

WINDSOR TOWN FORUM

TUESDAY, 13 JULY 2021

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

Also in attendance: Councillor Carole Da Costa, Councillor Leo Walters, Councillor Gurch Singh, Councillor Gurpreet Bhangra, Councillor Donna Stimson and Councillor Helen Taylor

Officers: David Scott and Shilpa Manek

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bowden. Councillor Sharpe was substituting. Also apologies for absence were received from Paul Roach, Windsor Town Manager and Catherine Griffiths, TVP.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of Interest were received.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: that the minutes of the last meeting be approved as a true and accurate record.

Councillor Tisi asked for an accurate update on Alexander Gardens as there was lots of different conflicting information being heard. Councillor Rayner commented that there were no plans to build on Alexander Gardens.

Ed Wilson, resident, asked about an update on the poor conditions of cemeteries and war memorials in Windsor and adding this to the work programme. Councillor Rayner commented that the Tivoli contract was going to be discussed at Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel so conditions of cemeteries could be covered in that discussion and residents could inform Councillor Rayner and Andrew Scott so that these could be cleared up.

The Actions from the previous meeting were completed as followed:

- Exploring resident season ticket – in progress
- Written response to Mr John Webb circulated to Forum Members – clerk
- Review bins for recyclable and non-recyclable waste – ongoing project
- Alexander Gardens information on website
- Remembrance Events – British Legion poppy appeal and all events to be addressed by Town Manager at appropriate time
- Mr John Webb asked about e-petitions being highlighted in the Forum – Monitoring Officer's email read out

THAMES VALLEY POLICE UPDATE

Jeff Pick updated the Forum in the absence of Catherine Griffiths. Jeff Pick discussed the statistics that had been sent to the Forum prior to the meeting. Some of the items covered include:

- 12 volunteers were being trained for the clear car campaign. They would be taking shed alarms with them for vans.
- If any IT Security help was required, Jeff Pick knew an IT Guru who was volunteering to help people. Jeff Pick could be contacted.
- A new burglary campaign was beginning on 21 July 2021.
- Three community speed watches had been completed in Ascot, Cookham and Wraysbury. Forum Members could email Jeff Pick if they wanted a road or area added to the list.
- Home security surveys had resumed.

Councillor Knowles found the information interesting. Councillor Knowles was concerned that 22 bikes had been stolen and this number was still high. This figure did not include bikes stolen from sheds. Thames Valley Police was working closing to attend all cycling events. Councillor Knowles commented that it would be good to have a press article around the awareness on online web fraud. Jeff Pick commented that a campaign was currently running.

Councillor Price commented that there were no stats for crime against persons, sex offenders. Jeff Pick offered to have these prepared and sent to Councillor Price.

ACTION: Add Crime stats to web

Councillor Price suggested having scams featured in libraries to bring to the attention of residents, but Jeff Pick commented that there were too many and so many new scams.

Councillor Tisi asked where car keys should be kept in the house and Jeff Pick suggested that they should be at least 30 feet away.

Councillor Tisi asked about dispersal orders that were being used for the town centre. Could these be used elsewhere? Jeff Pick commented that roads and areas that were already covered and others could be added. Councillor Cannon commented that the dispersal orders were only on Sundays at present but these could be expanded if needed.

Councillor Cannon asked if there had been any advertising or publicising of the spark water event. Jeff Pick was not sure, but it was starting on the 21st and was being organised by the Chief Inspector Bins and Sargent Collings. David Scott added that he had received a letter from the Deputy Commander asking for ward members to be briefed so that would be done. There was going to be some advance warning because of the specific hot spots that have been targeted. Councillor Cannon also asked about Speed Watch which he had an interest in. This had been subject of some discussion at the Maidenhead Town Forum but was a borough wide initiative. Councillor Cannon asked where the volunteers were from because there had been a lack of activity of Speed Watch in his ward. Jeff Pick commented that the volunteers would go anywhere. These were carried out in Councillor Cannons ward, but they were probably not publicised well. All Speed Watch's done were reported on in the email

hat Jeff Pick circulated. Councillor Cannon asked if the email address specific to Speed Watch could be circulated.

