

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE COUNCIL
HELD ON 19 MARCH 2015 FROM 7.00 PM TO 10.35 PM**

Members Present

Councillors: UllaKarin Clark (Mayor), Parry Batth (Deputy Mayor), Mark Ashwell, Alistair Auty, Keith Baker, Chris Bowring, Prue Bray, Lindsay Ferris, Michael Firmager, Kay Gilder, Mike Gore, Guy Grandison, Kate Haines, Mike Haines, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Tim Holton, Philip Houldsworth, Dianne King, Norman Jorgensen, Pauline Jorgensen, John Kaiser, David Lee, Abdul Loyes, Tom McCann, Ken Miall, Philip Mirfin, Ian Pittock, Bob Pitts, Barrie Patman, Anthony Pollock, Nick Ray, Malcolm Richards, Angus Ross, Beth Rowland, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, David Sleight, Chris Smith, Wayne Smith, Bill Soane, Rob Stanton, Alison Swaddle, Paul Swaddle, Dee Tomlin, Simon Weeks, Bob Wyatt and Shahid Younis

90. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from David Chopping, Gary Cowan, John Halsall, Nicky Jerrome, Julian McGhee-Sumner and Stuart Munro.

91. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 February 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Tom McCann declared a Personal Interest on the grounds that his daughter was employed by a company involved with the Wokingham Town Centre Regeneration Project.

Councillors Malcolm Richards, Chris Bowring, Lindsay Ferris and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey declared Personal Interests in the amendment proposed to Agenda Item 91.2 Motion 366 on the grounds that discussion around the amendment could have centred on the Elms Field and they were all members of the Planning Committee. None of these Members voted on this item.

93. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Mayor invited members of the public to submit questions to the appropriate Members.

93.1 Laura Blumenthal asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:

Question

What is being done to improve South Lake, specifically the dam?

Answer

South Lake is a beautiful amenity for local residents to enjoy on their doorstep. As well as grounds maintenance responsibilities, Wokingham Borough Council is also responsible for ensuring the safety of residents through the ongoing and regular maintenance of the dam. Regular inspections plus site engineer visits ensure that appropriate work is carried out in the interests of safety under Section 10 of the 1975 Reservoirs Act. These works are

crucial to enable the continuation of regular and thorough monitoring of the site as a whole.

The following works have recently been completed:

- Clearance of small pathways from the bottom to the top of the embankment to maintain a clear access route along the bottom of the embankment. This was to ensure the continuity of regular checks for issues such as animal burrows, seepage, instability or any signs of irregularity;
- Health and Safety works carried out to all trees highlighted within a recent tree inspection of the area.

In addition, screening from the top of the embankment is a concern for residents who overlook this area. We will therefore be erecting a form of screening which will be permanently attached to the inside of the fence to protect the privacy of residents. We hope this will also prevent planting along the embankment which may impede safety inspections.

Supplementary Question

Are there any other improvements planned for South Lake?

Supplementary Answer

Indeed, in addition and in response to a local petition, we are working with the South Lake Angling Club to trial a form of chalk treatment at South Lake in an attempt to promote the breakdown of sediment and reduce the odour highlighted by residents. This may also incorporate some reed planting at the appropriate time.

We will continue to work closely with residents and local ward members to ensure that we communicate any works on site and are able to continue to fulfil our health and safety obligations.

I would be happy to arrange a meeting with the Council Officer dealing with this so that you could monitor progress direct.

93.2 Shaun Hanna asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

In order to build their part of the Winnersh Relief Road, Wokingham Borough Council will have to use some land by the motorway bridge on Reading Road which is owned by the Highways Agency. What is the current status of the negotiations to buy the land?

Answer

The Highways Agency wrote to Mr John Redwood MP on 24 February 2014 advising that the land was deemed to be surplus to their requirements and with the intention that the land be sold to the Council for the provision of the relief road. The sale of the land will be at market value in accordance with Treasury guidance 'Managing Public Money.'

Supplementary Question

Presumably this requires some negotiation to reach a price acceptable to both. When last have you had any contact with the Highways Agency?

Supplementary Answer

This is a two part question. Of course there is also the District Valuer who can step in and arbitrate between the two of us. When was the last time; I cannot actually tell you. I will find out and get back to you if that is ok.

94. PETITIONS

The following member of public and Member presented petitions in relation to the matters indicated.

The Mayor's decision as to the action to be taken is set out against each petition.

Mr Clive Jones	Petition regarding M4 Smart Motorway – noise reduction measures between Junctions 11 and 10. <i>To be forwarded to the Executive Member for Planning and Highways</i>
Kay Gilder	Petition regarding the Number 19 bus. <i>To be forwarded to the Executive Member for Planning and Highways</i>

95. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council noted the pre-circulated list of Mayoral and Deputy-Mayoral engagements.

96. PRESENTATION BY THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, ANDY FRY

The Council received a presentation from Andy Fry, Chief Fire Officer of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS), Deputy Chief Fire Officer Trevor Ferguson and Area Manager Gene Ashe. In his presentation the Chief Fire Officer referred to why the Fire Authority had reviewed and reset its policy direction and outlined the financial situation. He also outlined the Strategic Commitments and Policy Statements and what the RBFRS had to offer in terms of assets and interventions.

Following the presentation, Members asked a number of questions relating to:

- what else the Fire Authority would like the Council to do to strengthen partnership working;
- working with the Council to link Councillors with their local fire stations;
- working with primary school aged children;
- combining of Ambulance and Fire Service as first responders;
- recruitment and retention.

The Chief Fire Officer answered these questions at the meeting.

Members thanked the Chief Fire Officer for his presentation.

97. APPROVAL OF A PERIOD OF ABSENCE FROM MEETINGS BY COUNCILLOR KATE HAINES

This item was withdrawn as Councillor Kate Haines was present at the meeting.

98. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Council considered the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees as set out within the Agenda.

Tim Holton introduced and summarised the report, highlighting some of the key activities undertaken by all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees over the municipal year.

He thanked all Committee Members for their involvement and Democratic Services for their support.

Members, Officers and the public were encouraged to submit scrutiny review suggestions for the next municipal year and were reminded of the criteria for such suggestions.

Michael Firmager also paid tribute to all the Members and Officers who had been involved in the work of the Committees and supporting them over the year.

It was proposed by Tim Holton and seconded by Michael Firmager that the report be noted.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee be noted.

99. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

The Council considered the Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2014/15 as set out within the Agenda.

Keith Baker introduced the report and summarised the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board over the previous year. He also highlighted that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy had been refreshed and informed Members of a funding transfer from NHS England.

It was proposed by Keith Baker and seconded by Charlotte Haitham Taylor that the report be noted.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the report from the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board be noted.

100. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

The Council considered the annual report of the Audit Committee as set out within the Agenda.

