

## WINDSOR TOWN FORUM

Monday 20 March 2023

Present: Councillors Samantha Rayner (Chairman), David Cannon (Vice-Chairman), David Hilton, Shamsul Shelim, Jon Davey, Neil Knowles, Helen Price, Wisdom Da Costa and Julian Sharpe

Also in attendance: Councillor John Bowden

Officers: Laurence Ellis and Andrew Durrant

Officers Virtually: Alysse Strachan

### Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Forum members then introduced themselves.

Apologies received from Councillor Luxton, who was substituted by Councillor Sharpe. Apologies were also received from Councillors Tisi and Muir, with no substitutes present.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

### Minutes

The Chair went through the actions from the last meeting.

<b>ACTION: Oran Norris-Browne to add Inspector Dan Bennett to any invites moving forward if TVP were on the agenda.</b>	Thames Valley Police (TVP) would be invited to Town Forum meetings when a police update is on the agenda.
<b>ACTION: Resident Questions to be added as a standing agenda item.</b>	Resident Questions to be added as a standing agenda item.
<b>ACTION: Oran to explore adding EV Charging points in Windsor to the next forum meeting in collaboration with the Chair</b>	Electric vehicle charging points came to a Place Overview and Scrutiny meeting in November and was heard at Windsor Town Forum in May 2022.
<b>ACTION: Oran to discuss with his team about the feasibility of a Task-and-Finish Group before May 2023.</b>	The Chair had discussed with the Head of Governance on establishing a Task-and-Finish Group before May 2023, and it was agreed that it would be established after the elections in May 2023.

Councillor Price expressed disappointment that the agenda was focused on the town and not West Windsor, stating that discussions at the last meeting suggested that the Forum should be more resident focused as well as not town-focused. She also suggested an agenda item on the current consultations so that residents were more aware of them.

*(Councillor Wisdom Da Costa entered the meeting at 18:38)*

Mr Griffin commented that the minutes stated that he was from Bray and that he was actually from King's Road, Windsor. He requested for this to be corrected.

**AGREED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meetings held on 16 January 2023 were a true and accurate record.**

### The Windsor Vision

Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place, gave a presentation on the Vision for Windsor. He explained that Windsor had recently experienced high-profile events, namely the death of Queen Elizabeth II and being the focus of attention during the funeral. He then stated that the Borough had engaged with the Prince's Foundation to formulate the Vision for Windsor report to articulate the project over the next 20 years.

Andrew Durrant then explained that some scoping work took place, gathering technical and specialist input from Borough and external officers. There was also a series of sessions and stakeholder engagements to gather feedback from residents, such as the World Café Session, Visioning Workshop, online surveys and engagement through the Vision for Windsor RBWM webpage.

Out of around 20 key areas raised from public engagement and feedback, the top three issues were satellite parking solutions, better cleanliness/waste management of town centre and environmental concerns. In addition, cycle routes, better traffic management in the centre and improved public transport options were also strongly favoured.

Andrew Durrant then showed the Prince's Foundation's Community Capital Framework, which assessed its natural, social, financial and built assets. The table also conveyed which areas were stronger or weaker and therefore required more attention.

The emerging consensus from the engagements were the following:

- Movement and access
- Heritage, character and identity
- Richness of natural resources
- Uses, commercial diversity and local amenities
- Global Windsor
- Local Governance

The overall vision for Windsor, Andrew Durrant explained, was "an attractive, thriving and welcoming town for the local and global community". The five Vision Statements were:

- Transport and movement: "Develop sustainable, convenient & affordable options to travel into Windsor town centre."
- Built environment: "Protect and enhance the heritage, character and identity of Windsor."
- Natural environment: "Promote, activate and improve access to the natural assets and resources."
- Local community: "Create a thriving local economy of business and community partnerships that benefit from Windsor's global brand."
- Global community: "Deliver a world-class visitor experience supported by a strong, diverse and resilient hospitality industry."

