

# Public Document Pack

COUNCIL - 21.11.23

## **AT A MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber - Town Hall - Maidenhead on Tuesday 21 November 2023**

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Neil Knowles), The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Simon Bond)

Councillors Clive Baskerville, Adam Bermange, George Blundell, David Buckley, Mandy Brar, Alison Carpenter, Richard Coe, Suzanne Cross, Wisdom Da Costa, Devon Davies, Karen Davies, Jack Douglas, Genevieve Gosling, Jodie Grove, Geoff Hill, Maureen Hunt, Lynne Jones, Ewan Larcombe, Sayonara Luxton, Asghar Majeed, Siân Martin, Helen Price, Gary Reeves, Julian Sharpe, George Shaw, Gurch Singh, Kashmir Singh, John Story, Helen Taylor, Amy Tisi, Julian Tisi, Leo Walters, Simon Werner and Mark Wilson

Officers: Stephen Evans, Elaine Browne, Elizabeth Griffiths, Kevin McDaniel, Andrew Durrant and Kirsty Hunt

### 35. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Howard and Reynolds.

Councillors Carole Da Costa, Del Campo and Moriarty were in attendance remotely and took no part in the vote on any item.

### 36. Council Minutes

The Mayor noted that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 10 October 2023 were not yet available for review and would be considered at the January meeting.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2023 were approved as a correct record.**

### 37. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

### 38. Mayor's Communications

The Mayor shared a series of images with the meeting to highlight activities he had attended since the previous Council meeting including:

- attending the Windsor Christmas Light Switch On
- leading the 21 gun salute to mark the birthday of His Majesty the King
- attending a citizenship ceremony at the Guildhall, Windsor where 70 people became British
- handing over a cheque for £3,500 to the House of Cavalry Foundation from the Armed Forces Day Dinner
- leading the Remembrance Sunday civic services in Windsor while the Deputy Mayor attended a service in Maidenhead
- joining Maidenhead Indian Association for their Diwali celebrations
- hosting the charity dinner in the Windsor Guildhall in aid of the Household Cavalry Foundation
- visit to the Maidenhead Gurdwara
- attending the Lord Lieutenant's retirement party at James Puxley's home
- visiting the Windsor Homeless Project for their annual Sleep Out

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- attending the Royal Marines Association (Windsor and District Branch) Corps birthday dinner
- participating in the Windsor Lions Swimathon with the Mayor's swimming team
- visiting the Mitzvah Day activities at Maidenhead Synagogue
- attending the Windsor Maidenhead Symphony Orchestra chamber concert

He concluded that the full list of activities was available in the agenda pack.

### 39. Public Questions

#### **a) Thomas Wigley of Clewer East ward asked the following question of Councillor K Davies: Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Windsor Town Council**

I understand that air pollution data is being gathered by a specialist company to help inform RBWM's choice of location for the three new atmospheric particulates monitoring stations. Can the air pollution data which is currently being collected be made available to the public please?

Written response: *I am very pleased to advise that the additional sensors to monitor PM10 and PM2.5 are scheduled to be installed in the first week of December 2023. Subject to data collection and validation processes, we will disseminate the provisional hourly datasets online as and when they are provided during 2024. In the meantime, our Annual Status Report (which will contain 2022 data) is available online at:*

*<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/environment-and-waste/environmental-health/air-quality-annual-status-report-asr>. The council is currently exploring whether the independent air monitoring data gathered to inform the choice of sites for the additional sensors can be provided and shared publicly and I will provide you with an update on that once available.*

Through the Mayor, Thomas Wigley stated that his interest was in the public availability of the data being collected. He sought clarification on whether three new monitors were being installed in December, as indicated in the written response.

Councillor Karen Davies explained that the additional sensors being installed in December were five additional low-resolution monitors which monitor PM10 and PM2.5 and also NO2. In addition to monitor that was monitoring particulates PM10 in the borough on Frascati Way. The idea was that these five additional low-resolution monitors would be in place for a year to inform the appropriate location for the three additional high-resolution monitors. These low-resolution monitors could potentially be relocated depending on where coverage was needed. The data from the new low-resolution monitors can be shared regularly and discussions were ongoing with officers to agree the most appropriate place e.g the Council's website or RBWM Together. The previously collected data was held by a third party and officers were exploring whether it was feasible for this to be shared. Councillor Karen Davies committed to updating Thomas Wigley directly once she was advised of the outcome.

#### **b) Shay Bottomley of Oldfield ward asked the following question of Councillor Jones, Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Finance**

The nature of floodlit artificial pitches offer an opportunity for residents to enjoy sporting and leisure facilities throughout the year, and in all sorts of weather conditions. As such, when was the last time the council conducted maintenance for its AstroTurf pitches in Maidenhead, and how much money is allocated to maintenance as part of the current budget?