Guy Grandison introduced the report and highlighted key changes which had had an impact on the work of the Committee, including the creation of a Shared Internal Audit Service with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council and the transfer of Benefit Fraud Investigations to the Department of Work and Pension's Single Fraud Investigation Service.

It was noted that the Committee received regular training which Overview and Scrutiny Committee members were also welcome to attend.

Councillor Grandison thanked Members, Officers and Ernst & Young for their hard work.

Chris Smith thanked Officers for their responses to the challenge offered by the Committee.

It was proposed by Guy Grandison and seconded by Chris Smith that the report be noted.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee be noted.

101. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

The Council considered the Standards Committee Annual Report 2014/15 as set out within the agenda.

Rob Stanton introduced the report and detailed the work of the Committee throughout the municipal year. He highlighted that it was important that Members were mindful of making declarations of interest when required.

He thanked the members of the Committee and Officers for their hard work and support.

Pauline Helliard-Symons reiterated the importance of declaring interests and encouraged all Members to attend the training session which would be held later in the year on the matter.

It was proposed by Rob Stanton and seconded by Pauline Helliard-Symons that the report be noted.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the report from the Chairman of the Standards Committee be noted.

102. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council considered the annual reports from Members appointed to outside bodies as set out within the Agenda.

It was proposed by Ulla Karin Clark and seconded by Parry Batth that reports from Members appointed to Outside Bodies be noted.

Keith Baker suggested that Overview and Scrutiny review the participation on all of the Outside Bodies to ensure that value was being added. Prue Bray commented that this was something which scrutiny was currently considering.

Parry Batth emphasised the importance of the appointments adding value to the organisations.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the reports from Members appointed to Outside Bodies be noted.

103. STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND DEPUTY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Keith Baker, Leader of the Council

First I would like to offer my congratulations to Councillor Prue Bray, Leader of the Opposition, for being selected as the Parliamentary Candidate for Rochester and Strood for the Liberal Democrat Party. As Leader of the Opposition she has a vital role to play in this Council in questioning the actions of the administration. We are often reminded of this fact by Prue during debates here in this Chamber, many times. I actually have every faith in Councillor Bray being able to fight a vigorous campaign in her new home whilst continuing to be an effective Leader of the Opposition. I am sure she will be comforted in knowing that we will not be following in the footsteps of her colleague Clive Jones, the Parliamentary candidate for Wokingham, in putting out press releases saying she is not capable of doing both roles.

My second point is a more serious point. As we are all aware, the issue of child sexual exploitation has been exposed in nearby Oxfordshire. When this happened it triggered all Councillors to pose the simple question, could it happen here? After all we are all corporate parents so we all have a responsibility. Following both main political parties raising their concerns to me, the Director of Children's Services recommended commissioning a review focusing on how well WBC are responding to the emerging concerns about children's sexual exploitation, and prevention etc. This will extract learning from Rotherham and Oxfordshire as well as other cases. As Leader of the Council I am totally in agreement with this approach. This was communicated to the Opposition on 9 March and included a request for a nomination from them for a Councillor to work with the Lead Member in defining the terms of reference. Now children's sexual exploitation or CSE is such a serious issue that it has absolutely no place in party politics. So I was surprised that after this communication, which agreed to the Opposition's request, there was a flurry of activity by them over the following days; a website article, personal calls to the press and now we see a question to the Executive meeting on 26 March, all repeating this same request for this review. All this many days after they had the answer. Now I know that Councillor Bray will say that this is all legitimate because it provided transparency but transparency should not be selective. Despite knowing the answer several days before their public activities, not once, not once did they mention it had been agreed and that they were going to be involved in setting the terms of reference. I firmly believe the reasons simply did not stack up.

Philip Mirfin, Executive Member for Regeneration and Communities

The last month has been an incredibly important month to town centre regeneration. We successfully secured planning consent for the new shops and the public square at Peach Place and have been talking to our residents about our other proposals for Wokingham town centre, with positive results. We have just finished consulting on our proposals for the new Carnival Leisure Hub where we will be extending the existing sports centre with new indoor halls, a new bowling alley and a multi-storey car park. We are currently consulting on our proposals for Elms Field where we remain committed to giving residents a greater variety of shops in the town, leisure facilities such as a new boutique cinema and a substantial new town park. Talking to our residents remains at the heart of what we do and we will be continuing to work with them as we move forward. With opportunities to discuss, detailed design elements such as the approach to shop fronts, signage and landscaping as well as the design of the town park and play area. Our joint work with the Town Council on the refurbishment of the town market square is coming on at a pace and announcements of these proposals are expected within the next few weeks.

Now moving onto communities. Community Development and Tennant Services continue to develop their partnership work by delivering communities Summer Fun Days. Dates are currently being finalised across the five areas. The Berkshire Young and Centre Forward

event is taking place on Saturday 11 April at the Rainbow Centre. The main aim of the event is to engage with local young people, providing a range of age appropriate activities. It will also provide an opportunity to consult with young people, in order to find out their needs and wishes. At Shinfield an Easter holiday trip to Paradise Wildlife Park is taking place on 16 April. This is facilitated by the Community Development Service supported by cross service working with Tenants, Public Health and Children's Services. 70 parents, carers and children are already signed to attend. The Community House Garden Project supported by Brunel University is set to commence in late spring and this project will provide a garden to be used as the community development work. At Norreys tag rugby has started with 10 young participants already signed up for the second session. Lifelong Learning will also provide cooking with 11 learners and the popular Make and Take, arts and crafts sessions are now scheduled during the Easter holidays. Gorse Ride are offering the Sandmartins Golf Extreme Project providing local youngsters with the opportunity to access golf facilities. This is now confirmed and scheduled for the end of April, May and June. Their forum there meets again in March and is discussing waste and recycling. In Woodley the partnership with Emmanuel Church is developing activities for young children and includes 5-a-side football at Goals. An inter-generational event at Alexandra Place in partnership with Southlake Primary Schools junior wardens is also happening on 24 March, this to include fun and physical games, something for all. Now Madam Mayor, I would like to pass to my deputy Mark Ashwell to cover other elements.

Mark Ashwell, Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration and Communities

As Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration and Communities it is my pleasure to give a brief highlight of my two standalone responsibilities; asset management and the voluntary and community sector.

In asset management we have embarked on an asset review programme. This effectively is a massive audit of £714 million worth of assets Borough wide. This has enabled a very positive engagement with our towns and parishes. I mean it has not been without its challenges but our mission is to engender the collaboration of local government and community for the benefit of all. I can report that this assets review programme is nicely underway in Woodley, very nearly complete there in fact, Earley just begun and Twyford to follow and a programme to include all of our towns and parishes. The aim is to produce proactive recommendations for all of our Borough assets. We have also experienced a really positive by-product of regular interaction with our Environment and Children's Services colleagues where a lot of our assets are actually managed. We are picking up service issues much earlier, enabling the planning of work on their behalf and the delivery of properly considered solutions.

