

## PARISH CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bateson (Chairman) and Samantha Rayner

PARISH COUNCILS: John Birkett (Waltham St Lawrence), Maggi Bevan (Waltham St Lawrence), Peter Lord (Wraysbury), Jane Clemance (Wraysbury), Benta Hickley (Horton), Stephen Hedges (Coc Green), Ian Harvey (Cox Green), Barbara Story (Sunninghill and Ascot), Susan Cook (Bray), Ken Elvin (Bray), Annr Catherine Buxton (Sunningdale), Ruth Davis (Sunningdale), Mary Cooper (Bisham), Amanda Brown (Bisham), Jo Stickland (Datchet), H Clasper (Datchet), D Burfitt (Hurley), Sandra Baker (Hurley), Cyril Brett (White Waltham), Heather Scott (White Waltham), Laura Tull (Cookham), Mandy Brar (Cookham), Des Warren (Shottesbrooke), Katy Jones (Datchet) and Inspector Louise Warbrick.

Also in attendance: Councillor MJ Saunders, Councillor Malcolm Beer and Councillor Derek Wilson

Officers: Russell O'Keefe, Harjit Hunjan, Jenifer Jackson, Shilpa Manek and Robert Paddison

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were carried out around the room.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Bob Austen, Eton Town Council, Linda O'Flynn, Datchet Parish Council and Lynne Penn, Transport & Access Team Leader.

### MINUTES FROM LAST CONFERENCE

The minutes of the last meeting were **Unanimously Agreed**.

### PARISH CONFERENCE HOTLINE (10 MINS)

Russell O'Keefe, Strategic Director Corporate & Community Services informed the Conference that a unique hotline had been set up for Parish Councils. A total of 230 calls had been attended to in an average of 38 seconds, being the average pick up time.

Points raised by Parish Councils included:

- What was an acceptable response time?
- What was the process followed once an issue was logged?
- Planning enforcement issues not answered.
- No feedback was provided if response was going to be delayed.
- Examples of enquiries that had not been answered were discussed.

Russell O'Keefe informed the Conference that the time taken to respond to an enquiry depended on the type of enquiry, however within five working days was anticipated. Once a call was taken and logged, it was passed on to the service level where an officer would resolve. Russell O'Keefe explained that if a query could not be answered quickly he would expect a response of an estimate of time and some feedback be sent to the customer to keep them informed. Russell O'Keefe also explained he would ask for the Council's customer

service standards to be circulated with the minutes and suggested inviting clerks to the borough to see the customer service centre and how it works.

Russell O'Keefe informed the Conference that a new model was being put into place where many queries could be answered through the libraries.

A senior management chart was handed out to all at the Conference and a more up to date version would be emailed. Russell O'Keefe informed the Conference that the new Monitoring Officer was Mary Kilner and the Managing Director, Alison Alexander was the Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer as of Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Mary Kilner would attend the next conference.

Councillor Ken Elvin, Bray Parish Council, was concerned about the poor communication between Parish Councils and RBWM. Councillor Elvin and another Parish Councillor had emailed examples of failed communications to Russell O'Keefe after the last Conference, awaiting solutions but they were not answered. Russell O'Keefe explained that he had followed those up and he understood that responses had been sent.

A couple of suggestions by parishes that could be used were:

- Acknowledge receipt of correspondence within an agreed period (say a week) and give a contact name.
- If a topic has not been resolved and an answer given inside a month a reason should be given in writing.

This way parish councils or residents would at least know that their concern had not been forgotten and they would have someone to contact if they needed more information.

Councillor Saunders addressed the Conference and said that Cookham Parish Council had only ever had two times not managed to contact the council. Councillor Saunders suggested using the worked examples where issues had been resolved to make other areas better. The tracking of an issue was very important as well as keeping the customer informed of the progress.

The Chairman summed up and once again reiterated that acknowledgement and communication was very important. The new way forward would be tried and tested and this item would be on the Agenda again at the next Conference.

