

VISITOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

13 OCTOBER 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Colin Rayner (Chairman), Gerry Clark, Jesse Grey, Nicola Pryer and Shamsul Shelim (sub for David Burbage).

Officers: Russell Bell, Tanya Leftwich, Craig Miller and Julia White.

Representing the Visitor Industry:

Amanda Bryett	Windsor Tourist Guides
Stuart Dorn	Windsor Racecourse
Chris French	French Brothers
Steve Harris	Fringilla
Sunil Kalia	Jetset Coaches
Chris Ireland	Legoland
Graham Lumley	Duck Tours Ltd
Claire Maloney	Legoland
Alan Mellins	Sterling Travel, Maidenhead Heritage Centre & MADAC
Lauren Moss	Legoland
Rebecca Seear	Windsor Carriages
Marnix Teeken	Sir Christopher Wren Hotel
Sally Worman	Norden Farm

It was announced by the Chairman that the meeting would be recorded and posted to the web.

The Chairman welcomed everyone and thanked Coworth Park for kindly hosting the meeting.

It was noted that the Chairman would be unable to stay for the whole of the meeting and as such an acting Chairman would need to be voted in for when Councillor Colin Rayner needed to leave. The Acting Chairman who was voted in was Stuart Dorn from the Windsor Racecourse (*proposed by Councillor Jesse Grey, seconded by Councillor Nicola Pryer and unanimously agreed*).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor David Burbage, Steph James (Maidenhead Town Manager), Paul Roach (Windsor & Eton Town Manager), Tony Howe (Visions of History), Debbie Keenan (Rendezvous Blue Badge Guides), Peter Langthorne (Windsor Town Horse Drawn Carriages), Susanna Mann (Royal Collection Trust), Louise Martin (Runnymede-on-Thames), Claire Pearce (Moor Hall Conference Centre), John Seear (Windsor Carriages), Caroline Street (Sheephouse Manor), Anne Taylor (Windsor &

Eton Society), Hilary Thompson (Windsor Welcome Tourist Guides), Janet Walker (Eton College) and Sue Watts (Windsor Royal Shopping).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared a personal interest in the venue as his wife was a member of the health club at Coworth Park.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

INTRODUCTION TO COWORTH PARK

The General Manager at Coworth Park, Zoe Jenkins, welcomed everyone to Coworth Park and explained that Coworth Park was one of the Dorchester Collection and was the only Country House. The General Manager explained that Coworth Park had opened five years ago, had seventy bedrooms (thirty in the mansion and forty in the converted stables) and hosted a large number of weddings mainly at the weekends. It was noted that Coworth Park also hosted corporate meetings and events with 90% of its business coming from London. The General Manager went on to explain that Coworth Park had three restaurants, an eco-friendly spa and had a team of 220 staff in the hotel. It was noted that Coworth Park worked closely with the local community and welcomed everyone.

Members were given a short presentation which highlighted events that had taken place at the venue.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOROUGH'S CCTV OPERATION AND HOW BUSINESSES CAN WORK WITH RBWM TO ENSURE VISITORS HAVE A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE

The Head of Community Protection & Enforcement, Craig Miller, gave Members a short presentation on the CCTV Control Room. It was agreed that the Clerk would email a copy of the presentation out with the minutes.

The presentation covered the following areas:

- Primary Functions.
- The Operation.
- Operational Outcomes.
- Future Actions / Opportunities.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That there was massive potential on how the Council could work with partners and link into operations (e.g. co-ordinating different exit times with Legoland) to benefit both parties.
- That RBWM public space cameras did not leisure centres or council buildings.

- That future actions / opportunities included the expansion of the Community Radio membership, migration of the Council's Urban Traffic Control camera estate to the Tinkers Lane control room and enhanced working relationships with large organisations, attractions and businesses to enable dynamic information provision to residents, businesses and visitors.
- The Chairman explained that the residents in his ward had been given twenty-four hours notice to leave their premises before the flooding had hit.
- The Community Radio membership cost £9 per radio / camera per month.
- The Chairman stated that he believed increasing the level of Community Radio membership with local businesses could help Windsor flow better.
- The Visitor Manager, Julia White, agreed to spread the word regarding the Community Radio membership to hotels in the Royal Borough.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Community Protection & Enforcement for attending the meeting and addressing the Forum.

DISCUSSION ITEM - REMOVAL OF TRAFFIC LIGHTS AT WINKFIELD AND IMPERIAL RD AND REMOVAL OF TRAFFIC LIGHTS ON ARTHUR RD

The Principal Traffic Engineer, Russell Bell, gave Members an update on highways improvements suggested for Winkfield Road, Imperial Road and Arthur Road.

Members were informed that the scheme options were for alternative methods of junction control, to endeavor to deal more effectively with the existing volumes (and possible future traffic growth) and reduce queuing between the junctions and on the approaches.

It was noted that queuing at both junctions could be experienced during the regular commuter peaks. However, it was during the summer months and on busy days for the local visitor attractions that the greatest queuing tended to occur. Members were informed that the traffic signals were able to make decisions using vehicle detection equipment to adjust the phasing times on a real time basis in order to respond to varying flows on each arm. It was noted that where heavy traffic persisted over an extended period of time, the limited physical space available and the need to serve numerous movements, could lead to gridlocking of the junctions.

