

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD
COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW RESPONSES**

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS / BUSINESSES

Response 1

Dear Sirs

I write in response to the request below to share our views on the proposed Windsor Town Council, please see below our thoughts:

1. What is the appetite for creating a new town council for Windsor? Is a parish council needed or desired?

LEGOLAND Windsor has no particular view for or against this proposal, but considers that it should ultimately be for local residents to set out their views (through consultations such as this) as to whether they wish to see a town council set up. We can certainly appreciate the desire amongst a number of residents locally to see such a body established, given how similar local councils exist in neighbouring parishes. The Windsor Neighbourhood Forum has played an important role in the development of the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan, and LEGOLAND has been pleased to contribute towards this work. We hope that if a Town Council is established it would continue this initiative, and LEGOLAND – as a major local employer – would be pleased to engage and work constructively with the Town Council and its elected members.

2. Is there a sense of community identity in the review area and should this community be represented by its own parish council?

Evidently there is a sense of community identity (i.e. the wider Windsor community) in the review area, and it is right that local residents are given the opportunity to indicate whether they wish to see such another tier of local government established.

3. How could a new parish council take shape?

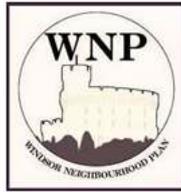
If it is established, it would make sense for it to cover all of the current unparished area of Windsor (the review area).

4. Should a new parish council be warded to reflect the communities that exist in the review area? If so, how should these boundaries be drawn?

We don't have a particular view on this, but recognise that there are existing ward boundaries for the Royal Borough wards, and these seem to be an obvious starting point.

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Response 2



Date 14/10/2020

Dear Cllr Shelim and the Governance Review committee,

This is the response of the WNP Committee to the Windsor Town Council Governance Review Stage 1.

Q1. What is the appetite for creating a new town council for Windsor? Is a parish council needed or desired?

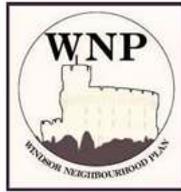
1.1 The Windsor Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) Committee supports the proposal for ONE Town Council (TC) for Windsor. In our view, there will be some clear positive impacts for the whole of Windsor from having a TC which will outweigh any disadvantages.

1.2 The support which the WNP has had from residents and businesses has shown us the high level of appetite which local people have for working towards the good of the town. Significant numbers of people have volunteered on the WN Forum over five years and been willing to give many hours of their time and to lend their expertise to improve planning outcomes. The skills and knowledge, ideas and energy which exists here could be successfully harnessed by a Town Council.

1.3 It is also our hope that any new TC would not be party-political and would comprise a body of town councillors acting solely for the good of the town rather than according to party political lines. Collaborative working with the Borough is preferable.

1.4 In our view, a TC can also enable people to get involved with their communities, to learn about local issues, and make for a healthier democracy. A unitary authority can be quite intimidating for ordinary people, and put them off getting involved in local political issues. A lower tier of local government can be a useful place to learn and a training ground for Borough councillors.

1.5 The last ward boundary review reduced the number of Royal Borough Councillors by a significant proportion, and their workloads consequently increased. A TC would enable town councillors to concentrate on the purely local issues and enable borough councillors to spend more time doing their duties at higher strategic level, thus spreading the workload.



Q4. Is there a sense of community identity in the review area and should this community be represented by its own parish council?

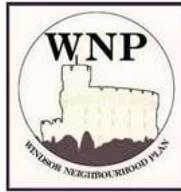
1.6 We believe that the combined Neighbourhood Plan areas of Windsor and Windsor 2030 do indicate a sensible future outer boundary for a TC, that is the whole of the unparished area should be one council.

