, including the storage, access, utility and admin space needed by Shopmobility at any temporary location while Broadway car park was being redeveloped.
- Other points raised by the Forum included:
  - Dominic Manley raised that there was no close by parking for him to now attend the Access Advisory Forum meeting . He parked at Nicholsons car park and was able to attend as his wheelchair had an electric function.
  - Lisa Hughes highlighted that blue badge spaces required adequate space around them to get out of the car. Lisa Hughes asked what were the plans for the three spaces that were in the Town Hall car park? There was a need for Blue Badge spaces with access zones near to the Town Hall and Library.
  - Peter Haley had asked for an update on the ShopMobility arrangements. Peter Haley had been advised that ShopMobility were no longer going to be able to enter the new Broadway car park with the minibuses because of the height restrictions. He had been advised that the minibuses could use the layby across the road. Peter Haley informed Officers and the Forum that this would not work as it was on the wrong side of the road and the layby would be used for deliveries too. It would be difficult and unsafe for ShopMobility users to use this. Councillor Love commented that the plans were fine when the Forum had last saw them so what had changed? Lisa Hughes informed the Forum that the plans shown at the exhibition had a lower ground floor ceiling height than previously discussed. Claire Watson pointed out that many wheelchair accessible vehicles would also be too tall to get into the new Broadway Car Park. The Chairman ended the discussion highlighting that the issue needed to be resolved as soon as possible.
  - Councillor Love informed the Forum that the new Broadway car park may be able to be built without demolishing the current car park. The new developer had a lot of experience and had dealt with projects such as the Battersea Power Station and Gunwharf Quay in Portsmouth. The Chairman reminded Officers that it had been already agreed that there

- would be a changing places facility included in the plans for the new car park and insisted that this needed to stay in the new plans.
- Lisa Hughes reported that the footpath on the northern side of Queen Street would be closed during the demolition and redevelopment phases of The Landings. Pedestrians travelling on Queen Street between the town centre and Maidenhead station would then need to cross the York Road junction. At rush hour this was a busy junction and drivers in York Road need to look over their shoulders for traffic coming down Queen St. A crowd of pedestrians waiting to cross would obscure the drivers' view. At the junction there was a dropped kerb but very little space on the pavement for queueing pedestrians, street furniture was very close to the dropped kerb and no pedestrian-controlled crossing.
- Dean Yorke asked if there would be any social housing disabled units. Pankaj Vara informed the Forum that there would not be specific units, there would be some fully accessible units. Liz Kelsall informed the Forum that it was her understanding Councillor Dudley had tweeted that RBWM would construct a fully accessible policy but was not sure how and when this would be done.
- There were many questions from the Forum that could not be answered. Pankaj Vara agreed to report back at next Forum.

**ACTION: Barbara Richardson/ Pankaj Vara to update the Forum on questions asked.**

#### **4.2 St Marks/Courthouse Road Junction Update**

Sarika Varma, Senior Commissioning Officer (Structures, Lighting, Highways & Transport), gave an update to the Forum. Since the trial had successfully completed, and based on feedback from residents, the lights were removed on 28 February 2019 and the roundabout was still there on a trial basis. The construction phase would last four weeks. A notification had already been sent out to residents and they had two weeks to comment then all works would take place. The construction would commence on 29 July 2019 causing limited congestion during school holidays. This would occur in a systematic approach, working on each arm at a time. There would be no additional signage, it would remain as it was now.

Peter Haley asked about the current garage issues and what would happen about them. The parking issues were being dealt with by Neil Walters. A consultation had been rolled out for the extension of the double yellow lines. The Council were in a good position to ensure enforce new parking restrictions.

Councillor Hollingsworth pointed out that the view of traffic approaching one arm of the roundabout was obstructed the roundabout by the nearby shops. Sarika Varma suggested this comment be sent to Rajinder Gill in Project Centre. Sarika Varma advised that the table crossing would be longer and slightly larger to fit between the two dropped kerbs so the view should be acceptable.

**ACTION: Sarika Varma to share the plan with Forum Members via the Clerk**

**ACTION: Sarika Varma to send feedback to the Project Centre.**

#### **4.8 Changes to the Council Constitution**

Karen Shepherd, Service Lead – Governance, provided the Forum with some background information. The number of councillors would be reduced from 57 to 41 from May 2019, following a boundary review. As part of the resulting constitution review, a Member working group had looked at all the committee structures and their recommendations were submitted to full Council last summer. Full Council had agreed the changes but in the main deferred implementation until May 2019. Some of the sections would be taken out of the constitution and made into policies.

The Access Advisory Forum terms of reference would be removed from the constitution. This would have no impact on the services provided for the Access Advisory Forum from democratic services, and Rachel Kinniburgh would still be the liaison officer. There would continue to be two Councillors on the Forum but it would be considered an Outside Body from May 2019. The Agenda and Minutes would continue to be available on the RBWM website.

From May 2019, the terms of reference could therefore be amended following agreement by the Forum, rather than having to seek full Council approval for any changes. However, any proposed changes should be referred to democratic services before implementation to ensure they were compatible with governance requirements

#### **4.3 Planning Applications**

Lisa Hughes, Vice Chairman, had reviewed twenty five planning applications between January and March 2019: 9 Residential, 5 Sport & Leisure, 3 Education, 2 Hospitality, 2 Mixed Use, 1 Retail, 1 Transport, 1 Parking, 1 Other. Comments had been submitted on eleven: 2 Residential, 3 Sport & Leisure, 1 Education, 2 Hospitality, 1 Mixed Use, 1 Parking, 1 Other.

#### **4.4 Raising the Profile of the AAF**

The Chairman, Angela Clark, informed the Forum that the leaflets had been produced for distribution in various public places and there were some leaflets available for Forum members to take. Also an article had been published in the Around the Royal Borough. There had been a little interest and some residents had contacted democratic services and were in attendance.