ACTION: Circulate Speed Watch email address

Councillor Hilton informed the Forum that the local PC Michelle Race presented the crime stats, monthly, to the Ascot Action Group and these were published in the minutes on their website. Also, the results of the speed watch on Ascot High Street were such that PC Race believed that enforcement was needed and the speed watch found places that really needed some other activity. Jeff Pick commented that PC Matt Gleeve was fully trained on the gatso speed gun for enforcement and would be attending Ascot High Street. If it was required, then it would be handed back over to traffic and the radar lines across would be put in.

Susy Shearer asked if the information about the events that were taking place at The Swan and the Maidenhead cycle hub site. This would be very helpful and it could be disseminated to the cycling action group and also interested individuals who were taking part in activities at both those cycle hub sites.

Susy Shearer also asked whether that information was included in the weekly RBWM residence newsletter that was sent out on a Friday, it was circulated by email. Would it be possible to include something about the smart water marking at the sites.

ACTION: Jeff Pick to contact Chris Hopper.

David Scott clarified that the smart water wasn't about cycle thefts, the smart water campaign was around house burglary, cycles could be marked with smart water but the focus was around the hot spots in terms of burglary from home but those details would be promoted with local ward members and there would then be some public material thereafter.

The Chairman thanked Jeff Pick.

TOWN MANAGER UPDATE

The screen was shared with Paul Roach's update.

ACTION: To include with minutes

Councillor Knowles commented that there was talk at the moment about quite an unexpected retail bounce which had occurred across the UK, which was as a result of people just being happy to go out and carry out the physical act of shopping. Councillor Knowles was wondering if the Hart and Garter Hotel, which was a substantial site

in the middle of Windsor and their current plans for the rest of the year. Were there plans beyond that because it seemed to be existing in a bit of a vacuum at the moment

for such a large property. Councillor Rayner commented that the Council knew that this was owned by the crown estate and they were obviously in the process of trying to market as soon as possible. It was a very impressive building and was a very important building to Windsor.

Councillor Hilton commented that visiting Windsor was a great idea and there was nothing better than actually marketing the area and telling the world exactly what there

was on offer. Councillor Hilton had noticed that the parking in the car park was lagging with very few coaches and that the organised coach trips to Windsor had still not started.

Councillor Tisi commented that she had noticed that Windsor Yards had reduced their parking to try and entice people back and wondered whether the council needed to think

about reintroducing some sort of discount or something to encourage people to come back and maybe reduce the parking slightly. The other point that Councillor Tisi raised was the platinum jubilee and the plans for that and asking people if they needed any support. Councillor Tisi wondered if one of the things that could happen was that some of the rules and the red tape around organising street parties could be relaxed a little to help people to organise those kinds of parties particularly if we were still thinking about social distancing and being apart.

The Chairman suggested anyone wanting information on street parties to contact Paul Roach as he had the documentation of how it could work.

Councillor Price commented that since the Panel had last met, Windsor had celebrated the Queen's birthday and Windsor had got really snarled up where people were stuck in traffic jams for hours on end which had affected people widely and they couldn't get from Windsor to Old Windsor, they couldn't get to hospital appointments, shop appointments and businesses suffered. Councillor Price wanted to ensure that there

were lessons learned from what happened on that occasion so that it wouldn't happen again and that the same mistakes were not made again.

The Chairman commented that all these points were being looked into.

Councillor Carol Da Costa raised a point about all the exciting events that were likely to happen in the coming year such as the platinum jubilee and the world cup and asked if it would be possible to have big screens put up in places such as Alexander Gardens and other public spaces so that people could enjoy watching together. It would take a bit of security and looking after things but if the council started thinking ahead and looked at attracting people to be proud of where they were and would build up a community spirit.

Councillor Davey commented that he was unaware that the Town Manager was not attending and asked once again that the Town Managers report be included and circulated with the agenda, in advance of the meeting. Chris Joyce commented that he had dropped an email to the Town Managers to prepare and send the reports in advance of the meetings. This had been agreed at a previous meeting.

Susy Shearer addressed the Forum and asked how far the project on open space Transformation consultation had come along.

ACTION: Paul Roach to include in next Town Managers update

Councillor Knowles complimented Officers for assisting with a recent street party in Bolton Avenue. It had been arranged very well.

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Chairman explained that this would be in two parts, a general covid update from David Scott and a covid memorial update from Councillors Stimson and Taylor.