1.7 The WNP supports one Council because Windsor is one town and one overall community, with much mutual dependency. The town centre provides goods and services, and employment to all areas of Windsor, and in turn relies on customers from the whole area. There is no part of the western, southern, or central suburbs of Windsor that are self-contained, and although they have some scattered shops, the majority of people rely on services and additional resources such as public open space, hospitals, education and leisure facilities in central and other parts of Windsor that are geographically dispersed. Legoland and Windsor Racecourse are significant employers and on the edges of town. The town functions as a whole, not as separate parts. (Also, the fact it works as a tourist town is only because it functions as a real town). There is a strong sense of local identity throughout Windsor, even though it may have different sub-parts and some different residents' associations, that is no reason to create two parishes.

1.8 In 2014 during the formation of the two Neighbourhood Plans, we found absolutely NO public appetite from ordinary residents to “split” Windsor. In fact, the Windsor Neighbourhood Forum voted in 2014 to include West Windsor into the WNP to make one NP area, and we have no reason to suppose that this view from residents in general has changed. The idea that West Windsor is a part of the town that should be administered separately from the centre is quite rightly strongly opposed, as it would imply inferiority and an attempt to exclude, whether or not that were the intention.

1.9 Some of the business community in 2014 wanted a separate business forum to give them a vote in a Neighbourhood Plan (there was no other way they could have a vote). The Borough supported this view at the time.

1.10 However, we would not want to see the decision to split Windsor repeated by the creation of two separate parishes, either between West Windsor and the rest, or between any part of the town centre and the rest. We do not believe this would be supported by people in Windsor, and particularly the plan-making function would be affected. **On current evidence more than one parish would be divisive, and not be as effective in plan making, or make for such an effective local administration.**



Should the business and ceremonial functions of Windsor be an issue, there are good ways that existing successful town councils use to give their businesses a voice, and there are many successful examples of TCs and Boroughs working for the common good, and there is no reason to suppose that Windsor would be different. These points are expanded below.

Q2. How could a new parish council take shape?

1.12 A Windsor Town Council would be able to cover some of the essential and very local issues particular to Windsor, giving local people a clear government mechanism to feed their views into decision making. Having a legally elected lower tier of local government would be preferable to the current arrangements, giving local people a better voice, including in plan making and dealing with planning applications. The community groups that have grown up in different parts of town are a direct result of the perceived distance from RBWM and lack of locally based formal representation, and not from a desire to separate.

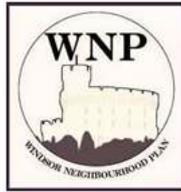
Windsor Town Forum

1.13 The present format is not working well to fulfil its existing purpose, leaving residents feeling frustrated and disenfranchised. The Forum only comprises Borough members, and doesn't allow for any direct involvement by local residents. It appears to give some power to local people but it doesn't actually allow any. It is understood that should a TC be formed it will replace the need for this body, and we would welcome this.

Planning issues

1.14 There have been two key Windsor focussed Neighbourhood Plan Forum groups over the last 5 years, the official designations of which have now expired. These are the Windsor Neighbourhood Forum, and the Central Windsor "2030" Business Neighbourhood Forum. These forums of local residents and business people were created in the absence of a Town Council, and were formed to produce neighbourhood plans for the town. (The Windsor and Eton Society (Civic Society focussed on heritage and environment) currently voluntarily monitors planning applications in Windsor, as does the WNP although they have no formal status).

1.15 The WNP plan successfully passed its examination in February 2020 but the Referendum has been delayed by Covid. (May 2021 is now a likely date for the Referendum).



There are benefits to having a TC for a NP. If a TC were formed, and assuming the WNP is made at Referendum in May 2021 it can take over responsibility for any existing NP as well as future updates, new plan making, monitoring the success of the policies and liaising with the Borough, for example in the same way as Eton & Eton Wick TC. It could form a working party or steering committee for these purposes and we would wish that it does so. The TC would also become a statutory consultee for planning applications submitted within the Neighbourhood Area.

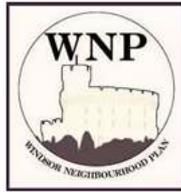
1.17 It would be beneficial to have a TC in place as soon as possible after the WNP comes into force. We would hope for an early – certainly May 2023 – inauguration. In the meantime, the WNP will have a NP Delivery Group to monitor and implement the Plan.