Onto the voluntary and community sector. This has been a very welcome new responsibility to our portfolio and as such we are looking to create better and stronger links between the voluntary and community sector and the asset management element of our portfolio. We have instigated a review of the social return on investment gained from organisations we give grants to. This should make sure our money hits the right spots. This in turn will help with our mission to match the Borough's assets to the community we all serve. We are making progress in our ambition to have a very different type of conversation with the voluntary and community sector. Our aim is that we want the voluntary and community sector to become active partners in both the design and the delivery of services and support of our Wokingham communities. An example of this in January and February is we ran three Co-Production Network events bringing together the voluntary and community sector with residents and service users. Each session had a single theme focusing in turn on mental health, autism and then families. These three

sessions have identified positive actions that will be taken forward to the Health and Wellbeing Board via our Place and Community Partnership. So Madam Mayor, across these two disciplines we are truly achieving in our mission to enable via collaboration.

Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services

Firstly I would also like to add my personal congratulations to Councillor Bray on her recent selection as a Parliamentary candidate.

On 2 March two Young Commissioners started on our new apprenticeship programme, improving opportunities for young people and showing that the Borough Council is a leader for other organisations and companies. Our Young Commissioners will be the champion of young people and add real value in testing the effectiveness of our services from a young people's point of view. Yesterday Joel and Hope came to the Wokingham Safeguarding Board and presented one of their first projects. This was the Board's annual safeguarding report but written for children and young people, demonstrating that papers can be produced in digestible formats. Their report was just five pages long, from the original report which was 33. I think we can learn a great deal from them.

The Local Safeguarding Board, under the leadership of the new Chair has enacted new challenge sessions in regard to the Board's priority areas of work, with all agencies accounting for the effectiveness of their work. The first session held this month focused on Early Help and received accounts as to the effectiveness of services from Thames Valley Police, Children's Social Care and the Healthcare Trust. In line with the Safeguarding Board's programme of work the Board received a report on the effectiveness and impact of the Multi-Agency Reducing Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy, which seeks to train the workforce, identify young people at risk and protect them from harm. The report was presented by Thames Valley Police and Children's Social Care leaders. One of the activities achieved is the training of 39 staff who will then themselves train others across the children's network. The training was delivered by the University of Kent. The Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy Group have commissioned a programme of awareness raising which has included visiting a large number of primary schools; speaking to 4,270 pupils about exploitation. They have also made 71 visits to secondary schools speaking to 5,915 students. There is evidence of impact in terms of effective identification of young people who are at risk and effective Police and Social Care joint work to address risk.

Lastly, I wanted to end on a lighter note. Bridges, our short care breaks service in the Borough for children and young people with disabilities between the ages of 8 and 18 was subject to an unannounced inspection at Christmas time. Unannounced inspections always come at a really good time. It was judged to be outstanding. Inspectors said that the service is not only outstanding overall but the same also applies to the quality of care given to the children and young people on respite visits, safeguarding standards, leadership management of the scheme and general outcomes for youngsters involved.

John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning and Highways

I have two items I would like to talk about. One is the Social Housing Decency Programme. As you know about 2 years ago we bought all our council houses that we thought we owned back from the Government for about £90million. We have now completed 820 new bathrooms and kitchens so far this year and we are 191 over target. It is estimated that we will complete another 100 in this financial year, which will mean we will meet the full target for the Government grant. The important thing, the cost of improving the quality of our housing stock, that we own, this year alone will be £3.3million, with a Government grant covering 90% of that. WBC contribution only being 10%; yet

another example of the Council ensuring excellent value for money, improving our housing stock, meaning quality housing for residents and do you know what, next year we are going to do even more.

The other item I would just like to touch on is obviously something that touches us all which is the roads. I mean the Council is set to continue investing with £95.8million in the Capital Programme this year to support its priorities including schools, roads, housing and despite financial pressure we can continue to focus on maintaining good quality services. This includes in this Investment Plan for 2015-2020 five new roads; Arborfield relief road, North Wokingham distributor road, South Wokingham distributor road, Shinfield eastern relief road and coming along Winnersh relief road. Wokingham Borough has among the highest ratio of car ownership in the country. Would you believe it only 9% of our residents do not have a car in their family. Not only that but the Borough is also one of the highest nationally for having more than one car. Wokingham Borough's road network has this unique problem in serving this high level of car ownership, which means it is trickier to maintain and upgrade without causing problems and congestion. The A329 is a major route through the Borough and each day it sees 40,000 traffic movements both ways. Winnersh Crossroads sees 24,000 traffic movements and Showcase Cinema, over 50,000. Investment in the Borough's highways and infrastructure and maintenance between 2015 and 2018 will, in addition to the major roads I have mentioned, include a major programme to replace all the Borough's worn out street lights; for you Tom. Additional footbridges over the Waterloo railway line and £8million replacement for the railway bridge on the A321 Finchampstead Road in addition to the extension of Nine Mile Ride. There will also be additions which will be upgrades of junctions and new junctions where they are required. There is also planned investment in future and current cycle networks as part of the development of Greenways, a network of quiet community and leisure routes for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. We will be investing heavily on measures to keep traffic moving, to negate as much as possible the effect of these works but they are needed. Whether you are a road user, whether you are a cyclist or you drive or even ride a horse, we need these roads.

Pauline Jorgensen, Executive Member for Resident Services

I will try and be brief. I am pleased to confirm that we are progressing plans to improve Woodley Library to meet the increased demand generated by the housing development in the area. These plans include improvements to the garden area so it can be used for activities and events, improvements to the entrance to create more space and the creation of a new meeting room at the rear of the library. These plans are consistent with the Borough library offer and will be funded through developer contributions and rather bring a lie to the comment last time that nothing ever gets spent in Woodley.

The drive for digital engagement as an option for our residents continues in Wokingham Borough. The new waste section is now live on the website and has excellent feedback from users. The new improved online process for garden waste renewals has proved very popular with 3,203 payments so far using the new online form, compared to 1,472 at our payment kiosks or by cheque. We are now getting nine out of ten payments through electronic means and that means that residents can pay when it is convenient to them rather than when it is convenient to us. The new website sections for Countryside, Parks and Transport are being developed and will go live in March with Planning to follow in April.

Finally to mention something which does not get mentioned very often, the Joint Trading Standards Service which we run jointly with West Berkshire is a key service protecting our

residents; although quite low profile. It especially protects the vulnerable and elderly and has been very busy. Cases are as wide ranging as illegal disposal of food products, animal welfare, endangering of sheep and various cases protecting the public from rogue traders and counterfeit products. It is a very underpublicised service but it does a really good job and it is doing a great job for residents at the moment.