David Scott covered the covid update in three sections, first a little bit around the current rates and cases, second area would be a little bit of an update on where we were with vaccinations and then finally just picking up on the implications for the borough as we move towards the government's roadmap step four. David Scott made use of the Berkshire Public Health website. The graph showed the rates over the last four months and you showed that since early June, there had been a steady increase in the rates and this had been widely discussed and was not unique to us. The position now was that actually the wider southeast picture was overtaken and if the England figure was added, then it was even higher. The current rate was 196 for the overall population per hundred thousand in terms of the seven-day picture so case rates were increasing and people needed to be aware of that. David Scott showed the Forum in table form of how the borough compared with its neighbouring boroughs. David Scott then referred to the vaccinations and the borough was sitting at 80 percent which was towards the top end of the range in the county. It was really important to continue to push the vaccination rates David Scott then referred to the heat maps and age ranges. The Forum were asked to consider the three age brackets, the 15 to 19, the 20 to 24 and the 25 to 25 and note there was a deepening of the dark colour which demonstrated the intensity of infection rates. David Scott was pleased to report that although there had been the rise, predominantly the result of the delta variant which was now the dominant variant in the community and it was much more transmissible and therefore it was important that we continued to be covid safe to try and restrict the community transmission. The team were working really hard to get the message to young adults and promote the vaccinations. There was now good evidence that supported the fact that the vaccination was certainly reducing the seriousness with which people suffered from a covid infection and also reduced the number of hospitalizations and the time people were needing to spend in hospital.

The Chairman gave a big shoutout to all the volunteers that were helping out at the vaccination centers, moving from the racecourse now to lakeland and other venues.

Councillor Davey asked if a thousand, under 25's got covid, how many of them would end up in hospital? David Scott commented that there was no conversation rate but the borough had had two hospitalizations in the last week and the rates of hospital admission were much lower but these were expected to rise because of the increase in infection transmission rates. David Scott commented that a lot of work was being done to help young adults understand the benefits of having the vaccine to them and their wider circle.

Councillor Bateson asked about the dark colour in the charts for 15 year olds, who could not have the vaccine at present and the effect on schools and then Councillor Bateson asked about how covid was transmitted if it was not through hands, face and space. David Scott commented that there had been spread into the lower age group. This was predominantly the 17 and 18 and the 19 to 24 year olds in the last week. We were very nearly at the end of the school term and so we are looking at what schools would be doing when they returned in the September term. This was an ongoing piece of work. The evidence was now very clear around the spread of the disease and through airborne particles much more so than the touch. Face coverings would still be essential in high risk areas such as on public transport and crowded places.

Councillor Knowles commented that it was important for people to break the mental link that being vaccinated prevented the spread of covid as it didn't, it just minimised the effects of it on an individual. More people were out and about now and therefore testing more and therefore there was more testing data. It was important that as long as the hospitalization and the mortality stayed low that is what really the clinicians are looking at. David Scott commented that the borough was continuing to look at ways of rolling testing out, not just based at community venues such as the two main leisure centres

but much more mobile venues with staff running a more flexible sort of testing arrangement with pop-up events to make it easier for young people and more convenient through walk-ins clinics.

Councillor Price added that the impact of long covid also needed to be considered as there were residents already suffering from the effects of long covid. David Scott commented that work was taking place on the effects of long covid.

Councillor Stimson started by introducing a young 15-year-old, Lucas Garrett, who was doing some work experience assisting Councillor Stimson. Lucas Garrett had been engaging with many young adults and looking at ways to increase the uptake on the vaccine.

Councillor Stimson informed the Forum that last year Councillor Taylor had proposed a contemplative place for people who had lost some loved ones to covid and having worked with Councillor Taylor and Jason Mills, Countryside Manager, we looked around the borough and we found a place that we thought was suitable as it was halfway between Windsor and Maidenhead and it was a stagnant pond with a punctured liner. The pond was no longer good for wildlife and was therefore removed. The water was pumped out, the liner was relocated and also a few newts were relocated. They were taken to Braywood Nature Center. Once the pond had settled, wildflower seed were put around the outside of it. It was in the corner of Oakley Green cemetery and there was also a side access to it too. A Facebook page had been set up. Some aquatic plants would come in September.