1.18 Existing civic groups such as the Windsor and Eton Society, Residents Associations, Neighbourhood Plan groups, and others, have built a considerable amount of expertise and knowledge. In the run up to forming a Town Council it would good to see these invited as advisories to join a joint pre-TC administration group to get the TC off to a good start. In due course, should individuals want to stand for TC they would be able to do so. A mechanism for the TC to retain the advice of such experts, such as in heritage, or planning, would be an advantage to the town.

Business issues

1.19 Many towns successfully have TCs which take into account the interests of the business community. For example, Congleton TC has a constitution which allows for people who work in the town to stand as Town Councillors. This provides a mechanism for representation of the business community.

1.20 Other successful TCs such as Bicester, Banbury, St Austell provide useful case studies.



The wider business community in Windsor has been represented in recent years by the Windsor Eton and Ascot Town Partnership (now that the Chamber of Commerce is little active). We understand that the WEA Town Partnership is an external body, is not in the RBWM Constitution, and employs a manager to deal with town centre issues. The Partnership already deals with Eton Town Council, and Ascot Parish Council, so there is no reason to believe that it could not successfully do the same with a Windsor TC. In fact, Town Councillors could help support the manager and Town Partnership in many ways, for example with committees of volunteers and a Town Clerk.

Ceremonial issues

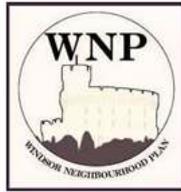
1.22 The same point applies to the ceremonial functions of Windsor. Any Borough level planning activities involved in Royal events would continue. A TC would work in collaboration with RBWM in helping to plan and organise such activities, creating positive advantages for all.

Q3. Should a new parish council be warded to reflect the communities that exist in the review area? If so, how should these boundaries be drawn?

1.23 We believe that separate wards within a TC should be created, to reflect the different geographic areas and their different sub-communities and socioeconomic situations within the whole town.

1.24 The current electoral boundaries are not best suited to the communities that exist. We were disappointed that the May 2019 LGBCE Electoral Changes both failed to resolve the most significant problem in Windsor and created a new one.

1.25 The Bray issue. The West Windsor boundary of the unparished area is currently down the Willows Path, meaning that the wider area of Windsor town now spreads into Bray parish, including the proposed AL21 development area. There are also some homes on St Leonards Hill that are in Bray Parish. It would make sense to address these anomalies at the same time as a TC by bringing them into Windsor's TC area. Bray Parish has recently changed its boundaries to incorporate the Fisheries Estate, so it is possible to amend such boundaries.



The Boltons issue. The May 2019 Electoral Ward Changes also put the Boltons community into Old Windsor ward. The Boltons is firmly geographically part of Windsor Town and the changes is universally unpopular among both Boltons and Old Windsor residents as it doesn't reflect the community reality on the ground. We wish to see the Boltons area as part of a Windsor Town Parish, and to seek a future Boundaries Commission ward boundary review to support re-defining this boundary to allow the Boltons area to be viewed and treated as part of Windsor again.

These are the views of the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan Committee and we hope that you will take them into account.

Response 3

Dear Sir/Madame,

I hope this email finds you well.

On behalf of Daniel Department Store I would like to express our fervent support of the formation of a Windsor Town Council.

Working in a store in the heart of Windsor myself, my family and Daniel's many employees - a significant number of whom live in Windsor - are constantly chatting with local residents. There is serious demand for more to be done to support Windsor as a town. I was surprised, as many residents are, to find out that Windsor does not have a parish council whilst the likes of Ascot, Eton and Sunningdale do. Understandably, the inner workings of local politics are not often the focal point of conversations with our friends and customers. What is hot conversation, among loyal Windsorians, is the severe deficit in affordable parking, infrastructure issues, unreliable bin collections and the feeling that there is a lack of direction for our wonderful town.