The Prince's Foundation had a series of strategies and actions which fit into the mission statements:

1. Develop Satellite Parking Sites
2. Celebrate Arrival into Windsor
3. Invest in Improving Public Transport Connections
4. Encourage a Shift to Active Travel
5. Discourage Unnecessary Vehicle Movement and Through-Traffic in the Town Centre

6. Improve Cycling and Walking Connections
7. Take Advantage of the River Thames for Access and Movement
8. Consolidate Town Centre Parking
9. Maintain Priority Parking and Access
10. Invest in the Riverside to Create an Attractive Entrance into Windsor
11. Employ Guidelines and Regulations to Maintain the Character of the Heritage Core
12. Diversify Town Centre Uses
13. Nurture the Local Culture, Arts & Retail
14. Apply and Maintain a High-Quality Materiality of the Public Realm
15. Improve Engagement with the River and Riverfront
16. Develop a Framework for Regeneration of Riverside Parking Sites
17. Build a Directory of Community Groups and Partnerships
18. Establish a Collective Voice of Stakeholder Representation Across Windsor
19. Create a Register of Ownerships and Landlords
20. Engage with Windsor Castle and The Crown Estate
21. Capitalise on Royal Warrants and the Windsor Brand

Andrew Durrant then explained the projects in progress for 2023:

- Installation of the Platinum Jubilee Fountain was completed in Feb 2023 though the official opening was pending.
- Work had started on Castle Hill pedestrian improvement scheme in March 2023.
- Work on the Windsor Footbridge (Coach Car Park) would start in spring/summer 2023
- Addition funding was acquired for a Welcome to Windsor project to improve public realm and signage as well as to enhance resident and visitor experience.
- A focus on public transport access and car parking arrangements under Unlocking Town Centre

Andrew Durrant then explained the programme management.

- Review existing groups and forums with involvement in Windsor before establishing any new stakeholder groups.
- Form a Programme Board to monitor and steer progress across all vision statements and key priorities within each
- Form task and finish groups to wrap-around the key priorities, with adequate subject matter experts to drive these forward
- Co-production a continued dialog involving community & resident groups
- Regional Presence where the project would consider its regional positioning and emerging work with neighbouring Berkshire authorities, to ensure that it can leverage its global brand for corporate and community benefits.

After expressing approval for the project, Mr Holland, a resident, asked about its parameter (timescales, budgets, decision-making schedule). Andrew Durrant replied that Officers had a draft plan on how to take the project forward within the Council, which would then feature a prioritisation workshop to ensure there were clear parameters and timescales.

An objective, Andrew Durrant explained, was to distil down the 21 actions and strategies to make them more manageable and assign key officers. He added that The Prince's Foundation would like to remain very close to the project. He also stated that delivering the project may require additional support other than exclusively the Council and The Prince's Foundation, and therefore Officers would seek to bring additional people on board.

Andrew Durrant then explained that there were budget lines within the approved budget to enable support for this project. There was already some investment from the Local Enterprise Partnership which would allow some objectives to be achieved sooner.

The budget provision would be configured once the work scope was identified. Andrew Durrant added that as the Executive Director of Place, he would have close insight on how this project would be taken forwards.

Claire, a resident, asked how the project would fit with local governance, adding that there was a democratic deficit in the Borough. She also raised that the purple 'Welcome to Windsor' sign near the Long Walk was falling apart and requested for this to be repaired before the Coronation of King Charles III. Andrew Durrant replied that he would investigate the aforementioned sign. He added that programme management needed some development, whereby the Borough made progress "in pockets" (e.g., Castle Hill project) but needed greater management and oversight in other projects, such as place making.

**ACTION: Andrew Durrant to investigate the 'Welcome to Windsor' sign near the Long Walk.**

Mr Holland asked how long it would take to formulate a basic delivery program. Andrew Durrant responded that the Borough was working on it with the end of April 2023 being the deadline according to a Cabinet report. At this point, there would be a template of the governance structure and a plan.

Mr Holland then asked what the timescales for identifying funding streams. Councillor Hilton explained that there would be a lot of work around the 21 actions, and these would likely not all happen at the same time; and therefore, the focus should be on planning on how to implement and fund these actions. He expected that these actions would come in phases.

Councillor Hilton added that the Council did not have infinite resources; therefore, the actions needed to be prioritised and properly resourced, and once more resources became available, other actions could be worked on.

Councillor Hilton then stated that an overall project plan would not be formulated by the end of April 2023; but added that there would be public consultation on the key actions and strategies.

Mr Griffin asked a series of questions. Firstly, he asked what the Council's formal position on the project was. Secondly, which Councillors were spearheading this project. Thirdly, he asked if the Vision for Windsor could be a near regular item on the agenda, stating that the Windsor Town Forum was ideal to have residents to engage on this project.

The Chair replied that she was Cabinet member of the Vision for Windsor project and therefore she would be spearheading it. She agreed that the Forum was a good place for it to come as a regular item for residents to participate. She also stated that the Vision for Windsor project was taken to Cabinet and was adopted. The next stage was to formulate a programme by end of April 2023.

**ACTION: Vision for Windsor to be an almost regular item on the agenda.**

Mr Wilson commented that there seemed to be poor programme management. He then asked what the cost of the Vision for Windsor so far. He also asked about some work by The Prince's Foundation in Ascot a few years ago and then claimed the Borough ignored this.