Councillor Taylor added that one of the reasons we chose the location was also because the cemetery was multi-faith and that was important and that everybody felt comfortable going to that location. There was a public footpath which ran alongside so you could access the site without actually having to go via the cemetery. Councillor Taylor commented that many people didn't have access to open space so it was thought that a wildlife place would again be suitable as a memorial. Residents were being asked to join the Facebook page or contact the Councillors for more information.

Councillor Tisi commented that this would be a lovely fitting tribute and would be appreciated by many families as many of us had lost people in the pandemic. Councillor Tisi asked what the Facebook page was. It was [rbwmcovid-memorialvolunteersoakleygreen](https://www.facebook.com/rbwmcovid-memorialvolunteersoakleygreen).

The Chairman thanked both Councillors and commented that this was a really important initiative and following it through and actually delivering such a poignant and beautiful reminder.

CYCLING ACTION GROUP (CAG) TRANCHE FUNDING

Chris Joyce informed the Forum that council had already adopted the cycling action plan and that the team were now undertaking a process to convert that into the department for transports in terms of infrastructure plans for cycling and walking which was a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan. The borough were planning, as part of that process, a big conversation and engagement, to get everyone's input into how we developed the cycling action plan into a more detailed infrastructure plan for walking and cycling. The first phase of that had been meeting and offering meetings to all ward councillors to take their views and get an understanding of the issues in their areas and proposals that they had as well as parish councils. The second phase of that would be a public consultation that was due to take place over the summer so August and September and as part of that consultation, everyone would have the opportunity to comment on the ideas that had been put forward so far in the process and have an opportunity to give their views on different forms of improvements that may help people to walk and cycle more and be able to put forward their own proposals in terms of ideas for improving walking and cycling across the borough. Following the consultation, all the feedback would be reviewed and later in the autumn, a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan would be produced. This would then need to be approved by Cabinet.

Councillor Tisi asked if the consultation was related to the options that were presented about low traffic neighbourhoods and safer streets for those people rather for just car drivers. Chris Joyce commented that they would be presenting the concepts again in the consultation to help explain them to residents and to ask them if they thought those measures were good ideas and where they might work in the borough. There would be other ideas coming forward so we would be effectively presenting all the different types of options and things brought forward to help improve walking and cycling and give people the opportunity to give their views generically on those ideas but also specifically in terms of putting forward where they thought they might work in the borough. Specific proposals that had come out from the first phase of the engagement would also be included, where ward councillors and others had put forward ideas to seek residents views and community views on whether they thought those proposals were worth developing further and taking forward.

Councillor Cannon asked about one of the big disincentives to cycling in the borough which was the safety issue of the bikes, was any schemes being considered to provide some sort of cycle storage in the towns which would allow people to bring their bikes in and leave them secure or safe? Chris Joyce responded that cycle parking would be one of the measures that would be consulting on as part of that consultation. People would have the opportunity to suggest locations where we need better cycle parking and also the opportunity to bring forward as part of the infrastructure plan there would be a need for plans for where to enhance cycle parking and where to put secure cycle parking. Councillor Cannon asked about a facility where you could actually put your bike into. Chris Joyce commented that this could be considered.

Councillor Price wanted to make sure an emphasis on walking was included, including identifying the alleyways, whether they were safe and whether they were lit at night, whether there are trip hazards and dropped curbs so that people who weren't 100 physically fit could actually get out and walk because they could use their wheelchairs or that parents could use the buggies.

Ed Wilson, resident, asked two quick questions. Firstly Mr Wilson asked about some suggestions that he had sent to both Chris Joyce and Councillor Gerry Clark about securing cycles. Mr Wilson asked for a response. Secondly a consultation the year

before which was a disaster had been improved on and Mr Wilson asked what reassurance was being given that the consultation would be much better organised and would genuinely take account of resident views on walking and cycling.

The Chairman commented that Chris Joyce and his team were working on it to make sure it's was done as well as possible.

Councillor Davies commented that during the first phase, quite a lot of alleyways were identified that connected from one ward to another and that gave continuity across the boundaries. So it was really important to encourage all residents to participate.

Councillor Sharpe commented that there seemed to be a problem with the issue between parking cars on the side of the road and allowing people to be able to walk up pavements where people were having to park on the pavement, so the roads were usable for the motorists and if space was going to be made for people to use the pavements, the cars would be needed to be taken off the pavement and put them on the road and then that would make the roads less accessible.