#### **ACTION: Item on next Agenda**

#### **COMMUNITY PROJECTS AT WHITE WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL (10 MINS)**

Heather Scott, White Waltham Parish Council, informed the Conference about a community project that she had been involved in. White Waltham has two new tennis courts for the community. An old MOD site had been redeveloped to contain four new houses and two tennis courts. Under special circumstances the tennis courts were given to White Waltham Parish Council and the land for the properties sold to Shanley Homes. The tennis courts are open to the public to use at a cost of £4 per person. This can be booked at the Parish office.

#### **BUS ROUTES DURING FLOODING (10 MINS)**

Harjit Hunjan, Community & Business Partnerships Manager, read out the report below that was sent from Lynne Penn, Transport and Access Team Leader, who was unable to attend.

#### **Public Bus: suspended services or alternative routes**

Procedures are in place to ensure the safety and well being of public bus passengers or pupils in the event of a diversion or road closure as a result of planned works, bad weather or an

emergency. It is not possible to provide precise actions to cover every eventuality; the following information acts as a basic guide.

### **Planned Works e.g. road resurfacing**

Planned works are notified to the Transport Team in advance by the RBWM Network Co-ordinator or by Highways Officers via email to: [Transport@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:Transport@rbwm.gov.uk)

The public bus service operators also receive the generic email and will receive further communications from Transport by direct email for their action. Planned work information is also forwarded to School Transport operators so action can be taken accordingly.

Diversions to routes as a result of planned works are notified to passengers in advance by the public bus operators. If it is necessary to put a temporary stop in place, public bus operators are required to provide the stop and attach information regarding the variation to the usual stop. School Transport operators are required to notify their passengers of any diversions to route, particularly if they significantly extend the duration of the route.

### **Bad Weather e.g. black ice, snow, flood**

[Transport@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:Transport@rbwm.gov.uk) receives the '36 HOUR SUMMARY FORECAST FOR BERKSHIRE CONSORTIUM' on a daily basis. This communication gives details of Road Surface Temperatures (RST), expectations of rain, hoar frost and snow. Details of gritting activity are also communicated. Action will be required to relay this information to operators and schools as appropriate.

### **Flooding**

In the event of flooding, staff will receive information from the Duty Officer, who will provide instruction and updates. Action may be necessary around road closures and diversions. Bus routes maybe affected and additional alternative transport routes will need to be established. It may be necessary to assign a Duty Transport Officer who is available to deal with out of hours actions.

Public transport operators and school transport operators will need to be informed accordingly.

Evacuation of residents, particularly those who are more vulnerable as a result of age and/or disability may be necessary and suitable accessible transport will need to be arranged.

In some circumstances, an additional local plan is in place. An example of this is the Cookham Causeway plan which comes into affect when the High Street becomes inaccessible via normal routes. People to Places, our Community Transport and Dial a Ride operator, has been commissioned to provide a shuttle service via the Causeway during flooding.

### **Emergency situation e.g. car accident, fallen tree**

The police would normally attend an emergency situation such as a car accident or fallen tree. They will decide if a road needs to be closed and will notify the Traffic Team and Streetcare, who will in turn notify other RBWM teams, including Transport. The Streetcare team normally set up signs for the diversion of traffic.

Notifications will be sent by RBWM staff to [Transport@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:Transport@rbwm.gov.uk) Public transport operators and school transport operators will need to be notified as appropriate.

## PRESENTATION ON THE BRAY FIRE ENGINE (15 MINS)

Geoff Hayes gave a very interesting presentation on the Bray Fire Engine. Geoff Hayes gave the history of the fire engine and informed the Conference that it is now located at the Fire Fighting College in the beautiful historic market town of Moreton-in-Marsh.

## INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND UPDATE ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS (30 MINS)

Jenifer Jackson, Borough Planning Manager, updated the Conference on the Infrastructure Development Plan, regulation 18 and regulation 19, the timetable and highlighted that this was a living document which was changing all the time. Jenifer Jackson gave a hypothetical example of how the plan works.

Robert Paddison gave an update on Neighbourhood Plans. Robert Paddison gave an update on each Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The diagram provided was slightly out of date and would be updated.