Windsor is a proud and historical place that functions as a whole but sadly we believe it has been a blind spot in the system of local governance for some time. There is a massive sense of local pride throughout Windsor but we do not think that we have the local governance, or suitable means to enact a united vision. We have an

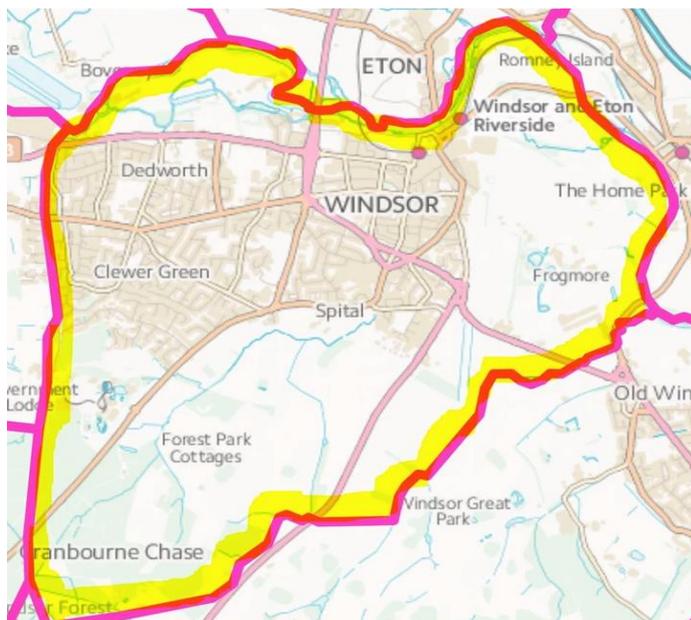
empty/closed Guild Hall, numerous vacant shops and a looming sense that the local authority rarely turns its eyes to Windsor. Perhaps there has been a narrative that Windsor, with its magnificent castle, plentiful green spaces and royal crests adorned on buildings, will always be fine but Windsor is not immune to entropy. Over time the disjointed nature of piecemeal developments has harmed our town and that can be seen in the space of a 5 minute walk.

RMBW is understandably busy and focusing on its largest populous area. RBWM has a lot to deal with including the coronavirus and budgeting issues, so why not offload some of the work of looking after Windsor to volunteers and residents who are keen to do the work? The problem here is not a particular party, individual or group of individuals, it is a systemic blind spot. Simply put, a great historical town, with a great sense of community and over 20,000 population should have a political forum for a united voice: its own a parish council.

There are an impressive number of Windsor residents, business people and political types, from cross-party backgrounds, who could do a stellar job if a parish council were to be formed. We are certainly not wanting for choice and we are sure an earnest and reliable council team could be formed by democratic process.

We support a Windsor Town Council representing resident and business interests across the whole unparished area, to enable a more localised approach to decision making in the town. We agree that a new parish council should be warded to reflect the communities that exist in the review area. The boundaries drawn by the proposed Windsor Town Council group do just that. I have attached the image from their website for reference.

We look forward to hearing how this governance review progresses and view the formation of a Windsor Town Council as a win-win for residents, businesses, RBWM and visitors alike.



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Response 3

WINDSOR TOWN FORUM **MONDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2020**

PRESENT: Councillors John Bowden (Chairman), Samantha Rayner (Vice Chairman), David Cannon, Jon Davey, Karen Davies, Neil Knowles, Helen Price, Shamsul Shelim, Amy Tisi and David Hilton.

Also in attendance: Councillors Christine Bateson, Gurpreet Bhangra, Wisdom Da Costa, Lynne Jones. John Webb, Richard Endacott, Claire Milne, Ed Wilson, Susy Shearer, Sally Stevens, Robert Peel, John Holdstock, John Holland and Elizabeth Jones (public speakers).

Officers: Shilpa Manek, Suzanne Martin, Karen Shepherd and Fatima Rehman.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Although no formal declarations of interest were declared, it was noted that Councillors Shelim, Cannon, Knowles and Davies were Members of the Community Governance Review (CGR) Working Group. Councillor Story was a Member of the working group but was not present at the meeting.

