

DISABILITY AND INCLUSION FORUM

MONDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2022

PRESENT: Angela Clark (Chairman), Lisa Hughes (Vice-Chairman), Sharon Carrigan, Sharon Bunce, Dominic Manley, Robin Pemberton, Jatinder Singh Rakhra, Tim Clare and Victoria Holt

Also in attendance: Councillors Mandy Brar, Helen Price, Gurch Singh and Donna Stimson

Officers: Becky Oates, Ellen McManus-Fry and Ian Motuel

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed all to the Forum.

MINUTES FROM THE LAST FORUM

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting on 20 June 2022 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Peter Haley, Habibah Tariq and Councillor Bhangra.

BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

Ian Motuel, Planning Policy Manager, introduced himself and stated that the Borough Local Plan (BLP), which was adopted in February, included a number of allocations and place-making areas. The area of Southwest Maidenhead included an allocation for housing (AL13), which included Maidenhead Golf Club. A supplementary planning document (SPD) for Southwest Maidenhead had recently been consulted on and contained guidance to expand on the policy contained within the BLP.

Site AL13 would deliver 2,600 homes, 30% of which would be affordable. Half of these would be houses with the other half being flats. The BLP contained a policy which required 30% of homes to be built to M4(2) standard under the Building Regulations 2010, which set out accessibility requirements and 5% to be compliant with M4(3) standard. This site would also contain schools, local centres, green infrastructure, and transport improvements. The site would come forward in phases over the next decade subject to planning permission, with two neighbourhoods being built. Throughout the site would be a 'green spine' to provide connectivity between the town centre and the housing development. Site AL14 would provide industrial space and warehousing for employment.

The draft document would be brought to Cabinet with a target date of December 2022.

The Vice-Chairman asked about traffic pollution on the site given its close proximity to major roads such as the A404(M) and the M4, and any mitigations that were being put into place to address concerns.

Ian Motuel stated that traffic pollution was a particular concern which was addressed within the SPD. Pollution would need to be mitigated at the planning application stage. The development would be built over many years with developers addressing these issues.

Dominic Manley asked for information on the approval process of Maidenhead Golf Course.

Ian Motuel stated that Maidenhead Golf Course would stay on the site until the end of 2025. The planning inspector for the BLP was satisfied with the arrangement that other areas of the site could come forward for development earlier than 2025. Ian Motuel could not see any legal reason why the Golf Course couldn't be developed on when the lease expired.

The Chairman asked how many access points there were to the new site, and if there were any proposals to increase safety on Harvest Hill Road.

Ian Motuel confirmed that the main access points to the site would be via Harvest Hill Road, with the original access point to the Golf Club from Shoppenhangers Road being retained. Access points would be a matter for planning applications, with several access points being anticipated. With regards to Harvest Hill Road, a number of proposals to increase safety were being considered, one of which was the proposal of a dedicated pedestrian route.

Councillor Brar asked about the impact on Desborough College, located on Shoppenhangers Road.

Ian Motuel stated that he wasn't aware of any intention to move or impact any current schools. There were plans to create a primary and secondary school, with a primary school being created first due to the demand and a secondary school following later.

Sharon Bunce asked if rental properties included within the site would be privately rented or social housing.

Ian Motuel stated that the current proposal within the BLP was at least 45% social rent, 35% affordable rent and 20% intermediate tenure. This was not a fixed target and higher numbers of social rent would be preferred.

HEALTHWATCH

Steve Sansom, Healthwatch Officer for Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead, introduced himself and outlined his role. Healthwatch had been established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to help understand the needs, concerns and experience of people who use health and social care services. Healthwatch was a statutory independent organisation with four main functions:

- Obtain the views of people about their needs and experiences of local health and social care.
- To provide information, advice and signposting to the public about health and social services, Council services and voluntary community services.
- Provide local Care Quality Commission (CQC) with any concerns about health, social care and care home services.
- Visit health and care services (including care homes) to collect evidence and report on what works well and what could be improved.

In December 2021, Healthwatch staff investigated 83 Frimley Healthcare GP Surgery websites, and their subsequent recommendations led to an immediate redesigning of a much more user friendly and accessible website. Other projects had been conducted on topics such as hospital waiting times, NHS dentistry access and community and public engagement.

Anyone looking to get involved with Healthwatch could volunteer as a Healthwatch Champion or on the Local Leadership Board. Feedback was welcomed from all to improve services. Bi-

monthly email newsletters which contained advice, information, news, activities, and events were available to those who signed up.

The Chairman asked what happened to feedback that was received by Healthwatch.

Steve Sansom stated that feedback was logged onto a CRM system. If enough information came up on the same issue, investigations would be started.

The Vice-Chairman thanked Steve Sansom for his presentation and asked how Healthwatch's brief had changed as a result of the Integrated Care Partnership.

Steve Sansom stated that this area was outside of his role, but he would confirm with colleagues.

ACTION: Steve Sansom to clarify how Healthwatch's role had changed as a result of the Integrated Care Partnership.

INCLUSIVE SPORT IN THE BOROUGH

Jatinder Singh Rakhra, Sports Inclusion and Participation Manager at Leisure Focus Trust and forum member, introduced himself and stated that part of his role was to facilitate an increase in physical activity among people with disabilities.

Leisure Focus ran sessions including disability swimming, boccia and wheelchair basketball, and had run a number of campaigns, including the Seven Days of Focus campaign, which aimed to increase activity for people with disabilities. 14 providers within the borough had been identified, and 34 different sessions had been held for people with disabilities.

Jatinder Singh Rakhra asked for collaboration in order to make sports more inclusive and ideas on how to reach more people within the borough.

The Chairman stated that advertising would be greatly beneficial to reach all members of the borough with mobility issues.

