

WINDSOR TOWN FORUM

WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2020

PRESENT: Councillors John Bowden (Chairman), Samantha Rayner (Vice-Chairman), Christine Bateson, David Cannon, Jon Davey, Karen Davies, Helen Price, Shamsul Shelim, Amy Tisi and David Hilton

Also in attendance: Councillor Gurch Singh and Councillor John Baldwin, Carrie Woods, Johnny Wales, Alice G, Claire Milne, Rev Matthew Scott, John Webb, John Bastow, Kim Dutton, Tom Wigley, Ed Wilson, Phil Collins and Jeffrey Pick, Kim Dutton, Lorraine Hart and Carrie Woods

Officers: Paul Roach, David Scott, Fatima Rehman, Feliciano Cirimele and Danny Gomm

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Knowles and Sue Watts, representative of Chamber of Commerce.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

MINUTES

An addendum was to be put on the September 2020 minutes meeting to correctly inform that there was £6.5 million of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money on the Imperial House, of which 15% could go locally.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2020 and 12 October 2020 be approved, subject to the following change in the former minutes:

- **To include, “Issues of discussing the WTC were raised”.**

The Chairman informed Members of progress on actions arising from the previous minutes:

ACTION FROM LAST MEETING	UPDATE
Councillor Coppinger to update on the progress of Windsor Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) offline.	A report (to agree to put the WNP to referendum and recommend the issue of a decision notice) was due to Cabinet in November 2020 and had been moved to December 2020. This was because two officers responsible for the report had moved on in the last 9 months and there were pressures on the Borough Local Plan examination. The WNP were informed of this.
A written response to be given to Robert Peel and Members to confirm if the Local Government	The response was sent to Robert Peel, circulated to Members offline and was to be added as an addendum to the minutes of 12

Act allowed an out of sync first election.	October 2020.
Councillor Knowles to invite Windsor Chamber of Commerce representative.	Sue Watts was invited to the meeting and regrettably sent her apologies due to a very late change of circumstances.
Councillor Knowles to update on the Army covenant in the next meeting.	To be invited on January 2021 meeting, as the representatives were busy due to COVID-19 workload.

Councillor Price said the waste collection item was not raised in the September 2020 Forum but was discussed in the Maidenhead Town Forum. The Chairman said the matter had now been discussed in Communities Over & Scrutiny Panel and could be put forward by residents and Members.

Councillor Price suggested an update from the Cycle Action Group second tranche group funding.

Councillor Shelim suggested a timeframe for each item on the agenda to ensure all items were discussed and Councillors Price, Davies, Tisi, Cannon and Hilton supported this for future meetings. It was said that the Chairman should use his discretion to use time efficiently, and it was encouraged for officers to provide written reports to aid in placing timeframes for items and reduce the need to extended discussion on aspects that could be read in advance.

FORUM PARTICIPATION & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Claire Milne, Co-Chairperson of the WNP, said the Forum was primarily central Windsor focussed and discussions took place between Councillors rather than the community. There was a need for greater opportunities for questions and transparency in decision-making, such as parking policies and Alexandra Gardens.

John Bastow, Co-Chairperson of the WNP, endorsed Claire Milne's points and asked what the purpose of the Forum was. Councillor Price reiterated the Constitution from Part 6D and said it would be useful to realign the Forum with the Constitution.

Councillor Tisi said devolving decision-making and taking actions would be valuable rather than discussing reports. Councillor Cannon said it was difficult to delegate decision-making to residents an unelected body and required a representative group and greater attendance. He said matters raised in the meetings should be passed onto relevant lead members and officers. John Webb suggested this to be taken further to allow residents to make decisions rather than Councillors and the Chairman said the Constitution would need to be amended for this to occur.

Councillor Davey said the Forum should be led by residents and suggested that the Members should contact Claire Milne and John Bastow to decide how to structure the meetings. Reverend Matthew Scott, Chair of Churches expressed the willingness of Churches Together to support and help facilitate the Forum.

Ed Wilson said the lack of resident involvement was a perennial issue and the meetings were lengthy, whilst residents would prefer short and sharp meetings. John

Webb said residents should be heard, uninterrupted, and felt the Forum could be contentious at times and the atmosphere was distasteful.

