

AT A MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held in the Grey Room, York House, Windsor on Tuesday, 23rd July, 2019

PRESENT: Councillors Luxton (The Mayor), Muir (Deputy Mayor) and Baldwin, Baskerville, Bateson, Bhangra, Bond, Bowden, Brar, Cannon, Carroll, Clark, Coppinger, C. Da Costa, W. Da Costa, Davey, Davies, Del Campo, Dudley, Haseler, Hilton, Hunt, Johnson, Jones, Knowles, Larcombe, McWilliams, Price, Rayner, Reynolds, Sharpe, Shelim, Singh, Stimson, Story, Targowski, Taylor, Tisi, Walters and Werner

Officers: Duncan Sharkey, Mary Severin, Russell O'Keefe, Karen Shepherd, Barbara Richardson, Chris Pearse and Maddie Pinkham.

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hill.

23. COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2019 be approved, subject to the following amendment:

Page 29 , paragraph 2 to read: '.....The Director of Adult Social Care *and the Assistant Director of Statutory Care* had advised him of the unavoidable issues relating to safeguarding and health and safety in relation to the motion.....'

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor McWilliams declared a personal interest on Item 7 as he owned a property in Kings Walk. He had taken legal advice and was able to take part in the debate and voting on the item.

Councillor Hunt declared a personal interest in Item 7 as she owned a property in the town centre. She had taken legal advice and was able to take part in the debate and voting on the item.

Councillor Dudley placed on record his thanks, on behalf of the council, to the Maidenhead constituency MP Theresa May for her just over three years as Prime Minister. He also congratulated Jo Swinson MP on her election as Leader of the Liberal Democrats and Boris Johnson MP on his election as Leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party.

25. ORDER OF BUSINESS

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the order of business as detailed in the agenda be varied.

26. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

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

27. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

a) Ed Wilson of Clewer and Dedworth West ward asked the following question of Councillor Rayner, Lead Member for Culture and Communities:

Given your manifesto pledge to plant more than 2,000 trees in the Royal Borough, will you please tell us when new trees will be planted to replace those removed from St Andrews Crescent, Testwood Road and Hayse Hill?

Councillor Rayner responded that she was pleased to be able to confirm that as part of the pledge to plant 2,000 trees over the next four years, the trees removed which Mr Wilson had referred to would, where feasible, be replanted during the next tree planting season, which was between November 2019 – February 2020.

The trees in St Andrews Crescent were in terminal decline with extensive dieback of the crowns and decay evident. The Silver maple in Testwood Road had a defective stem union. All had been removed for health and safety reasons. There was no recent record of tree removal at Hayse Hill but there were some small vacant planting pits adjacent to the narrow path between Hayse Hill and Maidenhead Road, indicating where trees may have grown previously.

Six new trees were due to be planted in St Andrews Crescent and the council was assessing the constraints concerning the planting of a tree in Testwood Road and trees at Hayes Hill. The latter would require the widening out of the pits to provide a sufficient rootable volume to allow the trees to successfully establish. Alternative sites would be found close by, if planting could not be achieved there.

She was also delighted that 7,000 new tree whips would be planted in Thriftwood over the next three years. This was being funded by a £35,000 grant from Network Rail. Support had already been given by business partners including Smart Motorways, Mars Chocolate and Husband and Wife Cleaning Company. This would exceed the pledge of 2,000 trees across the Royal Borough, and help support the achievement of the net zero carbon 2050 target recently adopted by full Council. There was also a commitment to expand the tree stock in other parts of the borough.

Native trees supported many more species in the natural woodland and therefore the plans would support the council's aim to increase biodiversity across the borough. The new trees would also enhance the existing tree stock, which contributed so positively to the borough's look and feel. The borough was very fortunate that this would help sustain the green and pleasant feel of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for generations to come. There was also an Adopt a Tree scheme on the borough website.

By way of a supplementary, Mr Wilson commented that not many people knew about the pledge to plant 2000 trees therefore he asked for something to be put on the website to explain and allow residents to suggest areas to be planted.

Councillor Rayner responded that she would be happy to take this up; the council positively welcomed suggestions for tree planting.

28. PETITIONS

No petitions were submitted.

29. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

a) Councillor Larcombe asked the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Lead Member for Planning:

A survey commissioned by RBWM has exposed significant numbers of 'unauthorised and tolerated' developments in the Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury Ward. What action is being taken to rectify the situation please?