Andrew Durrant replied that he was not suggesting that there was no programme management in place but rather it needed to develop and improve upon within the authority as we turn attention to strategic schemes. Regarding costs, he stated that he needed to check this and that various factors effected the costs, such as getting The Prince's Foundation commissioned and onboard. He stated that he could disclose the costs after checking what they were.

**ACTION: Andrew Durrant to disclose the costs of the Vision for Windsor.**

Andrew Durrant then explained that there was an officer group that was working on the Ascot High Street. The Place Team was due to meet e-partners and stakeholders in the next few weeks to take the work forwards, such as Ward Councillors, Parish Councillors and other key

interested parties, to explain the timelines and work process. He added that there was a live planning application in the area as well as a supplementary planning document was to be created.

Councillor Knowles commented that there were actions that the Council could do at the moment to improve Windsor rather than relying on the project, such as promoting the use of public transport and greater investment in improving facilities and areas of neglect.

The Chair agreed with Councillor Knowles points, adding that the Vision for Windsor was a strategic document and did not limit what the Council could do in between. She added that there was money in budget for investment in Windsor.

Councillor Davey suggested that an incentive could be offered to residents to use coaches to travel and spend money in town rather than on increased petrol fees. He also commented that he had more faith in Andrew Durrant and the Place Team to professionally manage the projects, gather information and acquire funds. He also commented that that local governance would involve the public, but the Windsor Town Forum may not be appropriate as it was not a decision-making body, and a town council may be required.

Councillor Wisdom Da Costa commented that the project required a budget and then asked about the project's budget, namely how much was the budget going to be and where was it coming from. He then commented that the Vision for Windsor project was mandated by Cabinet which was composed of Councillors who were not from Windsor. He argued that the only valid mandate for this project could be a Windsor town council or even a "supercharged town forum" composed of residents and Windsor Councillors.

The Chair replied that Cabinet decisions were made with officers as well as gathering information from residents rather than being made in isolation. She added that millions of pounds were being invested into Windsor, such as the Castle Hill project and footbridge, and Cabinet would be bidding for money. She also stated that some acquired funding acquired for 2023 came from central government. She also believed that the Borough should not be limited by budget.

Councillor Hilton stated that the best approach was to outline the project before establishing the budget and funding.

Andrew Durrant added that the Borough needed to ensure that pipeline projects were at an advanced stage so that they could acquire funding. He stated that the work which had taken place would place the Council at a more advanced stage.

### Plans for the Coronation of King Charles III

Andrew Durrant presented an overview of the plans of the Coronation for King Charles III. He mentioned that he would act as "gold command" for RBWM as part of the command structure alongside multi-agency partners for the events.

Andrew Durrant first gave a summary of Coronation Day on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023, whereby King Charles would be crowned at Westminster Abbey and all the events would be live on all major channels.

On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May, Andrew Durrant explained, over 20 street parties were approved through an application process. He pointed out the weblinks ([TNL Community Fund, coronation.gov.uk/events](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/coronation.gov.uk/events), [coronation.gov.uk/toolkit](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/coronation.gov.uk/toolkit)) and email address ([communications@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:communications@rbwm.gov.uk)) on the presentation slide where residents could get in touch with the Communications Team and notify what they were planning to do. He also stated that on Monday 8 May, there was the Big Help Out event which encouraged residents and community groups to organise and get involved in volunteering activities. There would also be

lottery awards for Big Help Out schemes. He also stated that applications for some funding for Monday activities needed to be made by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March.

The Coronation Concert would take place on the East Lawn at Windsor Castle, which would be managed by the BBC. The Borough was working in partnership with the BBC, Thames Valley Police and DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) amongst many other partners to ensure the event took place safely, was accessible and coordinate transportation as 20,000 people were expected to attend the Concert. The Concert would be broadcasted on BBC television and radio services.

Andrew Durrant explained that social media and other comms channels would continue to publish information on getting involve and what to do during the Coronation weekend. Pubs and clubs would be allowed to stay open until 1am between Friday 5<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March. He also pointed to the weblink ([RBWM Coronation of King Charles III](#)) on the presentation slide with further information on Coronation plans.

Claire asked if there were any arrangements for dealing with the expected high turnout of people arriving to the Long Walk. Andrew Durrant answered the information regarding this would be out in due course. He also stated that the Borough was not promoting anything in Windsor as a national event; rather the national event would be the concert at Windsor Castle.