Jeffrey Pick, Thames Valley Police Community Engagement & Resilience Officer, said over 30,000 people could be reached through the Thames Valley Alert and social platforms to promote the Forum. He requested for Members to inform him if they would be interested. Members confirmed their support for this option to be used.

Councillor Price said it was important to encourage resident participation via residents and promote on the agenda that residents may request items. The Chairman said the Communications department would need to be contacted to increase publicity.

THAMES VALLEY POLICE UPDATE

Police Sergeant Phil Collins, sergeant for Ascot, Maidenhead West and Windsor West introduced the item. Councillor Price asked why theft of pedal cycles was low in central Windsor compared to last year and Phil Collins said it was due to the lockdown. Councillor Price asked why young people were increasingly carrying knives and Phil Collins said this was because young people who were involved in low level criminal activity carried a knife as protection, in case they were targeted by rival drug groups. Stabbing incidents that took place were not random.

Councillor Price asked if there was a pattern in the thefts from motor vehicles and Jeffrey Pick said people were randomly checking car doors that were unlocked at night. In Ascot, car break-ins took place in cars with visible golf clubs. The Clear Car Campaign was set out to inform car owners who left their personal belongings on display. Tourists who left their luggage on display were a key concern in central Windsor.

Councillor Price asked what happened to bikes that were recovered and unclaimed and Jeffrey Pick said pictures of the bikes were published. If they remained unclaimed, they were auctioned, and the money was invested in the Thames Valley Police (TVP) proceeds from crime funds.

The Vice Chairman asked if Jeffrey Pick ran any surgeries on crime prevention during COVID-19 and the Forum was informed one surgery had taken place in both Maidenhead and Windsor during the Knife Crime Week. The Winter Burglary Campaign was being promoted, including fake CCTV, shed alarms and video doorbells. Home security surveys were suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions but were due to resume as surveys could be undertaken outdoors. Community Speedwatch was also suspended and resultantly had an impact on crime prevention.

Councillor Hilton said the Neighbourhood Action Group that he Chaired was restarting via Zoom and was joined by the students from Charters School to gain a new perspective. Councillor Hilton asked about the burglary rate in Windsor, which was low in his ward and Phil Collins said two burglars had been arrested on the day of the Forum meeting, however information could not be shared due to confidentiality reasons and ongoing investigations. Information about burglaries was limited as names could not be released until the suspect was convicted, and evidence needed to be gathered before presenting to the court. Jeffrey Pick said residents were encouraged through County Lines to pass on intelligence to support the police in arrests, such as doorbell and CCTV footage or inform of suspicious activities.

Councillor Cannon asked if action was being taken on the illegal use of e-scooters or was there information sharing only. Phil Collins said recent guidance stated that hired e-scooters were legal to be used on roads in the borough, but not private e-scooters, which were only allowed on private land. Under 165A, e-scooters could be seized if there was not a valid insurance, a license and a helmet. The law for private and hired e-scooters were different and it was hard to distinguish.

Ed Wilson requested for more police and community warden presence in Lodge Way and Keeler Close, as the activity there was concerning. Phil Collins said a house closure order was issued in the areas for 3 months and TVP was aware of the issues and would act upon it. Ed Wilson asked for an item on how well TVP work with Community Wardens to be added on the agenda. Phil Collins and Jeffrey Pick said Community Wardens were integral to TVP and shared information.

John Webb asked if there was a commercial opportunity for businesses to set up a left luggage to a bike storage system to reduce theft and would it be supported by the Forum. Jeffrey Pick said this was a good idea and would have to be well publicised. It was important to deal with the issue sensitively as the impression that Windsor was a high theft area would not be appetising. Residents were being contacted via social media and alerts. However, tourists were harder to contact, as hotels do not want to give the impression that Windsor was dangerous.