Dominic Manley stated that he agreed with the Chair's comments and commented that a name for the programme would also be beneficial to increase awareness and recognition. Dominic Manley asked if any surveys had been conducted any feedback surveys to ascertain whether people knew that these services existed.

Jatinder Singh Rakhra stated that the programme was linked with afterSportsAble, which provided sport and activities for people with disabilities. Sessions were advertised on their website to increase outreach.

Councillor Price stated that the forum was for all residents so would like to see that this covered all leisure centres. Councillor Price also stated that she would like to see this programme being joined up with the borough's work liaising with sports clubs across the borough on the activities being undertaken to help residents with disabilities.

Jatinder Singh Rakhra thanked Councillor Price for her comments.

The Vice-Chairman echoed Councillor Price's comments and stated that it would be beneficial for RBWM to carry out this work.

Councillor Stimson stated that Sharon Bunce had approached her in March 2021 about storage for disabled basketball players in Braywick, and whether anything could be done to help with this issue.

Jatinder Singh Rakhra stated that he believed this issue to be resolved but welcomed further contact from Councillor Stimson.

The Vice-Chairman commented that Maidenhead United Community Trust organised a range of sports for people with disabilities.

Sharon Carrigan stated that sports for people with disabilities should include those with hidden disabilities in order to reduce exclusion.

Jatinder Singh Rakhra thanked Sharon Carrigan for her comments.

Councillor Brar asked Jatinder Singh Rakhra about setting up facilities for local groups for people with or without disabilities.

Jatinder Singh Rakhra stated that he would be happy to discuss this with Councillor Brar after the meeting.

Ellen McManus Fry, Equalities and Community Engagement Officer, asked about the Seven Days of Focus campaign that was run by Leisure Focus and whether much uptake had been seen.

Jatinder Singh Rakhra commented that the taster sessions had high attendance and worked to bring providers together to raise awareness.

Councillor Singh asked about how many people had switched from SportsAble to Leisure Focus and asked for a cost comparison in terms of services.

Jatinder Singh Rakhra stated that he had been in his role since February 2021 and could not give a detailed comparison from before this time. He echoed the Vice-Chairman's comments and stated that it would be greatly beneficial for all information on sports for people with disabilities to be contained in one place.

Sharon Bunce asked Councillor Price for contact details for the officer responsible for sports clubs.

Councillor Price confirmed that this was Michael Shepherd, Sport & Leisure Service Manager.

Victoria Holt, Community Development Manager at Optalis stated that the Seven Days of Focus campaign, which was intended to coincide with the Parallel Windsor event which had been cancelled, would have served to bring many different groups together to offer different opportunities.

Sharon Bunce stated that she believed that the borough could play a role in developing a network between adult and learning disability social care and sports facilities.

The Chairman stated that co-ordination was key to evolving a proper sports disability structure going forward and welcomed further discussion at the forum meeting in March 2023.

The Vice-Chair stated that if people were interested, she would organise a working group in order to see how different organisations could collaborate to raise awareness.

Ellen McManus-Fry stated that one of the goals in the borough's Corporate Plan focused on attendance at leisure centres among people with disabilities.

The Chair thanked all for their comments.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

Ellen McManus-Fry, Equalities and Community Engagement Officer, introduced herself and explained that one of the major pieces of work she was undertaking was refreshing the equality objectives of the Council. One of the key focuses was improving accessibility within the borough.

A set of objectives had been circulated with the corporate leadership team to gain feedback, and Ellen McManus-Fry asked for feedback on the draft wording from the forum, which was as follows:

“To improve the accessibility of our streets, public spaces and public buildings” and “to create an inclusive and enabling street scape which removes barriers to community involvement, to social inclusion and to physical activity.” This would involve engaging with communities most likely to experience accessibility issues, specifically people with disabilities and older people to identify priorities in this area.

Lisa Hughes thanked Ellen McManus-Fry for her statement and commented that she believed the wording to be good, inclusive and fairly accurate. Reference to people and the process through which the objectives would be achieved would be appreciated to ensure these are also inclusive.

Councillor Price commented that the cost-of-living crisis would have a disproportionate effect on people with disabilities with reference to inequality and asked if the forum were raising awareness of measures to help mitigate against this.

The Chairman stated that she believed that people with disabilities and mobility issues were urged to contact RBWM but was open to more suggestions.

Councillor Price asked whether this was a successful method.

The Chairman commented that she hadn't had any contact with people regarding this issue but the forum was always open for people to get in touch if they were in need of assistance.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Vice-Chairman informed the forum that a government consultation was ongoing on the Downs Syndrome Act, which closed on 8 November 2022. Learning Disability England was calling for evidence and gathering responses as most of its members wanted the bill to include all people with learning disabilities.

Additionally, free training courses on online safety for people with learning disabilities had been developed and were available from Talk Back UK, and information would be shared after the meeting.

The Great Western Railway Accessibility Panel held a meeting at the end of September 2022 which highlighted the work of the Department for Transport in developing a campaign in partnership with industry disability groups and people with disabilities titled It's Everyone's Journey. The campaign brought together those who wanted to improve public transport for people with disabilities in order to deliver change.

Train operating companies such as LNER were investigating how wheelchair spaces on trains could be reserved.

Great Western Railway were looking at technology that would help people with disabilities, particularly visual impairment. An app had been developed to offer a live on-demand virtual sighted guide to help people navigate through stations.

The Vice-Chairman stated that both herself and Sharon Bunce would be meeting with the Highways & Transport department to look at accessibility in Maidenhead town centre and would report back on the developments. This would form part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

DATE OF NEXT FORUM

The Chairman thanked everyone for their time and confirmed that the next forum would be held on Monday 12 December 2022.

The meeting, which began at 11.00 am, finished at 12.15 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....