Councillor Wisdom Da Costa asked if there were any more grants available for local parties and whether this would be given on certain days. He also asked about the status of public toilets in Windsor, namely whether they were being maintained. Andrew Durrant replied that residents could take part in the national lottery if they wished to acquire funding for community events or Big Help Out activities (with the deadline being 24<sup>th</sup> March to apply). On toilet provisions, Andrew Durrant explained that there were no particular issues in which he was aware of. Alysse Strachan, Head of Neighbourhood Services, explained that she had not heard anything about public toilets not being functional, but requested for issues with any public toilets to be reported. She also stated that two items of growth were added to the budget: one on cleansing, and another on maintenance of public toilets. From this, the aesthetics (e.g., tiles) would be investigated.

Councillor Price raised that the local rotary was promoting the Windsor community shows for the third year in, she believed, Windsor Yards. She also hoped that the toilets would be repaired before the Coronation.

Councillor Davey asked which musicians would be performing at the Coronation Concert. Andrew Durrant replied that he was not involved with those discussions.

Councillor Sharpe asked what would be happening in Ascot during the Coronation. Andrew Durrant responded that there were discussions amongst officers to ensure there was activity in Ascot as well as Windsor and Maidenhead, such as bunting.

Councillor Knowles asked if certain roads could be closed to control parking, particularly in residential areas. Andrew Durrant replied that the Borough was seeking to keep road closures at a minimum for the Coronation. He also stated that it was not expected for there to be high number of people compared to Queen Elizabeth II's funeral. He stated he would take this away to ensure this was covered. Alysse Strachan confirmed that this was being highlighted.

Mr Wilson raised a couple of points. He commented that the public facilities around Windsor were a "disgrace", and that the Council should resolve this, especially as the Coronation was approaching. He also raised that there was litter and unkept plants around St Leonard's Road, and therefore asked if these would be cleared up. The Chair replied that she had recently contacted Alysse Strachan regarding the issue at St. Leonard's Road. Alysse Strachan added

that two of the roads in area had been sorted but requested for any other issues in the area to be reported to her or online.

### The Management of Waste & Litter in Windsor

Alysse Strachan explained that there would be a daily litter picking in the Town Centre from 6:00 to 8:00pm. In the outer skirts of the Windsor Town Centre, there would be a weekly litter pick and sweep. In more rural residential areas, it would be more six-weekly litter picks and sweeps. Around rural roads, it would be every 3 months, with some of them being annual.

On household waste collection, Alysse Strachan stated that recycle and food waste collection would be weekly.

Regarding business waste, Alysse Strachan stated that there was a district enforcement team which conducted spot checks on ensuring businesses met their duty of care to manage their waste and investigate any reports of business misbehaviour.

Alysse Strachan explained that there was no overnight litter picking during the night-time economy as daily litter clearing in the Town Centre was from 6:00-8:00pm. Nevertheless, if there a report was received for clearing something after 6:00pm, it would be cleared in the following day.

Mr Griffin asked if takeaway food restaurants were contributing to keeping Windsor clean from litter, whether contributing to the costs of keep their areas clean or whether they were being fined. Alysse Strachan replied that fast food litter was an issue nationwide. While she was not aware of any individual businesses misbehaving, she would look into this. She also reiterated that the district enforcement team would promote education and enforce waste cleaning rules.

Claire asked who was responsible for clearing up litter along motorway slip roads and wondered if this could be cleared. Alysse Strachan replied that she was uncertain if it was the Borough or National Highways who were responsible but stated that she would investigate this.

Mr Wilson commented that litter mess had become worse in the last 10 years, believing that the Borough had not changed its approach to street cleaning in years. He asked if there were plans to update this. He also raised that the public bins in Alexandra Gardens were out-of-date and asked how many new public bins had been installed in the last three years. The Chair replied that more money had been added into the budget which would allow more money to be spent on street cleaning. Councillor Hilton added that one action which could take place was to promote a message to discourage littering. Alysse Strachan informed that the Borough was in midst of procuring the new cleansing contract with Volker Highways which was expected to take into effect in April 2024. She reiterated that more money in the budget meant the Council would be able to conduct street cleansing in the following year. She also stated that she would send a team to investigate the Alexandra Gardens bins. While she did not have the figures on how many new public bins were installed in the last three years, she suspected that it was a small amount due to a lack of capital investment. She hoped that things could be improved.

Referring to the document in the report, Councillor Price asked for clarification on the routine of litter cleaning, citing a case where she reported Wakefield Road and was told it would not be done for 48 days. Alysse Strachan replied that Wakefield Road would be cleaned on a six-weekly or three-monthly basis. She also stated that she could get the list of roads and their cleansing schedule. She also stated that cleaning could be affected by parked cars and resources, though this should not prevent the Borough from being back on top with cleaning.