TOWN MANAGER UPDATE

Paul Roach, Windsor Town Manager, said a new tiered system was created to support businesses on 5 November 2020. The first system had a £10,000 and £25,000 one-off payment to businesses under the business rates value of £51,000. The current system allowed businesses over the value of £51,000 to apply for up to £3,000 per 28 days. There was also a Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund, which allowed the local authority to have control of the fund. The criteria were to be finalised the week following the meeting and the grant could be applied online rather than on paper for time efficiency. Other updates included:

- A single portal to promote local businesses was created and local businesses were encouraged to be directed to the website, <https://myroyalborough.com/>.
- Free one-to-one support was to be given from the Berkshire Growth Hub (<https://www.berkshirebusinesshub.co.uk/>) that gave guidance on the government's financial support scheme.
- The Government Kickstart Scheme was launched in July 2020, which provided a 6-month placement for 16 to 24-year olds.
- An apprenticeship scheme was being delivered through <https://www.berkshireopportunities.co.uk/>, with information on how employers could take advantage of this, as there was a significant increase in apprenticeship uptake.
- So far, £234,000 was granted to 122 businesses across the borough, 82 places were awaiting assessment and 32 open applications were awaiting to be finalised.
- Prior to the second lockdown, footfall was almost back to normal. In October 2020, footfall in Windsor was 550,000, compared to 590,000 in October 2019.

More shops were open in comparison to the first lockdown. Regarding businesses being open in the second lockdown that were not closed in the first, the Forum was informed that the businesses chose to remain closed, despite meeting the criteria to

remain open in the first lockdown. Some concern was raised about certain businesses being opened, which were directed to the Trading Standards to investigate.

Whilst pop-up stores and other opportunities were being explored, landlords and agents were looking for permanent full-time retailers. Windsor Yards representatives were invited to the Forum; however, they declined the offer as they were not in the position to discuss their business strategy and needed to discuss with partners and owners before discussing in a public Forum. Pop-up ideas were being pursued, to be opened before Christmas 2020.

The Christmas lights were turned on 21 November 2020 in the safest way possible, and a competition was launched to encourage the community to decorate their home and share their pictures using the hashtag #LightUpMyRBWM. The competition was between 21 November 2020 and 6 December 2020, with a prize of £250. As events and activities were cancelled, an online Christmas programme was to be launched that shared key things that were still open during COVID-19.

Paul Roach explained that the Chambers of Commerce had not ceased to exist but remained in name only. The activity previously undertaken by the Chambers of Commerce was now executed by the Windsor and Eton Town Partnership and Sue Watts attended meetings as a representative of the body.

Councillor Davey asked what footfall measured, as traditionally it determined the success of the town by the number of people who entered the town. Paul Roach said other measures were also used to measure success, such as car parking figures and vacancy rates. There was a need for sales data, however not many businesses shared the data. Windsor was part of a pilot scheme during COVID-19 to monitor the bounce-back to pre-COVID-19 conditions by comparing data in January and June 2020. There were positive results, and the data used included free information from Google Analytics and footfall. The government also provided data from four different sources, but it was costly.

Councillor Davey asked if retailers could be informed of the e-petition to provide free parking in Windsor during the Christmas 2020 period. Paul Roach said the Council was reviewing the parking plans and said whilst it would be nice to have, it had to be balanced with the budget implications.

The Vice Chairman said new shops had opened in Windsor, including Heidi and HotRocks.

John Webb asked if business promotion was only available for bricks and mortar operations, and Paul Roach said support was available for all businesses across the borough.

Ed Wilson said there was a litter pick at Bridgewater Terrace, Windsor, which looked neglected and asked if there were plans to upgrade the area. Paul Roach conversations had taken place with the horticultural team on a possible future project on upkeeping the small green spaces.

Councillor Tisi said Councillor Davies came up with an idea to increase community participation in looking after local parks by having park user groups and West Windsor Councillors were in the process of setting this up. This could be a model to be adopted by local group of residents.

COVID-19 UPDATE

David Scott, Head of Communities, said work was being done to minimise the spread and transmission of COVID-19. Work was based on embedding the immediate emergency response and supporting businesses, such as grants. Strong relationships were built with high risk settings where people were still meeting, such as schools and care homes. The local public health team, the Communications team and providers such as Optalis were working with stakeholders to spread the government messaging to reduce the risk of infection.

Areas of improvement included prioritising the data so that the strategy could be delivered, transmission could be reduced, and the economy and people could be protected. Data was used to prioritise the delivery of the strategy to reduce transmission, protect people and the economy.