Angus Ross, Executive Member for Environment

I will cover the important bits, actually they are all important. It has been a very active and productive year and I would just want to put on record my thanks to the Officers for their efforts on many initiatives that we have been working with. Perhaps I could just start on a very current one, Bulmershe leisure centre, which was a joint investment of over £400,000 with our leisure provider One Life to: refurbish swimming changing rooms and reception redecorating; bringing upstairs into use shortly as our second ground breaking long term condition gym; with consultation rooms adjoining; and opening a brand new gym already with 450 members. I want to thank all those involved including Woodley Town Council for helping the transfer arrangements and all those who attended the Open Evening last night when it was clear how well this Council and 1Life had worked together to transform this facility for the benefit of residents of Woodley and Whitegates. We are continuing provision across our three pools for free swimming for our youth in holiday time to promote exercise and learning to swim.

We have worked hard post the floods last year to produce the local Flood Risk Management Strategy and identify how to reduce chances of flooding from the River Loddon on the A327; works will be incorporated with the start of the Shinfield East relief road.

We signed up with the LGA's Climate Local to promote better efficiency in using energy and we are working to improve our country parks and finding good ways to make them financially self-sufficient whilst providing even more opportunities for residents, helped by success at Dinton of the new children's play area. Those parts that are being reworked are due to reopen very soon. Also the increased use of the Dinton Activity Centre and at California through reopening a very good café there. I could speak much more but I suspect my two minutes are up.

104. STATEMENTS FROM COMPANY DIRECTORS

Alistair Auty, Non-Executive Director of Wokingham Housing Limited

This is an update from Wokingham Housing Limited. When the Chairman of WHL last reported it was to notify Council that planning had been obtained for the Eustace and Fosters' sites. These are progressing with Eustace moving towards the selection of a contractor and Fosters going through the detailed design phase. Construction starts at Eustace in late August and is scheduled to last for 75 weeks and Fosters in November. We have an additional six applications in planning with others in the pipeline, though smaller than the two flagship schemes these account for 31 units. Thus by the end of next year we could have as many 133 units built, under construction or identified. Our existing MD Robin Fielder will be standing down at the end of May and after a detailed recruitment process we have his replacement Bill Flood contracted to start on 18 May. Robin has been an excellent MD and we may be fortunate enough to have him serve as a Non-Executive Director on the Board of our subsidiary Loddon Homes. On that front our consultant David Williams is guiding the Board through the process of applying for registered provider status. This is an important phase. If we can achieve this we will have the ability to potentially secure grant funding for future affordable housing schemes from the Homes and Communities Agency. I should just point out, on the Fosters front this is

the second extra care facility in Woodley. Finally the Chairman of WHL attended an Audit Committee meeting earlier this year to discuss matters of governance. All Directors are committed to keeping regular dialogue with its key shareholders.

Anthony Pollock, Non-Executive Director of Optalis

I am speaking in my capacity as Chairman of Optalis, our social care business. I am pleased to report that we are ahead of budget for this year by some 38% and that cash flow is well under control. I am also pleased that we have contributed to our Council savings for next year and we are contributing £250,000 towards the Commissioner's savings targets. We are making significant progress in connection with recruitment of more staff because we need them in order to be able to expand the business. We are doing a lot of work with recruitment. Our staff retention is better than similar businesses in the Borough. On the business development front we have won a contract to provide extra care housing support in a neighbouring borough and we are also advising a Labour council somewhere in the north of England on the setting up of a local authority trading company. So we are using the lessons that we have learnt to generate extra income and we are also working with the Commissioner of Wokingham Borough Council in connection with other services that we might assist the Council with. We have been working particularly in the last few months in developing our partnership working with the Commissioner and his team and it has been working particularly well and I look forward to that continuing.

105. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Mayor invited Members to submit questions to the appropriate Members

105.1 Philip Houldsworth asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:

Question

A "pilot" programme was established at Dinton Pastures working with Job Centre Plus and Pinnacle People to give long term unemployed people a chance to improve their skills and self-esteem through a volunteering programme.

Can the Executive Member for Environment please give me an update as to how this has progressed?

Answer

Thank you for the question and the opportunity to explain what this is about. Pinnacle People delivered two contracts on behalf of Job Centre Plus.

The first was Mandatory Work Related Activity (MWA), which offered a 4 week work placement for 30 hours a week.

The second contract was Community Work Programme (CWP), which offered a 6 month work placement for 30 hours.

On the first there have been 534 starts at the projects, around 60% of these starters sustained work for the 4 week period.

On the second there have been 283 starts which have led to 20 jobs, 4 of which have sustained beyond 6 months so far.

Operational outcomes for the service in a typical month included:

- Visiting and litter picking 10 countryside service sites
- Filling 2 skips with rubbish
- 575 volunteer days
- Other tasks included litter picking, painting, cutting back vegetation, stocking wood and kindling for the café, ditch clearance, leaf raking and playground maintenance.

The partnership programme has supported the long term unemployed gain workplace skills, in some cases sustainable jobs and in addition have made a significant improvement to the local environment. A downturn in client referrals means that the programme ended on 8 March this year.

I would like therefore to take this opportunity to thank Pinnacle People for their work to support long term unemployed people in our community and the productive partnership working with the Borough Council. I would also like to thank Council Officers Andy Nicholls and Lucy Jellis for their hard work in ensuring that the project was a success and also David Lee for his efforts to establish the programme and the initiatives when this was first discussed.

We will continue to research ways in which we can continue to help our long term unemployed and vulnerable people in the Borough and we believe that environmental enhancement programmes are a positive area to concentrate on.

105.2 Dee Tomlin asked the Executive Member for Resident Services the following question:

Question

Where in the Capital Plan is the money for the Twyford Community Hub?

Answer

The Twyford Community Hub, as you know, is a project led by a local voluntary group called the Polehampton Trust.

The Trust owns the Old Polehampton Boys School in the centre of Twyford. It is this building that the Trust wants to renovate and extend to become a community hub.

Within the Community Hub, the Polehampton Trust has indicated that they could provide an alternative location for the Wokingham Borough Council Library within Twyford. They have also designed space for the History Society, the Theatre Club and possibly the Town Council as well.

This option is being considered as part of the Council's Asset Review Programme, that Mark mentioned recently, which includes the potential utilisation of capital and revenue resources that could be generated from maximising the value of the current library site should the library services be relocated within the Community Hub.

Presently there are no resources allocated within the Council's Capital Plan but there is approximately £20,000 of S106 resources allocated for Library Services in Twyford.

Supplementary Question

Do you think you are misleading residents in this particular case about progressing the project when there is actually no money in the Budget; or is this just a case of smoke and mirrors?