Councillor Coppinger responded that he assumed the question referred to the RBWM Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), which was produced for the Council by consultants arc4 and published in 2018.

The study included a review of all types of existing sites and used this to estimate the future needs for Traveller accommodation in the borough. The study defined terms such as authorised sites, unauthorised development and tolerated sites.

The study showed that there were, in addition to two authorised permanent council sites, six authorised permanent private sites, two temporary private sites and 16 tolerated private sites. Authorised meant sites that had planning permission. Tolerated sites in the borough were mostly those that had existed in excess of 10 years and were immune from enforcement action.

It was recognised there was a relatively high proportion of Traveller pitches and plots in the Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury area. This existing uneven distribution of Traveller sites in the Borough was addressed in the Traveller Local Plan Issues and Option paper, where one of the questions specifically asked was whether there should be a more even distribution across the Borough. The planning policy team was currently analysing the responses received.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Larcombe asked if it would be helpful if he supplied the Lead Member with a list of unauthorised and tolerated sites in the ward?

Councillor Coppinger responded that he hoped that these would already have been put forward by the ward councillor but if there were any missing he welcomed further input.

b) Councillor Larcombe asked the following question of Councillor Cannon, Lead Member for Public Protection:

Fly tipping is an ever-increasing problem in the Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury area as it is elsewhere. How many successful prosecutions for local fly tipping have there been in the last four years?

Councillor Cannon responded that fly-tipping was an ever increasing problem; it was illegal and anti-social and the council was committed to reducing the activity across the Royal Borough through various initiatives.

Prosecution was part of that, which could be used. He was aware of seven prosecutions over the last four years: five had related to asbestos, one to household waste and one to a taxi driver throwing waste out of a vehicle. All seven had led to successful prosecution and fines.

In addition, the council had been proactive by:

- deploying mobile CCTV at vulnerable sites to act as a visible deterrent; this was not publicised for obvious reasons
- installed signage and made physical changes to specific locations
- removed facilities which had previously attracted fly-tipping (for example recycling centres in Ascot and Eton Wick)
- sought to collect evidence from fly-tipping which had been cleared by Royal Borough contractors, to recover costs and potentially result in prosecutions

Reducing fly-tipping was a key priority. It formed part of the suite of key performance measures which were reported quarterly and was showing an improving trend.

Councillor Larcombe confirmed he did not have a supplementary question

Councillor Hill had sent his apologies for the meeting therefore he had asked for his question (c) to be deferred to the next meeting in September 2019.

Councillor C. Da Costa confirmed that she had withdrawn her question (d) as she would be working with the Lead Member to resolve the issue for residents.

e) Councillor Knowles asked the following question of Councillor Johnson, Lead Member for Infrastructure, Transport Policy and Housing:

Will you commit to supporting the resurfacing of Bolton Road, particularly the portion between the junctions with Bolton Avenue and Kings Road as part of your commitment to spend £50m on our roads?

Councillor Johnson responded that the council was committed, over the next four years, to invest £50m to deliver infrastructure before housing development. In addition, the council had committed to a 24 hour pothole fix.

With respect to the specifics of Bolton Road, he was pleased to confirm that a patching programme for the area of Kings Road had been agreed which would be completed in August 2019. In addition, the section of Bolton Road (between Kings Road and the TA centre) had been assessed and highlighted for resurfacing the following year. This would be subject to approval by Cabinet when considering the full resurfacing programme for 2020/21. In addition, he understood that officers had been in discussions directly with Councillor Knowles regarding resurfacing treatment types and the methodology for technical assessments.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Knowles commented that he was unsure about the longevity of some treatment types such as surface dressing and believed they had largely been consigned to history.

Councillor Johnson responded that Councillor Knowles was correct that there had been some historical issues with surface dressing, particularly in the Bray ward. Volkers were due to redo this work with a slightly modified treatment, which would then be assessed by officers. If it was considered to be above satisfactory then the council would consider re-adopting surface dressing as a mainstream highways technique.

30. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Councillor Stimson introduced her motion. She commented that she was thrilled that her maiden motion was on such a life enhancing topic. The great Sir David Attenborough had said "*plants capture energy from the sun, and all life on land, directly or indirectly, depends on them*". Her motion looked to tackle just one aspect of biodiversity: to address the way verges, open spaces and barren sites were managed.

