

HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
PANEL

MONDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Jesse Grey (Chairman), Hari Sharma (Vice-Chairman), Malcolm Beer, Maureen Hunt, Paul Lion and Nicola Pryer

Also in attendance: Councillor Colin Rayner, Mr Graham Cribbin and Mr Henry Perez.

Officers: Wendy Binmore and Mark Lampard

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Gilmore.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Rayner - Councillor Rayner declared a personal interest as he is a Parish Councillor for Horton & Wraysbury, a local resident and a businessman in the Royal Borough. He had attended Panel to discuss bridge works in Wraysbury and the decriminalisation and enforcement works in the Borough.

Cllr Sharma – Declared a personal interest as he worked for First Group and there were some things in the budget report that may effect his employer.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting of the Windsor Urban Development Control Panel held on 25 November 2015 be approved.

BUDGET 2016/17

The Chairman agreed to let Mr Henry Perez, Mr Graham Cribbin and Councillor Colin Rayner address the Panel regarding works required to a footbridge at Wraysbury train station. The main points raised by Mr Cribbin included:

- He was a resident of Wraysbury and lived near the High Street.
- He was one of the founders of the Wraysbury Speedwatch Group.
- There were now more than 250 residents in the group.
- The main concern was Wraysbury footbridge.
- A meeting was organised with Railtrack and the Borough.
- Mr Cribbin and Mr Perez conducted a walk through of the footbridge and no party felt safe during the walkthrough.
- Wheelchairs and buggies were unable to use the footbridge.
- Mr Cribbin had spoken to the railways who said they could raise the platform.
- Four meetings had taken place with stakeholders.
- £85,000 was needed to make the bridge safe for pedestrians.
- All parties had agreed the works were needed immediately.

The main points raised by Mr Perez included:

- The footbridge was clearly not safe.
- The Borough approved works for Sunnymeads and Warysbury bridges but, the works for Wraysbury footbridge were put on hold.

- The population of the local area had increased and so had the footfall on the bridge.
- A lot of local people worked from home and had clients visit them; there were also two sports grounds in the area which increased pedestrian numbers.
- Nothing to date had been done to make the bridge any safer.
- 2,250 people had signed their petition to get the work to commence immediately.
- Pedestrians were sharing the road with cars.
- There was a high rate of speeding traffic along that stretch of road.
- The situation contravened the Highway Code and fails good practice.
- The proposal for the bridge works were produced by the Borough.
- The works were fully supported by Cllr Colin Rayner.
- All local Councillors had signed the petition.
- Mr Perez respectfully requested funding be made available to commence the works to the footbridge.

The main points raised by Councillor Colin Rayner included:

- Cllr Rayner fully supported the residents' actions.
- Officers time had been allocated to get a plan draw up.
- Budgets had been worked on for some six months.
- He had attended the Budget Steering Group who had told him he needed to address the Highways, Transport & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel to plead the case of having funds allocated for the works.
- He used the station regularly three times per week.
- Cllr Rayner requested the Panel recommend to Cabinet to include funding for the footbridge project.
- Wraysbury was a very close-knit community and the footbridge was a very important issue.

Councillor Sharma thanked Mr Cribbin, Mr Perez and Councillor Rayner for coming and addressing the Panel. He added that safety was taken very seriously by the Borough. There were signs stating the 30mph speed limit but he shared their concerns. Cllr Sharma stated some works had been carried out to the bridge but that more needed to be done. Councillor Hunt commented she wanted to support the project and put it forward. There were huge amounts of money in capital bids for the upgrade of the parking systems. The bridge works were very important as people were crossing roads with no safety.

Mr Perez confirmed he had look at the Parish Council minutes from the meeting where the bridge was discussed. The Parish had been trying to get funding secured since 2010. Councillor Lenton had tried to get something done but, now residents were trying to organise funds for the project. Southwest Trains had offered to maintain the overhanging bushes as that was their responsibility but, there had been no movement regarding the bridge and the bridge is the Borough's responsibility. Councillor Rayner stated the project had been fully costed. Councillor Beer suggested there should be a strong recommendation to Cabinet; he was surprised the works had not been carried out yet. The roads were getting busier so should be funded as a priority.