Supplementary Answer

We are certainly not misleading the public. We have been consistent in the discussions with various stakeholders in the group, that this is a joint project. The Borough Council have been very supportive in terms of planning and in terms of supporting the mechanism around the meetings. We need to get to a joint agreement about the library and the Polehampton site as a whole. We have been consistent with them throughout that this a joint venture. It is not just a replacement of the library and as I have said before the funding is partially covered by the Council's Asset Review Programme and the potential reuse of the library site.

105.3 Kay Gilder asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:

Question

For several years residents of South Lake have had to live with the stink coming from the lake itself and we have raised this repeatedly. In the current year's budget there is £10,000 allocated for clearing vegetation but it hasn't been spent and is being carried forward to next year. With warmer days coming, when is this Council going to take action and sort out the South Lake stink?

Answer

Thank you Kay for raising this point again. In part I did cover this matter in the public question earlier. Although two visits from the Environmental Health Service observed no notable issues of odour from the lake, the Council does recognise that this is a concern for local residents. After much investigation and discussions with local residents and yourself the proposal is: first, all debris and stagnant vegetation is cleared; following this a boom is to be installed across the lake which will prevent leaves migrating to that corner of the lake preventing build-up of leaf sediment. Subsequently a maintenance regime will include an annual chalk treatment that will also break down any future deposits. It is hoped that this will eradicate the issue but the area will be carefully monitored and future maintenance may be adjusted to meet the needs of the residents and you. This is being funded from revenue budgets. Health and safety works relating to the recent report and the recommendations by the Supervising Engineer include vegetation clearance and tree works and an element of this funding may be carried forward into the new financial year.

Supplementary Question

Fourteen years ago this lake was maintained regularly by just one man and there was no smell. It has got worse every year since then. Why has not enough money been allocated for maintenance and why do my residents have to endure this revolting smell every year in this otherwise beautiful area? We have been told about the chalk. Will this actually get rid of the smell or will it just take the first layer off and make the lake more alkaline and less acidic which is actually making the lake less environmentally friendly for the wildlife.

Supplementary Answer

I think I have answered most of the points to that already. All I will say about the treatment is that we have had expert advice and we believe that this has a fair chance of being successful, but as I said again we will be monitoring it and I do hope that what we do will have a continuing ability to maintain this at levels that we can afford.

105.4 Beth Rowland asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:

Question

In the 2015/16 Medium Term Financial Plan the funding for either a rebuild or refurbishment of Bulmershe Leisure Centre has been deferred for 2 years until 2017/18. Why?

Answer

I think in part you saw the answer to this question last night but you will of course understand that the capital scheme in the MTFP beyond the budget agreed at Council is speculative in nature and represents our best understanding of possible future requirements. The deferral of the funding marker for the Bulmershe Leisure Centre within that is a means of ensuring clarity regarding our approach to the continued provision of leisure facilities in Woodley. The provisional Capital Programme had originally set funding aside at £7m in 2016/7 and £5.7m in 2017/8; based upon a full rebuild or refurbishment of the Centre. These timings were originally determined prior to this Council's assumption of the lease and the operational management being transferred to 1Life, and were thus not based upon a full assessment of the sustainability of facilities at Bulmershe nor the economics of their enhancement in the short-term.

There is not as yet a consensus of the best options for improving Bulmershe – these will be determined once we have begun the appropriate high impact consultation that such proposals warrant. To be clear there is no preferred model at this time - options must be widely considered, including within the context of the renewal of the wider leisure contract.

We remain completely committed to the provision of high quality accessible swimming and sporting facilities at Bulmershe and support for the needs of Bulmershe School and the recent works which I referred to earlier and what you saw last night will ensure that we sustain the existing facilities over the next three years during which the consultations on options and the parallel process of re-procuring the leisure contract will be undertaken.

Supplementary Question

The report on the alternatives for Bulmershe Leisure Centre has been around for two years now, if not longer. I can see no reason why Woodley should not have the same quality facilities as the remainder of the Borough. Again Woodley is short changed.

Supplementary Answer

It was you I saw last night was it not? The transformation that we have provided there and the investment that we and 1Life have put into that facility, which I believe is now better than many of the other facilities in the Borough, that money has been invested for the benefit of Woodley. It will be put to good use. It will not be thrown away in the short term whilst we consider what is best for that centre for the people of Woodley.

105.5 Tim Holton asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

Park and ride is a way of reducing traffic. At the moment our park and ride sites are looking to be single destination. Is the Council looking at the possibility of adding multi destination buses which could serve other locations such as the new town centres and stations to elevate car parking problems?

Answer

As you know we are building two Park and Rides at the moment and there is a third one on the cards. In the past our Park and Rides would always have been single destination but it is my plan as part of the Parking Strategy, not only for the Borough, but for the town centre, to look at the possibility of working with bus companies and having multi destinations which would take in, as I say, Wokingham town centre. Why should we be sending everyone to Bracknell and Reading? Also it will help stations such as Twyford where CrossRail will be coming in a few years' time and they already have a parking problem so yes it is something we will be seriously looking at.

105.6 Tom McCann asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

Information on the WBC website about S106 developer contributions has not been kept up to date and one of the reports is missing, this is not very open and transparent of the Council.

However going by what has now appeared on the website, the February 2015 report of developer contributions by parish shows £5.3M of S106 contributions received or owed to WBC for Woodley, how much of this has been identified in the capital program for the next 3 years?

Answer

Thank you Tom for giving me the opportunity to explain how much we are spending in Woodley. I do apologise on behalf of the Officers and myself regarding the S106 information not being updated on the website. I get it in hard copy as does Prue every month so there is no secret.

Of the £5.3m, the following has been identified in the capital programme.

Active Projects on 14/15 Capital Programme:

- Environment ** - £102k
- Community / Leisure - £172k
- Libraries - £7k
- Education - £173k

**Environment Includes. Transport, Cycleways, Crossings, Public Rights of Way, Road Safety

Pending Projects on 15/16 onwards in the Capital Programme:

- Environment - £996k
- Community / Leisure - £349k
- Education - £2.8m

There is stuff which is at Feasibility project stage, but it always happens, as Angus pointed out earlier, things do tend to change but they are at the feasibility change stage at the moment and they are not projects on the Capital Programme and they are:

- Environment - £128
- Community / Leisure *** - £367k
- Libraries - £64k
- Total £0.6m

*** Community / Leisure Inc. Woodley Town Centre, Public Toilets, Civic Space, Play Areas

The money which has been recently received, which is awaiting allocation is £200,000.

Supplementary Question

Could you just tell me first what that actually totals up to? That would be very handy. I assume you have got that as a bottom number.

My supplementary question is, of that amount money (as it is extremely difficult for local people to understand) where and when this money is being allocated when the Council allocates its Capital programme and changes it at a whim. As an example the Bulmershe has been bounced for 2 years. I hope this Council undertakes to spend this money in time and in calendar year and to budget.