Biodiversity was the technical term for life on earth. It was a scientific measure of the variety of habitats and ecosystems across the planet. It was essential for human existence. As well as underpinning the food that was eaten and the air that was breathed, humans depended on biodiversity for protection from other threats, like pollution, flooding and climate breakdown.

Last month Council had declared an environment and climate emergency, and passed a motion to reach carbon neutrality. Councillors were increasingly aware that almost everything the council did had implications for sustainability. As the Chairman of the planning panel she felt a great responsibility for this. The previous Wednesday the panel had passed four applications totalling 200 residential dwellings on brownfield sites, all with perfectly good reasons for approval, and all of which would most likely win on appeal if turned down by the panel. The borough was vulnerable until it had approved its borough local plan. The onus was therefore on the council to do as much as it could to ensure that the properties built were sustainable and that more steps were taken to mitigate against the development that council had to, and should, continue with.

Councillor Stimson proposed three action steps towards improving biodiversity in the borough:

Firstly, to allow the grasses on verges to grow long enough to get through their lifecycle of grow, flower and seed each year. Over 700 species of wildflowers grew on verges, which was nearly 45% of the total flora.

The council would have to be mindful of health and safety by keeping the grass short where sight lines mattered, or along paths where children walked to school. She thanked Councillor Jones for her input in this regard, and also for suggesting that ward councillors get involved as they had intimate knowledge of their own wards. Councillors could also draw on skilled officers such as the Countryside Manager and Ecologist.

Some of the borough parks and open spaces already benefitted from selective mowing. Parts of Town Moor had longer swaths of grasses, for example, and was alive and buzzing for much of the year. Councillor Stimson thanked Councillor Baskerville for his motion relating to bees that the council had passed many years previously. She would like to aim for borough parks to have 10% of their area given

over to biodiversity. It was more complicated than mowing everything, but the benefits were more than worth it. Frequently trodden paths across an open park might be more neatly clipped, or the shape of a football field where children were known to play, but elsewhere biodiversity should be encouraged. For the last six years, a local farmer, Jim Headington, had managed the perennial grasses and wildflowers that ran alongside his fields. Today they were full of orchids, ox-eye daisies, self-heal, yellow rattle, lady's bedstraw and the sight was breath-taking. Maidenhead was going to go through a tricky period with regeneration, and the council needed to do everything it could to make it attractive in other ways.

Secondly, she proposed the sowing of annual wildflowers to cheer up targeted sites within the borough. One of her friends at Wild Cookham had already mentioned that her language, such as 'cheer up' devalued the purpose, which was about saving life on the planet, and that cheerfulness was a by-product. He was of course correct.

Councillor Stimson asserted that this was something that needed to be tackled on a ward by ward basis. In St Mary's, for example, residents had notified her of areas that were in need of love, and had asked for help. That would be replicated throughout the borough. Wildflowers would grow in sunny areas until first frosts. Other areas might need different treatment. It would not be solved overnight.

Thirdly, Councillor Stimson wanted to introduce more insect friendly and drought resistant plants into key areas where biodiversity was currently lacking. The council would look at ways of introducing succulents, such as sedums, which were great drought resistant plants. Their compact heads oozed nectar during the late summer and were loved by bees and other pollinating insects. She had spoken to the council's window box supplier and they were happy to introduce hairy plants which were good at trapping air pollution from traffic.

The council needed to start doing things differently. It would be messier, and it may be more difficult, but it was clear that if business as usual continued, the loss of habitats posed as much a danger to life on the earth as climate change did.

Councillor Rayner seconded the motion. She stated that it was incredibly important as it raised a great awareness of biodiversity and how the council was and continued to make changes in the Royal Borough to address this.

The borough's fantastic parks and highways were valued by the residents and the aim was to keep high standards. Currently verges were cut three times a year and sometimes twice if suitable for long grass growth. With wildflowers the management was very similar with two operations: a cut in the spring, and cut and collect in the late summer after the plants had shed seeds.

The borough would like to trial the wildflowers in some high profile areas across the Borough: the A308 entry into Maidenhead where there was a wide central reservation; in Windsor on the Royal Windsor Way and some roundabouts; and in Ascot on a wide verge near the War Horse roundabout. These areas would still need to maintain highway safety therefore cuts would be maintained at 1m or 0.5m for vision. Yellow rattle was known as the most important plant needed to establish a wildflower meadow, there were also fantastic seed mixes with grasses which would be used across many of the sites. Plants like this would set their own seeds so would continue to multiply. The areas would need refreshing every three or four years. The

wildflowers and native plants attracted bees and butterflies and other pollinators and wildlife; 30% of food directly depended on pollinators.