Councillor Bateson asked about narrow roads and the fact that there wasn't a footpath on either side and lots of twists and bends. This also needed to be looked into.

Councillor Davey commented that a new law was in the process of being adopted about not parking on pavements. There was also the situation where hedges were overgrown so residents were having difficulty walking on pavements. There was currently an issue with the contractors, Tivoli which was also being discussed. There were lots of things that the council needed to make better but also lots of things that as residents and private citizens, needed to be thought about.

Councillor Knowles commented on the quality of the road surfaces and gave an example that if you were riding a bike on a standard road around the borough, it was like riding on a mountain bike across the middle of Windsor Great Park. The state of the surfaces were because of the various resurfacing measures which ended up quite uneven towards the actual curbside and this made it really difficult when riding a bike, particularly for younger people. As it has been said before, this needed to be a big strategic worldwide plan going forward. Councillor Knowles asked how could people be discouraged from making car journeys if there were no better options.

Councillor Davis asked if Chris Joyce could explain what the process would be after the consultation period ended and what would happen with all the data and ideas and how they would be prioritised. Chris Joyce explained that would depend on the volume of responses and these could be considered, developed and reviewed as they were coming in and the feasibility could be tested. All the ideas would then be collated and then there would be a prioritisation process to prepare a final draft and then a final version of the local cycling and walking infrastructure plan. The team would then re-engage with the councillors through the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel and then the draft plan would be considered and approved by Cabinet.

Susy Shearer commented that this was a moment to thank many individuals. Firstly, the Chairman of the Panel chairman for enabling this item on the agenda, then David Scott for his comments, input and for all his support on a whole range of relevant matters to do with transport and infrastructure and to Chris Joyce for attending the meeting to update residents and answer questions. And finally, to the members of the Local Access Forum and the Windsor Town Forum who had been engaged in the

process so far. It had been really valuable to have all the comments from the residents. The Chairman thanked Susy Shearer for all her work with the council.

WORK PROGRAMME

Ed Wilson commented that he had requested in the past that the Forum discusses houses with multiple occupation or HMO's within and he noted that the recently approved Housing Strategy didn't actually mention HMO's anywhere.

Ed Wilson also wanted Cedar House added to the work programme and a discussion on how that was progressing to house homeless people in Windsor suggested combining these items and having a Housing Overview.

ACTION: Invite Tracey Hendren to Forum

Susy Shearer wanted to check that under the Windsor Consultations item, that was listed for the next meeting, the cycling and walking consultation would be included. The Chairman commented that it would be mentioned but not discussed.

ACTION: To include the Cycling and Walking Consultation in the Windsor Consultations Item

Councillor Knowles suggested an item on the Armed Forces day 2022 in November as the plan would be mature by that point and to make people aware.

ACTION: To add for November meeting

WINDSOR CONSULTATIONS

The Clerk advised the Forum that two consultations had been highlighted which were the Windsor Town Centre active travel measures consultation and the day opportunities consultation. Another consultation that had been highlighted was that the civil aviation had an ongoing consultation on night flight proposals, so if people were interested and wanted to participate, they should visit the Civil Aviation website and submit their comments there.

The Clerk suggested contacting her in the first instance if there were any other consultations that members wanted highlighted. The Clerk also suggested that it would be better to provide a link to the borough's consultations and therefore members could go in there and look at all consultations including Windsor consultations.

Councillor Tisi expanded on what the day opportunities consultation was about, which was about day centres and activities and events for people with learning difficulties, people living with dementia and so on. Councillor Tisi also commented that she thought the active travel measures consultation was an old one.

ACTION: David Cook to look into this and respond to Councillor Tisi

Jeff Pick suggested adding the consultations link in the email that he sent out so that more residents responded to the consultations.

ACTION: Send link to Jeff Pick before every Windsor Town Forum

Councillor Price commented that the overall link was a good idea.

Councillor Davey suggested tidying up the work programme as there were many items on there that had not yet been scheduled and others had been dealt with.

ACTION: Clerk to work with Chairman to schedule items to meetings for next meeting

DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The meeting, which began at 6.15 pm, finished at 8.15 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....