The next phase of support was based on including epidemiological and local data, working with technical advice from Public Health England, enforcement activity from the TVP and communications from the Communications team and community influencers. Trusted information was shared through powerful local influencers, particularly in the higher risk Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community and the messaging was tailored to the community.

Once the data was collected, hotspots of transmission would be identified, causes could be deduced and actions to reduce transmission could be deployed. Awareness of how their actions impacted the spread of COVID-19 would be raised, such as a recent communication with Head Boys and Girls in local schools. The young people said it was the first time they received information from what they considered was a reliable source and the conversation helped them dismantle the perception that young people did not have an impact on the spread of the infection.

The new launch of the Berkshire public health website (<https://www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk/>) was a very useful resource that shared the latest information and a COVID-19 dashboard updated on a daily basis. The weekly rate data reported at 20 November 2020 for the Borough was 144 per 100,000, which had dropped from the high point in 12 November of 198.8 per 100,000. There was an effort to coordinate information and ensure there was one view, such as the borough's Health Protection Board, which included Director's and Managing Director's from Public Health, the borough, nursing and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

The borough was due to find out the tier criteria at the time of the Forum and the key factors that determined the tier, these included: absolute infection rates, positivity rates and age profile, with the transmission moving up to the over 60s, who were a higher risk and added pressure on the health system. A higher proportion of the infection rates were not able to be attributed to a known cluster and the highest source of infection was from the home setting.

Councillor Price said it was important for residents to look at a reputable source and rumour mongering was unhelpful. The Vice Chairman said that Test and Trace Local Contact Tracing Service was now available. Councillor Davey asked if contact was not possible via a contact number, would police and community wardens be utilised to contact residents.

David Scott informed the Forum that the service was launched a week prior to the Forum meeting and was growing. Information was cascaded from the National service

and if the follow-up information was unsuccessful in 72 hours, then the information would be sent to the council. There was a combination of follow-up actions such as ongoing welfare checks, home visits from community wardens and initial calls by colleagues.

Councillor Singh said the messaging for the tier system was confusing and asked if there were translations to reach the vulnerable communities, and the Forum was informed that community influencers and BAME community leaders were contacted to translate the messaging. Councillor Singh asked if there was audio messaging recorded and the Forum was informed this had taken place, as well as information shared on Asian Star Radio and Councillors.

AIR POLLUTION UPDATE

Feliciano Cirmele, Environmental Protection Officer, informed Members of the item and said air quality (AQ) across the borough had significantly improved, with 2019 results being below the national quality objective. Windsor had two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA), Imperial Road/St Leonards Road junction and West Windsor. The results at the junction were below the objective for three consecutive years and was eligible for revocation. There were reducing trends of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentration, which was a national and regional trend.

The Environment Protection team monitored NO₂ in real time with a monitoring station and 15 diffusion tubes deployed that provide monthly concentration rates. There were two diffusion sites in Eton, Old Windsor and Datchet. The recorded concentrations had to be 10% below the national quality objective for three consecutive years. Provisional results of AQ during COVID-19 showed an expected reduction in concentrations compared to the same period in 2019 due to reduced travel due to COVID-19 and therefore reduced emissions.

Changes that would improve AQ included the change to working from home more, and therefore reduction use of transport and therefore less emissions and the increase in sustainable and affordable hybrid and electrical vehicles. The borough's scheme to provide on-street electrical vehicle charging points in residential areas was underway. A bid was successful to bring forward the cycling scheme, as cycling was a better alternative to public transport and cars.

Thomas Wigley said he rejected the optimistic claims made about AQ, as the selection of data presented made it appear that there was an improvement recently. He asked where the quantified statistical analysis was to substantiate the claims. He listed the objectives for atmospheric pollutants.

It was not apparent that the borough monitored any other atmospheric pollutants such as PM_{2.5} particulates, PM₁₀ particulates, Ozone, Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, Benzene, 1,3-Butadiene, Carbon Monoxide and Lead. Therefore, the real AQ in the borough was unknown. He said the AQ data reported for 2019 appeared to have been 'greenwashed' with an unrealistically positive impression.