The trial was important as this would be as much about understanding residents' expectations. There was a balance with managing this, therefore the council would introduce signs on the trial areas which showed the reason for the long grass and a webpage on the website.

There were already over 300 acres across the Royal Borough in parks that were promoting biodiversity and bee pollinators, including Cooleys Meadow in Eton Wick, Braywick nature reserve, Ockwells, Thriftwood, Battlemead, Sutherland Grange, Allan's Field, Deerswood and Trinity Park

Another idea was to trial seedham flower roofs on bus-stops. This planting had been very successful in Utrecht, Holland and was improving air quality as well as biodiversity.

Councillor W. Da Costa stated that he applauded Cllr Stimson's maiden motion especially as a local bee keeper. It was good to continue the debate about enhancing biodiversity being threatened with extinction due to human activity and climate change, after all it was an emergency but, the council really should be looking at creating a Biodiversity Strategy which would cut across all areas of council operation especially planning, highways, transport, parks and green spaces, energy, construction and home building, procurement and disposal strategies, but would also apply to education, adult services, social services and more.

There were different options in looking at a strategy. The council could take the EU option of aiming for:

- Enhanced implementation of nature legislation i.e. implementing the full force of the new NPPF and the Town & Country Act
- Restored ecosystems
- Established green infrastructure
- Sustainable agriculture and forestry
- Sustainable fisheries or, with the River Thames and the Jubilee River, aquatic life
- Combatting alien invasive species
- Contributing to averting global biodiversity loss

Or the council could consider the UK approach of:

- A more integrated large-scale approach to conservation on land and at sea
- Putting people at the heart of policy
- Reducing environmental pressures
- Improving our knowledge
- Monitoring, reporting and reinventing

Or the council could also layer in the forward thinking approach of the National Assembly of Wales which included green infrastructure, a nature based approach, a

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circular economy, and a place based approach. This strategy included five ways of working, and nine principles of sustainable management for each area of activity.

It was important that the council create an evidence based biodiversity strategy that cut across all areas of the council's activities and responsibilities. It could:

- Set a target date for creation of 2021
- Prepare and issue regular audits and status reports of borough ecosystems and biodiversity
- Collaborate with experts and residents such as Wild Maidenhead and Wild Windsor
- Set up a Task Force to ensure completion and implementation
- Ensure carbon neutral buildings in RBWM both new and retrofitted
- Improve education for children and adults
- Facilitate residents becoming greener
- Create schemes to help businesses become green
- Empower and release residents and businesses in Green Action Networks which were already being set up by forward thinking residents in the borough
- Require reports on progress and successes including KPIs at all Overview and Scrutiny Panels, Cabinet, full Council and on the website
- Reimagine environments by bringing the countryside into the towns
- And of course, create a greener borough by planting verges

The strategy must take the word emergency seriously. This will also allow an opportunity to improve the wellbeing of residents, reduce air, ground and water pollution, limit the effect of alien and invasive species, reimagine urban spaces, improve the happiness index and save money and as well as saving local biodiversity and planting green verges. Piecemeal resolutions might actually hamper biodiversity; evidence based strategies and activities were needed. Equally, the borough should not continue to fall behind other areas in the UK and the world. The council must work collaboratively and put some high energy, intent and resourcing into the declared emergency and resolve to create a Biodiversity Strategy fit for royalty, that husbanded the ecosystem and one that would be an asset for future generations. Councillor W. Da Costa stated that he would support the motion but the council needed to aim higher.

Councillor Dudley stated that he supported the motion but would like to see the council's plans to be more ambitious and avoid symbolism. When looking at public open spaces he suggested an opt-out type of approach. He therefore requested a report back to full Council on what the council was doing, to include the default opt-out approach.

Councillor Coppinger explained that at this year's annual councillor visit to a local farm, Members had been shown a field that had been planted with wildflowers to increase biodiversity and ultimately improve crops. He asked that all seeds used on borough land be from native species.

Councillor Jones stated that she completely supported the motion. Wildflower planting already happened in Old Windsor on Crimp Hill Road. Officers had arranged for it to be appropriately managed. A lot of open spaces were managed by parish councils

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therefore she asked that communications be made with parish councils to encourage them to take up the plans on behalf of residents.