Supplementary Answer

It may surprise you that my colleague there will not let me change anything at a whim. The last time I was asked I remember I had somebody ask about the Winnersh relief road. They asked where the money was for it and I explained very clearly the Winnersh relief road money, because it would change priorities and it was coming forward sooner, would appear on the Capital Programme. Now with regards to you finding out, this information is all available. It is not hidden anywhere. Prue gets this information; she can ask for it, she is on SCiWG. There is no reason why you cannot see this information. If you feel that there is anything which is underhand or you do not think represents value for money I would suggest that you ask for the information.

I have asked my colleague to add it up for me and it actually comes to £5.3million. The other thing I would say while I am here is that we did not reroute the bus but I am quite prepared to work with you, Beth and Reading Transport to try to get the route changed if that is what you require.

105.7 Bob Pitts asked the Executive Member for Resident Services the following question:

Question

I am frequently asked what is happening about the Community Hub/Library in Twyford. I know that this is not my Ward but it does affect my residents. Could you please provide me with an update on progress so far and an estimated date when something might happen?

Answer

I will not repeat what I just said about the funding to Dee. Since December, well since the last meeting in December, we have had two meetings with the interested parties which are Twyford and Charvil Town Councils; the Twyford Village Partnership; the Theatre Company; the Polehampton Trust themselves; and the History Society. Discussions also continue with the Police about their interest in jumping into the Hub. Since Christmas we have agreed the minimum spec with the architect. There has been a detailed site survey which was jointly funded by all the interested parties which shows a sign of their commitment and that enabled the architect to tweak the plans, including moving the building slightly because we discovered that the railway line was not quite where we thought it was. It would have been a bit unfortunate otherwise. The architect has redesigned the building as a result and we discussed it at the last meeting and have agreed the redesign. Conversations are ongoing with the Listed Building Officers because

obviously this would be an adjustment to a listed building in the Polehampton building itself. The architect is doing further refining of plans as a result of those conversations and we hope to submit for planning application shortly.

Separately somebody who is connected to the Polehampton Trust has made a nice model of the building and we are hoping to provide that to local groups in the area so the local residents can get a better idea of what is being planned.

Supplementary Question

It is just a point of clarification because I know when you answered Councillor Tomlin you mentioned something about the assets. Is any of that going to be used to assist the funding of the Community Hub Library?

Supplementary Answer

Just to be clear, we are looking at the whole site and if we do move the library into the Library Hub building that will free other land on the site so we are looking at what we can do with that land to generate revenue to actually enhance the money available to support the Community Hub, but in the end it will be a mixture of fundraising from the various different bodies, local funding and also contributions from the Borough so it is a joint project. At the end of that I would expect that we should have some form of joint governance over the whole thing so that the building is owned and operated by local residents and that they have a real engagement in the whole Hub and are interested in keeping it going.

105.8 Chris Bowring asked the Executive Member for Resident Services the following question:

Question

I have found the introduction of modern.gov into the Council's website a great help especially when searching previous council agendas and minutes for relevant information. Would the Executive Member for Resident Services please indicate what future enhancements we can expect using this new software?

Answer

I think I am becoming the new Keith Baker, being asked all the questions. The new software has already made it easier for members of the public to access Council information and more easily become involved in local democracy through a clearer website, better search and automatic notification of specific items registered as an interest.

It has also introduced new levels of transparency about attendance at meetings, details about Councillors including the ability to add additional information such as timing of surgeries and social media contact information. I must make a note before everyone dives into attendance at meetings items, that is only since Modern Gov has started so do not assume that because your Councillor has no attendance it means they have not attended anything. It has only been updated actually in the last couple of weeks. We are not going to retrofit all the old agendas and meetings and stuff onto the site but it will track attendance going forwards.

It is important to the Council that residents got the first set of improved services. In the coming months the Council will use the system to deliver improvements within the organisation including:

- Substantial reductions in the volumes of printed paper used at meetings.
- Improved information security because of less paper
- Easy access to calendars. You can already see the calendar on the website so you can see when the council meetings are.
- Key information such as the constitution and year book which will improve the efficiency of processes such as setting up meetings.
- More efficient processes of administration for essential Councillor items.
- Automated reminders and tasks to ensure maximum attendance at meetings and attention to key tasks.
- Proper workflow so things can get approved properly.
- Less money spent on postage and document delivery.

Future enhancements include:

- Incorporation of the Council's e-petition scheme into modern.gov.
- A workflow process which should speed up the passage of formal reports to Council and Committees.
- In association with the Council's elections software inclusion of election results on Councillors' webpages.

106. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS

106.1 David Lee asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

I read with interest today in the Wokingham News about how wonderful our housing is, and I would just like to ask I think Councillor Kaiser, it says here Wokingham Council spent £96million buying back its housing stock so it could collect all the rents and reinvest the money in social housing. Can you tell me how well that has worked Councillor Kaiser, and I suppose on behalf of my colleague over here have we spent any in the houses in Woodley?

Answer

Well I think David you will know being involved with Wokingham Housing in the past, that we have the opportunity to refurbish one of our less salubrious buildings which is now called Phoenix rather than Eustace Crescent that has allowed us to do that. That will provide 72 living accommodations and we are doing Fosters as well and we also have a programme that we would never have been able to do in the past, where we have been looking at some of our older, less desirable social housing where we will be looking to refurbish that across the Borough. thank you.

106.2 Kay Gilder asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

Thank you Councillor Kaiser for your comments because my thing is my residents in South Lake feel that they have been disenfranchised by the recent withdrawal of the Number 19 bus; their only direct route to both the Royal Berkshire Hospital and GP Surgeries. One of my residents this week informed me that it had cost her £40 in one week to go to the doctor and to go to the hospital which is an incredible amount for pensioners. The elderly, less mobile residents have to drive or get someone else to drive them for essential medical appointments and the young mothers have to either walk or get someone else to drive

them. When will this service be restored and when will South Lake residents be treated fairly?

Answer

I think I answered that earlier. We did not change the bus route, Reading Buses did but I would be quite happy to work with you to consult Reading Buses to see whether or not they would reinstall that route.

106.3 Beth Rowland asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:

Question

I drove down one of the main roads in Lower Earley today on my way home and would like to congratulate Councillor Kaiser on the lovely road surface that it will be when it is finished. However, when I got home to Fairwater Drive that was a different world entirely. There were signs all along Fairwater Drive indicating that the length of the road will be repaired or should have already been repaired by now. Woodley Town Council had a report from Reading Buses to say that Fairwater Drive is the worst road to drive on in Woodley. We have now discovered that only about 10% of the road will be repaired from the roundabout by Bulmershe Leisure Centre to the top of Antrim Road. Once again the residents of South Lake and in particular one of my residents who rides a motorbike up there and puts his life in danger every day, would like the whole of Fairwater Drive to be repaired. When is it going to be done and residents of South Lake treated fairly?