He asked why 14 out of 43 Annual Mean NO₂ concentration readings had been corrected, and why 6 readings that exceeded the objective of 40µg/m³ were corrected to less than the maximum limit of 40µg/m³. Of 30 Annual Mean readings between 2009 and 2019, 27 exceeded the maximum limit of 40µg/m³ and were corrected to 24µg/m³. Thomas Wigley said the Annual Mean values hid the maximum NO₂

concentrations recorded. The AQMA was close to local schools that children travelled through and drivers on route to Legoland and Ascot.

He asked for transparency in the AQ of the borough and what happened since his attendance last year for 'No Idling' signs to be erected. Thomas Wigley said there was a strong case for continuous monitoring at Imperial Road/St Leonards Road junction. The Chairman said Thomas Wigley's comments to be sent to the environmental services to respond and action.

Councillor Davies said she was pleased that the concentration of NO₂ was declining but noticed the numbers were adjusted to account the distance to the nearest residential property. With the Climate Strategy, it was encouraged to cycle and walk after the lockdown restrictions. She said all WM03 site IDs in the report had high NO₂ Annual Mean concentrations, and whilst they had reduced over the last three years, it was still high.

Councillors Davey and Price said the AQ was a concern for children walking to school. Councillor Davey said there was a need for a standardised measure of air quality in a quantified way.

Councillor Price said the Borough Local Plan suggested that AQ would get worse before it got better in the coming years, and therefore the already high concentrations were a concern. She said the frequent breakdown of traffic lights near St Albert Pub that were no longer fit for purpose, which increased the problem, as pedestrians were unable to safely cross the road.

(Richard Endacott joined the meeting.)

Councillor Davey asked what the size of the grant for home charging point for electric cars and the Forum was informed this would be answered offline.

ACTION: David Scott agreed to ask colleagues who were involved to inform Councillor Davey of the grant size for home charging point for electric cars.

Ed Wilson asked for Councillors to propose solutions rather than describing problems. Councillor Tisi said there was a need to make roads safer for pedestrians and school children, such as traffic lights on dangerous junctions such as Mill Lane so pedestrians could cross the road safely. Drivers needed to be encouraged to use cars less and encourage parents to walk shorter distances to school and reduce the number of cars in narrow streets. She said there were many creative solutions on how to spend the active travel fund.

Ed Wilson said there was no mention of the installation of on-street electrical vehicle charging points for the last 18 months. The Chairman said there were two charging points on Alma Road in a residents parking area at nil cost. However, the location would lead to dispute as residents wanted access to their parking space, which was not an electrical vehicle. Moreover, the infrastructure of the roads did not lend to easy access of cables.

The Vice Chairman said an ongoing project was being undertaken by the Infrastructure team regarding electric car charging points and could be brought to a future meeting. Councillor Davey said there was a review of electric charging points in the Parking Strategy being considered at the upcoming Cabinet meeting.

John Webb wanted Members to note that an upcoming high-density planning application on Hatch Lane, which had 42 proposed car parking spaces, none of which were likely to be electric charging points. This would add more cars and congestion in the borough.

YOUTH SERVICES UPDATE

Danny Gomm, Youth Service Manager, said since the initial lockdown in March 2020, open access youth sessions were closed and in recent months and the Youth Workers had been redeployed to support the esteem project.

The esteem project, which was a targeted group for young people aged between 8 and 18 years old with low self-esteem, restarted in-person in September 2020 until the second lockdown and had then continued virtually.

One-to-one support for young people has continued virtually since March 2020, as well as visiting schools. Support was provided around substance misuse, exploitation, online safety, low mental health and support for children who have a substance misusing parents. Low-level mental health support was also provided.

Return home interviews continued to be carried out for young people who had been reported missing, either virtually or in person. There was a correlation between young people who were missing regularly and victims of exploitation. The youth service determined what the young person did whilst they were missing, who they met with and if were they pushed to go missing.

Free virtual drop-in workshops to educate parents and carers continued, which included topics such as substance misuse, child sex exploitation and online safety. Two live virtual Q&A sessions were to take place on 8 December 2020, where queries by the audience on online safety and substance misuse would be answered by social workers.