Councillor Davies commented that to gain maximum benefit it would be important to ensure there was no loss in translation of implementation. She therefore suggested the motion should include a schedule for both rural and urban areas and specify native species.

Councillor Stimson responded that she would prefer for the motion to be approved as written rather than to go into detailed changes. A working party could look at a detailed framework. Councillor Dudley reiterated his suggestion for a report to full Council including a detailed action plan.

Councillor Knowles echoed the comments of Councillor Jones. During the recent Garden in Bloom competition he had seen some wonderful wildflower gardens; it would be good to mobilise these residents. Certain flowers that were considered weeds were important for the food chain and love by bees, for example dandelions.

Councillor Cannon commented that the motion focused on urban areas yet the majority of verges were in rural areas. He highlighted that rural areas were also taking action and groups already existed such as Wraysbury Gardeners and Wild Datchet. Joined up work with these groups and parish councils was needed.

Councillor Davey highlighted the need to ensure no alien species were introduced. Residents should be encouraged to seek advice before taking action.

Councillor Clark thanked both Councillor Stimson and Councillor W. Da Costa for the wide variety of aspirations that had been expressed in relation to biodiversity and the climate emergency. It would be important to be guided by science and expert advice. Work undertaken after the initial support of the motion would look scrupulously at how the council could best deliver the aspirations including guidance to be given to parish councils and residents, the application of resources and monitoring of payback.

Councillor Tisi commented that natural wild verges would support 1400 species of insects. If non-native plants were introduced only 40 species of insects could be supported. If the council wanted the residents to believe it was not simply 'greenwashing' it would be important to get the message across.

Councillor Bowden highlighted the use of green walls in central London which could be extended to roofs. He also commented that Heathrow had set aside funding to offset their own carbon footprint.

Councillor Bateson commented that it would be important to include schools as young people were very much involved in the green movement.

Councillor Baskerville explained that his motion relating to bees had been agreed by Council in 2008. The motion on biodiversity built on the earlier motion. He commented that at the 50th Anniversary of the moon landing, one of the big features had been the sight of Earth from the moon, gleaming like a precious jewel but also vulnerable. It had brought home the importance of being stewards of the Earth.

Councillor Del Campo commented that meadows in Oaken Grove Park had been cut down in their prime and had yet to recover. Officers and residents were working to restore them. She hoped lessons had been learnt. She also highlighted the importance of locally-sourced plants, possibly from donor meadows.

Councillor Stimson thanked all Members for supporting the motion and making it more ambitious for both urban and rural areas of the borough. The idea of a report back to full Council including all the ambitions was very important.

It was proposed by Councillor Stimson, seconded by Councillor Rayner and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That this Council, in the interests of encouraging biodiversity, and with input from ward councillors, agrees to:

i) Less frequent mowing of verges to encourage wildlife friendly grasses and flowers and of parks and open spaces to encourage biodiversity, whilst being cognisant of health and safety issues insofar as traffic is concerned

ii) The introduction of wildflowers to cheer up targeted barren sites within the Borough

iii) The introduction of drought resistant insect friendly plants in key roadside areas

Councillor Baldwin left the meeting at 8.25pm

The meeting adjourned at 8.25pm and reconvened at 8.30pm.

31. NICHOLSON'S WALK SHOPPING CENTRE

Members considered sale of the council's freehold interest in Nicholson's Shopping Centre and the freehold of the Central House office.

Councillor Dudley introduced the report. He explained that Nicholson's shopping centre covered 4.5 acres in the middle of Maidenhead and had originally opened in 1964. In February 2019 Tikehau Capital, in partnership with Areli Real Estate, had acquired the shopping centre from the administrators. In March 2019 they had undertaken extensive public consultation on their proposals. In April 2019 Cabinet gave approval for Heads of Terms with Tikehau and Areli to form the basis of a development agreement including the re-provision of the town centre car park and redevelopment of the shopping centre. At the time the Cabinet report included a delegation to officers and himself as Leader of the Council to finalise the development agreement and commercial terms. However there had been some concern from Members about the breadth of that delegation therefore he had agreed to bring it to full Council. Extensive negotiations had been undertaken between the architect and the RBWM Property Company as detailed in the Part II appendices.

The Part I report detailed three elements relating to the transaction. The council owned 55% of the freehold of the shopping centre on a very long term lease. Over time the financial return to the council had reduced significantly. The projected income in the Medium Term Financial Plan was zero given the challenging nature of the retail environment.