Answer

It may surprise everybody in the Chamber but I do not wake up in the morning and think I will not do that road. I mean we want to do as many of the roads that we possibly can but we have an issue, two issues first of all. The first is we are the lowest funded authority in the country. The other issue, as I said earlier on, Wokingham Borough road network's unique problem is serving the high level of car ownership. It means it is trickier to maintain. Nobody is going to thank me for resurfacing roads when we are doing major work on places like Showcase Cinema where the whole traffic will grind to a halt. We have to do it in phases. Unfortunately as it we do it, it will appear that it is going on forever because as we finish one phase we will do another; but unfortunately that is the situation we are in.

106.4 Dee Tomlin asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:

Question

Can you guarantee that the grass in Twyford will be cut and kept at a reasonable length this year so that small children and small animals do not get lost? It was an absolute disgrace last year.

Answer

As we have reported and as scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny the grass cutting regime has been reviewed and will be prioritised. What I cannot do is guarantee the weather and as to whether they can get on to cut it. But I can assure everyone that there will be a more selective scheme this year for cutting the grass. Also we will be looking at areas where we can allow the grass to grow and wildflower meadows for the attractiveness that they will provide.

106.5 Abdul Loyes asked the Executive Member for Economic Development and Finance the following question:

Question

At the beginning of 2014 Wokingham Borough Council launched two initiatives to help local unemployed people realise their potential and take control of their lives. The Strive Programme was run in partnership with the local housing association who share the cost and help with promotion and provide intensive support to disadvantaged people enabling them to use their skill and passion to start their own business. Can the Executive Member for Economic Development and Finance please give me an update?

Answer

Yes I can. This programme is running and has provided some real success stories. It has been a good example of cross-Council working. The Strive Programme has also provided opportunities for some of our former looked after children to start their own businesses. In 2014 a total of 15 residents graduated from the Strive 2014 course. Since then 10 have managed to launch their own businesses and have orders or have already provided services to their customers. The Strive Programme is run by a social enterprise called Enterprise Q who deliver an 11-week course offering a unique programme of dynamic, practical and interactive learning. Local businesses have supported the programme through mentoring and the graduates have also formed a self-help group using social media.

The examples of some of these businesses which have been started are: childcare business; an interior design and soft furnishing business; a commercial cleaning company; a party planning and on-line video messaging business aimed at children; and a start-up street food business. All these have been successful. They have obtained new customers and have been making sales.

In 2015 the 12-week course for Strive began on 7 January and overall 60 local residents expressed an interest in the programme; 25 attended our taster session and there are now 28 residents enrolled on the course. There are currently five residents on the waiting list and 40 residents have expressed an interest in attending an additional course.

In summary this is a successful programme contributing to the development of new businesses but also to individual personal developments and I am pleased that we support it.

106.6 Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:

Question

The litter bins in Winnersh, especially in Winnersh Meadows, are not being emptied on a regular basis. They seem to be emptied mainly when I go and talk to the people at the front desk or my residents call Wokingham Direct to get them emptied. Isn't there a regular schedule of them being emptied or are they hit by grass as is happening in Twyford at the moment?

Answer

The collection is not affected by the rain. It is a regular programme but I will take up your particular point and ask the Officers concerned to contact you.

106.7 Prue Bray asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

My question is about Winnersh Crossroads one of the busiest junctions in the Borough which has very high pedestrian traffic. On 20 February a resident reported to the Council that there had been an accident which had resulted in a set of pedestrian lights being demolished. It took over a week and a reminder before someone came and picked up the bits from the pavement and we are now a month on and nothing else has happened. I have a lovely picture of it here which I will give to you John in a minute. There is no indication of when the lights are going to be functioning again. Please can you take some action to get them repaired and please let all Winnersh Councillors know when it is going to happen and why it has taken so long?

Answer

Yes and I am a bit disappointed I must admit. I would say I was not aware of that and I will take that up. Travelling through the Winnersh Crossroads I am now finding it a lot easier and am finding that it takes a lot less time. I think possibly we have now found a situation where the phasing of the lights is correct.

106.8 Tim Holton asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

I have recently delivered a survey to every household in Hawkedon Ward. The response has been very positive and appreciative of what the Conservative Councillors have actually achieved in the Ward. Following on from this will you commit tonight that in the very near future you will meet with me to discuss the possibility of resurfacing residential roads in Lower Earley and particularly in my ward of Hawkedon?

Answer

The simple answer to that is yes I will but I am sure I will get a request from every other Member. I am currently at the moment looking at the schedule of work for this year and hopefully I might have some good news when I come back to the next meeting.

106.9 Tom McCann asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

My question is why is this Council even considering the development of a so-called "My Journey" app at the cost of around £100k for an app that no one wants and no one will use. Is this yet another example of this Council wasting money?

Answer

It is a bit of a red herring because the app is not just an app it is part of the "My Journey" product that the Officers have actually built which will actually help us to extract more money out of developers. But you are right there was a problem because it had not gone through our IT people and I have insisted it goes through them. It has gone back to them and they are looking at it now and I will be bringing a paper forward in the not too distant future which actually details how "My Journey" works and what it does. It is worth many millions of pounds to us.

106.10 Paul Swaddle asked the Executive Member for Planning and Highways the following question:

Question

One of my residents wanted to get to a hospital the other day and he had a lot of journeys to do and if he had used either a bus service or used something else it would have cost him £40 a week. He actually used the Readibus and was able to get there easily. I would just like to confirm that this service is available in Woodley?

Answer

Yes I believe it is.

107. MOTION 365 SUBMITTED BY NORMAN JORGENSEN

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Norman Jorgensen and seconded by John Kaiser.

‘This Council supports the campaign from our members of Parliament, spearheaded by John Redwood, to urge the Highways Agency to provide noise mitigation measures when the M4 becomes a managed motorway between junctions 3 and 12. This especially affects our residents in North Wokingham, Emmbrook, Hurst, Winnersh, Earley and Shinfield.’

After some discussion of the Motion, Norman Jorgensen in line with Rule 4.2.13.8, proposed that the Motion be altered as follows:

‘This Council supports the campaign from our members of Parliament, spearheaded by John Redwood, to urge the Highways Agency to provide noise mitigation measures when the M4 becomes a managed motorway between junctions 3 and 12. This especially affects **the majority of** residents in **the Borough.**’

Upon being put to the meeting, the alteration to the Motion was accepted.

At this point in the meeting 9.45pm, an in accordance with Rule 4.2.13.11g) Paul Swaddle proposed that time limit for speeches on this motion be extended for 15 minutes in order to enable the debate on the Motion to continue. This was seconded by Guy Grandison.