Councillor Wisdom Da Costa asked if it would be possible for a schedule to be provided on which streets would be cleaned and which days this would happen. He also asked if the cleaning was a frequency or standard. He also asked if it can be requested for the whole

street to be cleared. Alysse Strachan confirmed that a whole street can be reported and then cleansed. She explained that the standards were set under the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse where it set out gradings for litter and detritus. If an area came under an unacceptable standard, it should trigger a complaint and a cleansing regime should begin. There were also time standards for cleaning the road depending on the intensity of the road used.

Mr Wilson raised that he had looked at the Freedom of Information request from September 2022 on the number of litter bins being installed since 1 June 2019, which, he stated, revealed that none had been installed since then. He then asked the Chair and other Forum members on not pushing for more litter bins to be installed. The Chair replied that the Council was seeking to do this by increasing the budget and the new contracts for cleansing.

### Resident Questions and Item Suggestions for Next Forum

A resident suggested an item on pollution monitoring levels. Andrew Durrant stated this could be brought to the Forum.

Nigel, a resident, asked if the Councillors on the Forum supported a town council for Windsor. The Chair stated that she publicly supported a town council. Councillors Price and Knowles also proclaimed their support for a town council for Windsor.

Councillor Hilton stated that adequate support for a town council did not exist, and that the Windsor area was too large with too much concentration in one section. He said he supported two parish councils in Windsor instead of a single town council.

Councillor Wisdom Da Costa also expressed support for a town council as well as transitioning powers to the Windsor Town Forum.

Councillor Shelim mentioned that he was the chair of the formation of a Windsor Town Council, in which, he stated, members had to be impartial. He chose not to express an opinion on the matter.

Councillor Cannon, who was on the aforementioned committee as well, stated that he was supportive of a parish or town council for Windsor. However, agreeing with Councillor Hilton, he believed the Windsor area was too large, and that west Windsor and Central Windsor had differing interests. Therefore, he argued, Windsor would be better served through more parochial representation. He added that there was a lot of vocal support for a Windsor town council, but there was not enough support from the consultation.

Councillor Bowden, who attended as a member of the public, suggested a representative of either Heathrow Airports Limited, National Air Traffic Service or The Airlines to attend a Forum meeting and explain why certain events took place, namely the issue of air traffic over Windsor. He also opined that the Aviation Forum had "faded away". Andrew Durrant said he would take this suggestion away.

Councillor Wisdom Da Costa agreed with Councillor Bowden's suggestion.

Councillor Knowles, while agreeing to invite an airline representative to attend a Forum meeting, suggested that the Aviation Forum should be rejuvenated.

Claire reiterated the suggestion of the management of existing trees and the planting of new ones. Andrew Durrant replied that 2023 budget was focused on statutory tree inspection and associated maintenance as well as limited re-planting. He added that he discussed with the Sustainability Team to consider schemes and funding opportunities whereby the Borough could look into priority re-planting and then possibly provide a short briefing to the Forum.

Mr Wilson suggested an item on the state of the Windsor Leisure Centre, explaining that he received complaints that the facilities were not clean and tiles were falling off the swimming



pool. The Chair stated that one of the leisure operators often attended an overview and scrutiny panel and suggested that this could be added to an overview and scrutiny agenda.

Councillor Price suggested a couple of items. Firstly, an item on the repair and maintenance of local highways. She commented that central government had given additional funding to the Borough and would be interested to know how much of this would be directed to road maintenance in Windsor. She also hoped that highways would include pavements, stating residents had raised concerns on tripping. Secondly, she asked for an item on the support provided by the Family Services Unit.

The Chair replied that the highways was covered under the capital budgets and that additional funding was added into the budget which would encompass filling potholes. Based on this, she stated that there was not much more which could be added but nevertheless was open to questions to be directly answered. Regarding youth services, the Chair stated that this would be covered by overview and scrutiny panels.

Councillor Price then raised that the Forum should look into the consultations. The Chair stated that this could be added to the next agenda.

**ACTION: Consultations to be added to the next agenda.**

Items proposed for the next meeting included:

- Pollution monitoring levels
- Representative from Heathrow Airport or National Air Traffic
- Management of existing trees and the planting of new ones
- State of Windsor Leisure Centre
- Repair and maintenance of local highways
- Support provided to Family Services Unit

The meeting, which began at 6.31 pm, finished at 8.42 pm

Chair.....

Date.....