Councillor Dudley explained that the second element related to Central House, which the council had acquired a few years previously. The building had a structural life of 40 years therefore it could not be refurbished as an office building. It was therefore proposed that it also be sold to Areli. Areli would then bring forward a comprehensive

planning application. The transfer of title and freehold would be dependent on a successful planning application including long-stop dates for submission.

The third element concerned the redevelopment of the car park. The council had approved a budget of £35m for a new car park. However the proposal was now for a land swap for an equivalent footprint of land for the building of a new car park at a significantly lower cost. The cost would be greater on the current site because of linked buildings.

Councillor Werner stated that all welcomed the excellent proposals for Nicholson's Walk. He noted there would be no sale until planning permission had been agreed. He welcomed the change of plan ensuring the current car park would not be knocked down until a new one was built. However the problem he had identified was that the council would no longer have a freehold interest in the enterprise. Strategic oversight of the sites meant the council was in the game and could ensure commitments made in the consultation would be met. He referred to the Landing development which was given a number of planning permissions with increasing heights of building and less of a community hub element. The council needed to be careful in monitoring its strategic ownership. When the waterway under the Colonnade needed to be increased to allow larger boats the council had had to go to the developer with cap in hand. If the council had been part of the partnership the process would have been much easier. The detail would be in the contract yet the contract was not due to come back to full Council but was to be decided by the Leader and Councillor Johnson.

Councillor Jones commented that the Opposition were not as close to the detail or the conversations as the administration but the feeling was that the proposals would be a good thing for the town. However, there were concerns that there was no detail as to how the proposals fitted with the wider strategy and vision for Maidenhead. She wanted to understand how the changes would impact on the original vision and needed reassurance that it fitted into Maidenhead as a whole.

Councillor C. Da Costa highlighted the need for adequate disabled parking given the change in location of the car park.

Councillor Hilton commented that it was a sad fact that the shopping centre had been forced into receivership in October 2018 but this was a golden opportunity to remodel a significant part of the town centre and move the regeneration forward. A consequence of the changing retail environment meant the proposal was for mixed use. Councillor Hilton explained that he had been involved in the Ascot regeneration project since 2012. In Ascot the proposal was for new retail with a double-sided high street and was predicated on new development on an adjacent site. The viability of the retail element was to a great extent dependent on the footfall from the new developments. In a similar way, the success of the Nicholson's centre would to some extent be dependent on those living in the area. Councillor Werner had spoken of a lack of control; in Ascot the council had no levers, just the borough local plan and a development brief. In comparison in Maidenhead there would be contractual arrangements and relationships had been built.

Councillor Reynolds stated that he was concerned that the proposal was selling off both the council's rights and the opportunity for its voice to be heard. It should not be about an income for the council but about having a seat at the table and a voice in the debate about the future of Maidenhead.

Councillor Knowles commented that his concerns were with the tendering process as it looked like a closed situation with the developer getting a free run at building. A councillor who was absent had asked him to raise the suggestions that increased parking capacity could be included to reduce the need for Vicus Way car park.

Councillor Davey explained that he had read the previous minutes of Cabinet and full Council and had a few concerns. He understood if a local company wanted to undertake the works they would need three years' accounts, a positive track record and could only bid for the project up to 30% of turnover. Areli had only been incorporated in 2018 therefore it had not been around that long even if its Directors had. He asked if the council was happy to give a line of credit on borrowing? He understood that in the corporate property world no entity wanted to lose its asset base and therefore set up a brand new company to minimise any potential financial risk, it was however a shame that SME businesses in the borough would not have the same breaks and were prevented from potentially life changing contracts such as this by bureaucracy and red tape. The cost of building the Broadway car park had originally been £8.51m but was later revised to £35m. Areli could reduce costs by 10% because of the individual build. Vicus Way was showing on the website as a tender of approximately £10m for 500 spaces. The new Broadway car park was estimated to cost £31m for 1333 spaces, or 1035 which was the figure in an earlier set of minutes. He therefore questioned if the value should be dropped by 22% to £24m? Could the new car park have 1500 spaces thereby negating the need for Vicus Way?

Councillor Targowski commented that the nature of the retail environment was constantly changing. The council could not expect to be an expert at retail but could use its assets to enable experts to come in. He was happy the council could manage the contractual relationship. It would be important for good lawyers to draw up the contracts rather than Members at full Council.