Robin Pemberton suggested holding a presentation in the foyer at Maidenhead library. The space had been offered to Robin for April 2019.

Dominic Manley suggested having it on the advertising boards at both Windsor and Maidenhead Leisure Centres.

**ACTION: Clerk to circulate leaflet with minutes.**

**ACTION: Rachel Kinniburgh and Clerk to look into advertising on the boards at both Windsor and Maidenhead Leisure Centres.**

#### **4.5 Borough Local Plan: Future Consultations**

Lisa Hughes, Vice Chairman, gave the following progress update to the Forum:

The Borough Local Plan 2013 -2033 was submitted to the relevant Secretary of State for examination in January 2018.

- A Planning Inspector, Louise Phillips, was appointed by the secretary of state. The planning inspector reviewed the plan then posed questions to RBWM plus other consultees and used their answers to inform her preparation of the public hearing which took place last June.
- Following the hearings the Inspector issued a further advice note to the council and invited legal submissions from RBWM and some other parties.
- The council's response in October 2018 was interpreted by the Inspector as RBWM asking for a lengthy pause to the Examination process. She then asked the council how it wished to proceed in light of the matters/concerns she raised.
- In December 2018 the council indicated that it would be consulting on the outcome of this additional work after the elections in May 2019.

The Inspector issued an update in February 2019: "I await an update on the Council's additional work and its implications for the submitted plan and the examination. I understand that the Council will not be in a position to undertake any necessary consultation until the end of May 2019, but look forward to receiving any further programming information".

The Chairman informed the Forum that a consultation on the Borough-wide Design Guide document was currently out. The Forum would respond to the consultation by Thursday 18 April 2019.

**ACTION: Lisa Hughes to send link for the consultation to other Forum Members.**

#### **4.6 Taxi Licensing Update**

A written update had been provided by Greg Nelson, Trading Standards & Licensing Lead, which had been included in the agenda pack.

The Forum commented that they were happy that the policy had finally been implemented, however, it needed to be further clarified whether only assistant dogs were included in the policy, or whether other animals such as those used for therapy were also included.

**ACTION: Greg Nelson to clarify to what animals the policy referred.**

#### **4.7 The Oaks Leisure Centre**

Kevin Mist, Community Projects Lead, provided an update to the Forum on the Oaks Leisure Centre. The following points were highlighted:

- The front façade had been changed and the height had been reduced – this made the project more economical.
- The Leisure Centre would be a two-zoned building, have a wet and dry side, be accessible to residents in the south of the building and be open term-time, evenings and holidays.
- There would be six electric vehicle charging points, one of which would be a disabled vehicle point.
- The disabled parking spaces were at the front of the Leisure Centre.
- The Leisure Centre was a single level entrance.

- The pool would have a moveable floor lift and the wheelchair would be supplied by the Leisure Centre. This would be the same as the Braywick Leisure Centre. Many practical points had been taken from SportsAble.
- Claire Watson asked about the nearby autism school using the Oaks Leisure Centre and whether there would be a calm space within the Centre. Kevin Mist informed the Forum that the Autism school currently used the Leisure Centre and he would have to check with the current centre what was done at the moment.

**ACTION: Kevin Mist to confirm whether a calm space is or will be available in the Oaks Leisure Centre.**

## ITEMS

### **5.1 Terms of Reference (ToR)**

The Forum were content for the ToR to remain as they were. Rachel Kinniburgh informed the Forum that there would be an addition of the equality policy update.

### **5.2 Chair and Vice Chair Nominations**

The Forum acknowledged that nominations could be made from this point and that formal appointments would be made at the July meeting agenda.

**ACTION: Clerk to place the item on July 2019 Agenda**

### **5.3 GWR Focus Group**

Lisa Hughes, Vice Chairman, attended the GWR focus group in Reading which provided input to new Disability Awareness training for their staff. Lisa Hughes thanked the Forum for providing their experiences of travelling on GWR as or with a disabled person. The GWR Focus Group feedback had been attached for information.

Points that Lisa Hughes reported to the Forum included:-

- GWR would refund the full cost of the train journey if assistance had been booked but not provided.
- There were going to be improvements to the booking assistance, the notice period would be reduced later in the year to 10pm the night before travel.
- A passenger assist app was currently being trialled by other train companies and this would be adopted by GWR in time. The app would hold all your details and only the journey details would need to be added each time.

**ACTION: Clerk to share Lisa Hughes' GWR Focus Group feedback with Forum members.**

### **5.4 Housing Forum Discussion**

The Forum had a discussion on housing for now and in the future. The discussion focused on housing for young adults coming through the system. Not all disabled people had a physical disability, some could have a mental health concern which was not being considered. Social housing was required with a small number of living units

and a full time care worker present, allowing young adults with needs to live independently but with assistance if and when required.

The Forum felt that it was vital for the council to hold a register of children with special needs now in order to assist them in the future as they became young adults. Liz Kelsall pointed out that no one was taking ownership of this from the Council and taking this forward. It was agreed that in the first instance it would be beneficial to understand more of the current provisions made by RBWM and its partners in Achieving for Children and Optalis, and so it was agreed that efforts would be made to dedicate a significant portion of the next meeting to this issue and to invite key officers to attend to provide a full overview of existing provisions.

**ACTION: Rachel Kinniburgh and Clerk to arrange part of the next Forum as a small informal conference to discuss Housing. Meeting to invite all involved, officers, housing associations, new members and users to discuss the matter and develop solutions.**

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

**ACTION: Clerk to circulate dates of future meetings**

The meeting, which began at 11.00 am, finished at 1.00 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....