Upon being put to the meeting, the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

It was proposed by Lindsay Ferris and seconded by Prue Bray that the Motion be amended as follows:

‘This Council supports the campaign from our members of Parliament, spearheaded by John Redwood **and Clive Jones, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate for Wokingham**, to urge the Highways Agency to provide noise mitigation measures when the M4 becomes a managed motorway between junctions 3 and 12. This especially affects the majority of residents in the Borough.’

Following debate of the amendment, upon being put to the meeting, the amendment to the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be lost.

Following considerable discussion, it was proposed by Paul Swaddle and seconded by Keith Baker that the Motion be amended as follows:

‘This Council supports the campaign from our members of Parliament, spearheaded by John Redwood **and residents**, to urge the Highways Agency to provide noise mitigation

measures when the M4 becomes a managed motorway between junctions 3 and 12. This especially affects the majority of residents in the Borough.'

The amendment to the Motion was accepted by the proposer of the original Motion.

Following debate, upon being put to the meeting, the amended Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

RESOLVED This Council supports the campaign from our members of Parliament, spearheaded by John Redwood and residents, to urge the Highways Agency to provide noise mitigation measures when the M4 becomes a managed motorway between junctions 3 and 12. This especially affects the majority of residents in the Borough.

108. CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING

At this point in the meeting 10.00pm, in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.8, Council considered a Motion to continue the meeting beyond 10.00pm for a maximum of 30 minutes to enable further business on the Agenda to be transacted. This was proposed by Prue Bray and seconded by Lindsay Ferris.

Upon being put to the meeting, the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

109. MOTION 366 SUBMITTED BY PHILIP MIRFIN

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Philip Mirfin and seconded by Mark Ashwell.

'This Council fully supports the regeneration of Wokingham town centre on the basis that it continues to satisfy the 5 key principles:

- . To provide a thriving town centre
- . To provide an eighteen hour economy
- . To treat streets as places for pedestrian and cyclists
- . To provide active and accessible public spaces
- . To enhance the quality and heritage of the town centre.

This will be achieved by:

- . Continuing to put the local resident right at the heart of the regeneration process with an open and honest exchange that involves them in shaping how their town grows in the coming years
- . Continuing to ensure that residents are kept up to date on what is happening and how it effects them
- . Continuing to ensure that the regeneration remains viable and that it becomes something which benefits the community both financially and, more importantly, by delivering the facilities an ever growing and changing population needs
- . Creating a destination which offers something different from neighbouring towns and focusses on delivering a local market town experience for local people
- . Delivering a better mix and variety of retail offer within the town so it becomes a destination people want to come to rather than having to go elsewhere or compromise
- . Ensuring that the surplus income from this development is used to benefit the whole Borough and can be reinvested in delivering the things local people need on an ongoing basis

- . Ensuring the development responds to and integrates into the existing fabric of the town and remains flexible enough to continue to adapt to the ever changing needs of a local high street
- . Continuing to ensure that whatever is built is done so to the highest standards and to the highest quality and that it will stand the tests of time'

It was proposed by Prue Bray and seconded by Lindsay Ferris that the Motion be amended as follows:

'This Council fully supports the regeneration of Wokingham town centre on the basis that it continues to satisfy the 5 key principles:

- . To provide a thriving town centre
- . To provide an eighteen hour economy
- . To treat streets as places for pedestrian and cyclists
- . To provide active and accessible public spaces
- . To enhance the quality and heritage of the town centre.

This will be achieved by:

- . Continuing to put the local resident right at the heart of the regeneration process with an open and honest exchange that involves them in shaping how their town grows in the coming years
- . Continuing to ensure that residents are kept up to date on what is happening and how it effects them
- . Continuing to ensure that the regeneration remains **financially and economically** viable and that it becomes something which benefits the community both financially and, more importantly, by delivering the facilities an ever growing and changing population needs
- . Creating a destination which offers something different from neighbouring towns and focusses on delivering a local market town experience for local people
- . Delivering a better mix and variety of retail offer within the town so it becomes a destination people want to come to rather than having to go elsewhere or compromise
- . Ensuring that the surplus income from this development is used to benefit the whole Borough and can be reinvested in delivering the things local people need on an ongoing basis
- . Ensuring the development responds to and integrates into the existing fabric of the town and remains flexible enough to continue to adapt to the ever changing needs of a local high street
- . Continuing to ensure that whatever is built is done so to the highest standards and to the highest quality and that it will stand the tests of time
- . **Maintaining all the green area of Elms Field as a focal point for future generations**
- . **Implementing development in a phased manner in order to manage and minimise the impact and disruption on town centre businesses and residents caused by many years of development**
- . **Minimising the financial risk.**

110. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

At this point, 10.15pm, the meeting adjourned for a short period in order for discussion of the proposed amendment as requested by the Mayor.

111. RECOMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING

At 10.23pm the meeting recommenced.

112. CONTINUATION OF MEETING

At this point in the meeting 10.25pm, in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.8, Council considered a Motion to continue the meeting beyond 10.30pm for a maximum of 30 minutes to enable further business on the Agenda to be transacted. This was proposed by Prue Bray and seconded by Tom McCann.

Upon being put to the meeting, the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be lost.

113. NOTICE OF MOTION 366 CONTINUED

Following debate, upon being put to the meeting, the amendment to the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be lost.

Upon being put to the meeting the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

RESOLVED That this Council fully supports the regeneration of Wokingham town centre on the basis that it continues to satisfy the 5 key principles:

- . To provide a thriving town centre
- . To provide an eighteen hour economy
- . To treat streets as places for pedestrian and cyclists
- . To provide active and accessible public spaces
- . To enhance the quality and heritage of the town centre.

This will be achieved by:

- . Continuing to put the local resident right at the heart of the regeneration process with an open and honest exchange that involves them in shaping how their town grows in the coming years
- . Continuing to ensure that residents are kept up to date on what is happening and how it effects them
- . Continuing to ensure that the regeneration remains viable and that it becomes something which benefits the community both financially and, more importantly, by delivering the facilities an ever growing and changing population needs
- . Creating a destination which offers something different from neighbouring towns and focusses on delivering a local market town experience for local people
- . Delivering a better mix and variety of retail offer within the town so it becomes a destination people want to come to rather than having to go elsewhere or compromise
- . Ensuring that the surplus income from this development is used to benefit the whole Borough and can be reinvested in delivering the things local people need on an ongoing basis
- . Ensuring the development responds to and integrates into the existing fabric of the town and remains flexible enough to continue to adapt to the ever changing needs of a local high street

- . Continuing to ensure that whatever is built is done so to the highest standards and to the highest quality and that it will stand the tests of time.

Due to time constraints Motion 367 was not considered and in accordance with Rule 4.2.8.1 was deemed to have fallen.