Written response: *The council agrees that floodlit artificial pitches are important as they provide residents with an increased opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity. Council owned AstroTurf pitches in Maidenhead (at Cox Green, Furze Platt, and Braywick*

*Park/Leisure Centre) are included as part of the leisure contract so we do not pay for or maintain them directly, just for their replacement.*

*Repairs are financed from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funded Leisure Centre annual maintenance budget or from separate capital bids depending on the specifics. Spend to date since April 2023, has been at Furze Platt which required a complete seam repair to extend the life of the pitch equating to £6,240 (excluding VAT). The pitches within the leisure contract are subject to specialist maintenance work on a quarterly basis in addition to regular tasks undertaken by leisure centre staff.*

*What's in the budget for maintenance of Astro Turf pitches?*

- We directly manage one Astro pitch, this is at Dedworth School. We collect £3.5k of income each year which we use to cover reactive maintenance at the site, an example of which is the floodlight maintenance.*
- Floodlight maintenance varies depending on bulbs and ballasts needing replacement, annual maintenance paid in 2022/23 was £1,870.28. 2023/24 will probably be more, 3 bulbs and ballasts need replacing at present.*
- Capital of approximately 450k annually (it can vary) is used for everything required under the Leisure contract terms which is basically anything which breaks and wouldn't fall out if you turned the asset upside-down. As this is for reactive maintenance rather than future planning it is hard to predict what it will be spent on. We have requested conditions surveys for all our Astro pitches to get an up-to-date picture of lifespans and expected costs.*

Shay Bottomley thanked Councillor Jones for her detailed response but requested further clarification. He understood that astro turf pitches required a complete carpet replacement every 10 years on average. The cost of replacement can be substantial and multiple pitches may require carpet replacement at the same time in the event of unfortunate timing. As such does the council collect and hold an annual sinking fund to cover the costs of carpet replacements for each of these pitches.

Councillor Jones confirmed that the Council did hold reserves and they were built up each year. She would have to ask Councillor Reynolds as portfolio holder for Leisure Services exactly how that was administered.

**c) Shay Bottomley of Oldfield ward asked the following question of Councillor Reynolds, Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure**

Recently, Maidenhead Golf Club emailed its members to confirm it will be required to vacate the site by December 31, 2025. Naturally, the new inhabitants will need sport and leisure facilities for the benefit of their wellbeing. What provisions is RBWM making to ensure there will be adequate such facilities in time for the influx of thousands of new residents?

*Written response: The Council's Sport and Leisure Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy, and Indoor Built Facilities Strategy are aimed towards identifying requirements across the borough to support sport and physical activity participation. They are produced following consultation with national governing bodies, sports clubs and other organisations and council departments with similar or shared objectives, and include population growth projections and the associated expected demand for facilities. These documents assist the council in working with clubs and other organisations to obtain funding to access, protect and develop existing facilities, whilst looking at opportunities to increase provision in the most efficient and effective manner within legal, financial and other resource limitations.*

Shay Bottomley thanked Councillor Reynolds for his response and reassurances but stated that he continued to have some concerns particularly over the council's Sports and Leisure Strategy and indoor built facility strategy which appeared to be out of date or yet to be

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Adopted. He stated that the last update was provided at the April cabinet meeting although no formal adoption of the strategy had taken place. He added that the Indoor Sport and Leisure Facility Strategy ran from 2016 to 2021 and an updated version had not yet been published. He asked by way of a supplementary that without the adoption or renewal of these strategies how could the council confidently plan for the required sporting facilities in preparation for the town's projected population growth over the coming years.

Councillor Werner, in Councillor Reynolds' absence, replied that the Council was ready to fix the mess that had been left by the previous administration and so they would be bringing forward those policies soon. He advised that Councillor Reynolds would be able to provide a more detailed reply in writing.

### 40. Petitions

There were no petitions presented.

### 41. Councillors' Questions

#### **a) Councillor Larcombe asked the following question of Councillor Coe, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services**

The construction of the Jubilee River by the Environment Agency over two decades ago resulted in more than twenty new or modified bridges. Can you tell me please - how many of these bridges are now partially or wholly the responsibility of RBWM?

Written response: *Only a small section of the Jubilee River passes through the borough and according to our records, the structures for which RBWM are wholly responsible for are:*

2610 *BLACK POTTS FOOTBRIDGE*  
2453 *POCOCKS LANE*  
2756 *THE MYRKE FOOTBRIDGE (aka MICHAELS BRIDGE)*

Councillor Larcombe thanked Councillor Coe for his answer. He stated that the Jubilee River was now called the Jubilee Flood Relief Channel. The Berry Hill Footbridge, which is not in the borough, was removed as it failed and was removed about two years ago. It is due to be replaced by Bucks County Council at a total cost of about £500,000. He stated that it had cost £100,000 to remove the 35m long footbridge. Dorney Wetlands footbridge, also not located in the borough, decking had already failed. Slough Borough Council were responsible for that bridge. He believed that the Council's two timber bridges located at Black Potts and The Myrke were at the end of their lives. He estimated that the removal and replacement costs would exceed £2m. He stated that the Environment Agency who had designed and installed these bridges had cut the costs at every opportunity. He asked that, given the Environment Agency designed and installed these bridges, was it fair and reasonable that the RBWM budget should have to bear these costs? He queried how the Council had taken on the responsibility for these things.

Councillor Coe replied that he had been supplied with the condition reports and the opinion of the chartered engineer at Project Centre was that all three bridges were basically sound. There may need to be some work in replacing the decks on the wooden bridges but the structural elements were in good order. He did not think the council would be worrying about a £2m cost in the very near future. In relation to the adoption of the bridges, he confirmed that they had been adopted, they were the council's responsibility including the third bridge across Pockocks Lane which carries the road from Eaton to Datchet near to Thames Valley Athletic Centre to be maintained. He advised that he was still waiting for detailed advice to confirm whether the council had to adopt them or was a choice. He noted the adoptions of the structures occurred about the same time as local government reorganisation in Berkshire which complicated the tracking of this issue for officers.

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The Mayor concluded the meeting by wishing everybody a Merry Christmas and a very safe festive season.

The meeting, which started at 7.00 pm, ended at 7.30 pm.

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