The Chairman agreed that a recommendation should go to Cabinet that showed the panel supported the cause. He was pleased members of the public had taken the time to address the Panel.

The Chairman agreed that Councillor Rayner could make a short statement regarding decriminalised parking enforcement (post implementation parking review). the main points raised included:

- Cllr Rayner was speaking in his capacity as Lead Member for Highways & Transport.
- 150 parking reviews had been carried out this year with 50 consultations being sent out week commencing 1 February 2016.

- If resident wanted parking schemes in place, there was no money available in the budget to implement them.
- Virtually every ward in the Borough would require some changes to their parking.
- The scheme would cost £75,000 and would entail painting yellow lines on streets and putting signs up.
- Money had been made available for the consultations but no budget had been made available to carry out the works.

Councillor Hunt mentioned the parking systems upgrade again and stated that there were huge sums of money made available for that. She suggested scaling down the parking systems upgrade and putting some of that money towards the decriminalised parking enforcement project instead. She added that there was £500k available for the parking systems upgrade but there were other things that were more urgent. Councillor Rayner suggested putting forward the Wraysbury Bridge safety works at £85,000 and the decriminalised parking enforcement scheme at £75,000 and scale back the parking system upgrade. He added that installing new parking machines at five sites in one go may not be the best approach. If they are wrong, then they would have been installed across all five sites. He suggested scaling back the replacement parking system upgrade and spend the money saved on the Wraysbury footbridge works and the decriminalised parking enforcement scheme. The Chairman agreed it was necessary to have the right parking systems in place. All Members of the Panel agreed with that course of action.

Mark Lampard, Finance Partner - Corporate Services & Operations then went through the rest of the Budget 2016/17 report. The main points raised included:

- The paper talked about the national context and that there was a reduction in government grant of 45% over four years.
- However, there was more leeway in the Council raising revenue.
- Local authorities with a larger tax base were hit harder by the Spending Review.
- Nationally, there was a consultation of new homes bonus being reduced by 33% but the Borough were addressing that.
- The Borough were received a government grant of £23.1m which was a 6% reduction in 2016/17.
- 2% adult social care precept was ring-fenced.
- Parking rates were being raised to 2012/13 levels in real terms.
 - There was an increase in tariffs for approx. 25 charging car parks from the 50 in the Borough.
 - The Borough decided to raise prices across the board to near 2012/13 prices. The tariff increases represented a 9% increase overall.
 - Some tariffs would be increased and others would not.
- The PCC and EA levies had not been agreed yet.

Councillor Sharma said he had looked at the whole budget. Most services had been protected with some getting more investment. Surrounding Councils such as Slough had put restrictions on their residents using their bus passes before 9.30am but this was not the case in the Royal Borough. He was pleased that residents were able to travel without any restrictions. Cllr Sharma added that the budget report was a blueprint for financial wellbeing for the Borough. Officers had done a brilliant job with more being spent on street cleaning than last year, investment in the Stafferton Way Link Road and money on public rights of way being ring-fenced. Cllr Sharma was happy to support the budget.

Mark Lampard, Finance Partner - Corporate Services & Operations confirmed that parking services expenditure remained the same but with income increased due to the tariff charge increases. General tariffs had not been increased for a number of years. Cllr Sharma suggested more income was being raised from parking charges because more people were visiting the Royal Borough. There was a huge amount of investment taking place in Maidenhead and that would bring further income to the Borough as more people will visit Maidenhead.

In response to Cllr Hunt asking why income had reduced down to £26,000 in Highway Contracts, Mark Lampard, Finance Partner - Corporate Services & Operations confirmed it was because expenditure had dropped and in the year 15/16, the Borough achieved more than forecast. The Chairman stated the borough was investing to save, investment in LED lighting, for example.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Panel endorsed the recommendations with the added recommendation To reduce the number of parking systems upgrade from five sites down to one in order to ensure the new machines were suitable (page 67), and then use the money saved to go towards the Decriminalised parking enforcement scheme (post implementation parking review), and the works to the Wraysbury Train Station footbridge to make the bridge safer for pedestrians.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 7.50 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....