### YOUNG PARISH COUNCILLORS (15 MINS)

Councillor Laura Tull, Cookham Parish Council, gave a talk to the Conference about becoming a young parish councillor. Councillor Tull informed the Conference that she had already been a resident of Cookham and had become a councillor at 23 years. Councillor Tull thought it was very important to listen to ideas from young people. It would be useful to visit primary and secondary schools and inform them of the role of the council and councillors.

The Chairman and many Members from the Conference congratulated Councillor Tull.

### UPDATE ON UNPARISHED AREAS (5 MINS)

The Chairman informed the Conference that the Chairman of DALC, Mandy Brar, had requested that she speak to other Members to see if none parished areas would like to be parished. The response was no. The Chairman of DALC requested that further investigations be carried out. The Chairman suggested this item be on the agenda for the next Conference.

### **ACTION: Item on next Conference Agenda**

### UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION OF SERVICES TO PARISH COUNCILS

Harjit Hunjan, Community & Business Partnerships Manager, read out the report below that was sent from Ben Smith.

### **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Parish Conference with an update on devolution within the Highways, Transport and Countryside Service.

The Parish Conference received an update from the Head of Highways and Transport at a previous meeting with respect to the new operating model for this service and the procurement process seeking to attract and appoint external providers.

Subsequently, Cabinet resolved at the meeting on 15 December 2016 to award contracts to VolkerHighways Ltd. and Project Centre Ltd. to deliver highway maintenance; street cleansing; winter service and other highway functions and professional services with the contract commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 for a 5-year term.

In addition Employment Panel agreed the new operating model for the retained Highways & Countryside service on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

The Parish Conference previously discussed opportunities for engagement and devolution of services as part of the new operating model with the following actions undertaken:

- Contract documents and specification shared with Parish representatives to review, comment and input during development
- Contracts procured and awarded to enable Parish Councils to purchase services through the contracts

Additionally, the following was agreed as future actions:

- (i) Communicate new operating model with Parish Councils, post-award and invite further engagement with respect to utilising the contract and identifying opportunities for Parish Council representatives to be engaged informally monitoring the contract and identifying areas for improvement
  
- (ii) Communicate and engage with 'pilot Parish Councils (Datchet; Bray and Cox Green volunteered at previous meeting) with respect to developing the detailed capital works programmes for 2017/18 which will be delivered through the new contracts

These Actions will be progressed by officers within the next 3-months.

### DEPLOYING SANDBAGS IN TIMES OF FLOODING

Harjit Hunjan, Community & Business Partnerships Manager, read out the report below that was sent from Craig Miller.

#### **Provision of Sandbags to Protect against Flooding**

The council makes sandbags available to residents of the district, during emergency situations, to enable them to protect their homes from flooding. However, residents who are aware that their homes are at a high risk of flooding, e.g. as a result of the close proximity of a watercourse, are recommended to obtain sandbags from a builders' merchant to enable early preparation, as at times of flooding the council's contractor may not be able to reach all properties before flooding occurs.

For more information visit

[https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200701/drainage/250/flooding\\_-\\_drainage/10](https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200701/drainage/250/flooding_-_drainage/10)

### ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chairman advised Conference Members to inform Sandra Baker of any items for future Agenda's.

The Chairman invited Inspector Louise Warbrick to address the Conference. Inspector Warbrick gave her background to the Conference and asked them if the Conference would like for her to attend all meeting with updates. The Conference were happy to receive updates at all meetings. Parish Councils were asked to email Inspector Warbrick for any specific updates they required at meetings.

Inspector Warbrick's details are as follow:

Inspector 190 Louise Warbrick  
Engagement and Resilience Inspector  
Windsor & Maidenhead Neighbourhood Team  
Windsor Police Station, Alma Road, Windsor [Louise.warbrick@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Louise.warbrick@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

### DATE OF NEXT CONFERENCE

The next Parish Conference is on Tuesday 13 June 2017 at 7pm in the Guildhall, Windsor.

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 9.15 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....