Members were informed that there were two options currently being suggested which could be found on the RBWM website:

Option A:

- Small roundabout at Imperial Road / St Leonard's Road junction.
- Clewer Hill Road traffic to give way at Winkfield Road with a 'no right turn' restriction from Clewer Hill Road (traffic can use new roundabout to turn or seek alternative route).
- Longer length of right turn lane into Clewer Hill Road.

- Tighter radius on kerb for left turn into Clewer Hill Road to improve safety and offer increased turning opportunities for traffic to turn right into Clewer Hill Road and left out of Clewer Hill Road.

Option B:

- Mini-roundabout at Winkfield Road / Clewer Hill Road junction.
- Priority from Imperial Road into St Leonards Road west and east.
- Priority from St Leonards Road western arm into Imperial Road.
- St Leonards Road (east arm) to give way at Imperial Road with a 'no right turn' restriction also in place (traffic can use new mini-roundabout to turn or seek alternative route).
- St Leonards west to St Leonards east to be served using long right turn lane.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That plans / drawings were hoped to be on the RBWM website this week.
- That whilst two options had been suggested it was felt that neither would completely solve the queueing problems.
- That the two traffic light systems currently in place were different makes and therefore did not communicate effectively with each other.

The Chairman thanked the Principal Traffic Engineer for attending the meeting and addressing the Forum.

THE ROLE AND REMIT OF THE SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

The Head of Community Protection & Enforcement gave Members a short presentation on the role and remit of the Safety Advisory Group (SAG). It was agreed that the Clerk would email a copy of the presentation out with the minutes.

The presentation covered the following areas:

- What is SAG?
- RBWM SAG.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That SAG applied to school functions.
- That further information about the SAG policy was available on the Council's website: www.rbwm.gov.uk (by searching the Safety Advisory Group).

The Chairman thanked the Head of Community Protection & Enforcement for attending the meeting and addressing the Forum.

VISITOR MANAGER'S UPDATE

The Visitor Manager, Julia White, gave Members the highlights since March on the following:

- Print for next year.
- Digital & Social media.

- The economic impact research was now in but still waiting on the visitor information.
- TV Berkshire Tourism.
- Visitor Information Centre thoughts going forward.

Print for next year – it was noted that the Official Visitor Guide 2016 had been completely revamped and the visitor manager was working on it with the “Ice Experience” on Windsor High Street. Members were informed that the new guide would be available in the next few weeks.

Digital & Social media – It was noted that three out of the four Facebook campaigns had been run this year. Members were informed that the Council had nearly 9000 Facebook fans, 3303 Twitter followers and 660 Instagram supporters. It was noted that the Council had launched a social experience app and added siteminder to its website to allow online bookings. Members were informed that ongoing Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) work would help to achieve 1.2million visitors to the website in 2015.

The economic impact research was now in – that the 2014 data was now available and would be circulated to everyone to read at their leisure.

Thames Valley Berkshire Business Tourism – that the Council was working with TV Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership to implement business tourism activities as part of its strategic economic plan.

Visitor Information Centre thoughts going forward – that Box Office sales were up 8% compared to 2014 and a 100% increase in hotels using the concierge service. It was noted that the Visitor Information Centre was due to be updated. Members were informed that nothing had been done to the Visitor Information Centre since it had opened in 2006 and it was noted that the shopping centre where it was located had a 3million footfall. The Visitor Manager explained that “Ice Experience” had been asked for ideas as to how best to update the Visitor Information Centre.

The Chairman left the meeting after thanking the business partners for their support and handed over to Stuart Dorn who took over chairing the meeting.

The Visitor Manager showed everyone present the ‘mood boards’. The top level concept included the introduction of modern technology, eliminating clutter / keeping minimal, making it a main focal point, utilising the destination app and making the centre more interactive, fun and engaging. The mid level concept was something similar to the previous concept but on a cheaper and less grand scale. The short term concept was to refresh what the centre already had and to remove conflicting messages on the box office. It was noted that space not currently used could be utilised (e.g. hanging space) and vinyl signs would be produced for the windows.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

- That the Visitor Managers preference would be to proceed with the top level concept.

- That the lease at the shopping centre was due in April and that permission from the Station would be needed in order to update the Visitor Information Centre.
- That whilst moving to another venue was a possibility, it was felt that rents in Windsor were high and available lets did not come up very often. It was felt that the current location was ideal with regard to the level of footfall.
- That timeframes were unknown at present.

It was noted that economic impact research and visitor survey information would be circulated to the Forum once it was available.

ITEM SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE FORUMS

Members were asked to email any additional item suggestions for future meetings directly to the Visitor Manager, Julia White at julia.white@rbwm.gov.uk and the Clerk, Tanya Leftwich at tanya.leftwich@rbwm.gov.uk

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman informed Members that the dates of the next meetings were as follows:

- Wednesday 2 December 2015 – venue to be confirmed.
- Tuesday 8 March 2016 at the MacDonald Windsor Hotel.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution:-

“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 6 & 7 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act”.