Councillor McWilliams commented that this was a huge opportunity to rebuild a key part of the town centre. The architect's plans were very exciting. The key was control over the planning application. He referred to the Joint Venture sites which represented high quality development with affordable housing. He asked what the consequences would be if there were a downturn in the economy and the developer did not deliver a planning application.

Councillor Coppinger commented that the council had the opportunity to be at the birth of a new Maidenhead. The problem was that most councillors did not know what it should look like. The younger generation had a better idea. At one of the workshops recently held he had sat next to a young lady who commented that the group did not understand what younger residents wanted. They did not want a house with two parking spaces; instead they wanted a flat within walking distance of restaurants and entertainment venues.

Councillor Dudley responded to questions raised during the debate. He explained:

- A change of control consent mechanism would be included in the contract to deal with a situation where the developer wanted to sell on the development in the event of an economic downturn.

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- The counterparty from a credit perspective for the developer's financial obligations was Tikehau capital, which had assets under management of 22bn Euros.
- Car park building costs were affected by factors such as ground conditions therefore there was not a uniform per parking space cost.
- The current figure in the capital programme was based on a very complex site therefore a different location would be more straightforward.
- The council would retain complete control of the new car park, which would supplement what was being provided at Vicus Way. The approximate size was 1030 spaces; the council would ensure it was the right size.
- More blue badge spaces would be available in the new car park. The location would be closer to civic facilities such as the Town Hall.
- The developer had successfully brought about the redevelopment of the Battersea power station site. The council was in a fortunate position that there were people who wanted to invest in Maidenhead and would bring their expertise. There was a commercial imperative to create a beautiful place.
- A piece of work was being undertaken on ensuring the new proposals fitted with the wider vision for the town centre. Areli had been instrumental in this.
- The council retained control as the Local Planning Authority. Pre-application advice was being provided by skilled planning officers.

At this point the debate moved into Part II, to enable Members to debate the Part II information before making any decisions.

During the Part II debate, Members agreed to minute the resolutions relating to the Part I report in Part I:

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

RESOLVED: That Council notes the report and:

- Approves the sale of the freehold interest in the Nicholson's Walk Shopping Centre for £1,000,000**
- Approves the sale of the freehold interest of Central House, Maidenhead for a total consideration of £5,000,000.**
- Delegates' authority to the Executive Director – Place in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Maidenhead Regeneration and Maidenhead to negotiate and agree a contract with Tikehau Capital and Areli for sale of the Council's assets above.**
- Agrees to minute recommendations i-iii in Part I.**

A named vote was taken as at least five councillors made such a request, as per Part 2 C17.3.3 of the constitution. 31 Councillors voted for the motion; 2 Councillors voted against the motion; 6 Councillors abstained:

Nicholson's Walk Shopping Centre (Motion)	
Councillor Andrew Johnson	For
Councillor David Cannon	For
Councillor Wisdom Da Costa	For
Councillor Julian Sharpe	For
Councillor Sayonara Luxton	For

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Councillor David Hilton	For
Councillor Leo Walters	For
Councillor Maureen Hunt	For
Councillor John Bowden	For
Councillor Gerry Clark	For
Councillor David Coppinger	For
Councillor Gary Muir	For
Councillor Samantha Rayner	For
Councillor Christine Bateson	For
Councillor Stuart Carroll	For
Councillor Simon Dudley	For
Councillor Lynne Jones	For
Councillor Ross McWilliams	For
Councillor Shamsul Shelim	For
Councillor John Story	For
Councillor Simon Werner	Abstain
Councillor John Baldwin	No vote recorded
Councillor Clive Baskerville	Abstain
Councillor Gurpreet Bhangra	For
Councillor Simon Bond	Against
Councillor Mandy Brar	Against
Councillor Catherine del Campo	Abstain
Councillor Carole Da Costa	For
Councillor Jon Davey	For
Councillor Karen Davies	Abstain
Councillor Phil Haseler	For
Councillor Neil Knowles	For
Councillor Ewan Larcombe	Abstain
Councillor Helen Price	For
Councillor Joshua Reynolds	For
Councillor Gurch Singh	For
Councillor Donna Stimson	For
Councillor Chris Targowski	For
Councillor Helen Taylor	For
Councillor Amy Tisi	Abstain
Carried	

32. 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 11-12 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.