The youth service worked with the TVP and Community Wardens and had meetings regarding sexual and criminal exploitation, where information was shared, methods to disrupt activities were devised and support for victims was planned.

Elaine Keating, Youth Engagement Officer, was responsible for the Girls' Policy Forum, which was created to empower young girls and was to be promoted in the next few weeks in schools. Cabinet was due to receive a report in December 2020 to set up a Youth Council so that young people could be involved in council meetings.

The Young Health Champions was also being set up, to train 12 young people in years 11 and 12 to become peer educators in anything linked to health. The deadline was the first week of December 2020.

Councillor Price asked what the major challenges were within the youth services and changes needed to deliver in future. Danny Gomm said the digital world was the biggest concern, as it exposed young people to exploitation. There was an ignorance on how to stay safe online and young people were at risk of being groomed to share sexual images, and then blackmailed to share images. Sharing sexualised images amongst young people was now becoming the norm, therefore it was difficult to break the cycle. One-to-one sessions were deployed in Trevelyan and Dedworth Middle

Schools to educate young people. Substance misuse was also a challenge. Ideally, working with the TVP and community wardens and attending parks and other spaces that young people spent their time in the evenings would be beneficial.

Councillor Tisi asked for the details of the Girls' Policy to be shared and asked why young people were not using youth services as much. The Forum was informed that connections could be made on social media rather than in a physical space, therefore there was reduced youth engagement. Feedback from young people suggested that they wanted to meet recreationally in a space that was not regulated by adults, such as schools, at home or at youth centres.

ACTION: Danny Gomm to share details for the Girl's Policy Forum with Councillor Tisi.

WINDSOR TOWN COUNCIL UPDATE

Councillor Cannon, Vice Chairman of the Community Governance Review (CGR) Working Group, said the first stage of consultation was completed with 69 responses. 4 responses were received from parish councils, 6 from local organisations and a few responses from businesses, the Windsor Town Council (WTC) steering committee representatives and local political parties. Redacted responses were to be published on the borough's website by the end of November 2020. There would be a greater response rate in the second stage of the consultation.

The CGR Working Group was tasked to decide what to put forward for a second stage of the consultation, which would be sent to all households that would be impacted in future by the proposed WTC. The Working Group was to decide the area to be included in the WTC, boundaries, wards, naming of the communities and the number of Councillors to be elected and timings of the elections. The physical and legal power transfer, asset transfer, constitutional approach and the calculation of the precept was also to be decided.

There was an option to have the elections in 2022 for a one-year period and the consequential effects were to be reviewed by the Working Group. A draft recommendation was to be compiled in January 2021, ready for Full Council on 23 February 2021. The final recommendation would be made in late July 2021, to be decided at Full Council.

John Webb commented that he understood the CGR Working Group had only looked at one example of a CGR by another council, and in this case the CGR had concluded not to set up a town or parish council. He therefore asked why only one area review was chosen. Councillor Cannon said several examples were presented by the officers, and this was compliant to the guidelines. John Webb was advised to contact Suzanne Martin, Electoral & Information Governance Services Manager, if there was a concern regarding the process.

Ed Wilson said 69 responses represented less than 0.1% of those affected by a potential WTC and asked for a breakdown of the data that showed how many residents from unparished areas responded to the consultation.

Councillor Davies said the legal officer advised that the response rate was enough and was a sound database and that all respondents would be contacted directly for the second stage of the consultation. Councillor Cannon said the second stage of the

consultation would likely have a higher response rate and the first stage of the consultation was only to review the appetite for a WTC and not to decide if a WTC should be formed.

Richard Endacott asked for the comparison of response rates from other consultations open at the same time as the WTC consultation to be shared.

ACTION: Members of the CGR Working Group to request legal advice on the robustness of 69 responses for the stage one of the WTC consultation.

ACTION: The comparison of response rates from other consultations open at the same time as the WTC consultation to be shared.

WORK PROGRAMME

Ed Wilson suggested the Electric Vehicle Charging Points and the impact of Housing of Multiple Occupations to be added to the Work Programme.

The Vice Chairman said residents were welcome to write to the Forum and suggest items. The Work Programme was to be taken offline.

The meeting, which began at 6.15 pm, finished at 9.30 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....