The Vice Chairman was also commented that as the relevant Lead Member, she would likely present the Community Governance Review reports to the Council.

MINUTES

Councillor Cannon said the minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting dated 22 July 2020 and was seconded by the Vice Chairman.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2020 be approved.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW: WINDSOR TOWN COUNCIL

Suzanne Martin, Electoral & Information Governance Services Manager, introduced the item to the Forum. She gave a procedural overview of the Stage 1 consultation rather than details such as the financial implications for a Windsor Town Council (WTC), that would come during the second stage of the consultation. The Terms of Reference was endorsed by Full Council in July 2020, which provided background information and the expected timeframe of the review. The Working Group was set up to examine if there was a need for WTC following significant interest raised by Windsor residents through an e-petition in early 2020. While the threshold was not met by the e-petition to require the council to run a review, in May 2020, the Leader of the Council announced a review would be undertaken given the resident interest. The review commenced in July 2020 and would conclude in July 2021.

The Working Group covered the whole procedure, including examining the existing parish governance arrangements, new matters, existing ward boundaries for parishes and the

number of Councillors elected to parished areas. The scope of the review was the unparished areas of Windsor, which covered five wards and 12 polling districts. The first consultation was conducted from August 2020 and would close on 28 October 2020. Public consultation was being undertaken to receive feedback to help the Working Group in formulating draft recommendations, to be published in early 2021. The consultation included members of public, local electors, businesses, community groups and other organisations with interest.

The overall consultation would address the following questions:

- What was the appetite for creating a new town council for Windsor? Was a parish council needed or desired?
- Was there a sense of community identity in the review area and should this community be represented by its own parish council?
- How could a new parish council take shape?
- Should a new parish council be warded to reflect the communities that exist in the review area? If so, how should these boundaries be drawn?

The second phase of the consultation would run for 3 months in early 2021 and would ask for the public's view on the draft recommendations. The working group would aim to scope the details of WTC, which would include the area boundary for WTC, the number of wards proposed for WTC and the number of parish Councillors needed. Final recommendations would be published at the end of the second consultation and reviewed by full Council in July 2021. If the outcome of the review was to create a WTC, the first election would take place in May 2023 as this was the date of the next scheduled election for parish elections in four-yearly cycles.

John Webb, Windsor resident and representing the WTC steering group, said he polled residents on his street and asked residents if they knew RBWM was unable to tell how and where the unparished precept was spent. Almost all residents were unaware of this and almost 90% of them signed the e-petition.

John Webb asked the following questions:

- What feedback had Councillors received regarding the unparished wards precept that had been collected, and did they know this had increased the appetite for the creation of a WTC?

Councillor Price said she did not have statistical evidence to suggest that residents were unaware regarding the unparished precept. She asked the question on social media, but the number of responses were low. She believed residents would want control over the money and she would like to know where the money was allocated in Windsor.

Councillor Tisi said there was an increase in residents' appetite to know about the unaccounted precept and the WTC would ensure accountability. Councillor Davey said asking the question directly would enable a response regarding the expenditure of the precept.

The Vice Chairman said residents from the Eton and Castle ward had not asked about the unparished precept and she was unsure if they were aware of this. The precept was accounted for and the council spent more in Windsor than the precept.

Councillor W. Da Costa said he was unaware of how precept money was used, or how money was used and raised for assets in Windsor, such as the Guildhall and Museum. He said Windsorians did not have control of these assets, and the WTC would ensure control of assets, as well as help create a community emergency plan. The Vice Chairman said residents of

Windsor did have a say on the Guildhall and Museum and were welcome to Overview & Scrutiny panels to raise any issues.

Ed Wilson, Windsor resident, said it was misleading for Councillor Tisi to say the precept was unaccounted for. He said it was accounted for and published, however where the money went was undocumented. He suggested the council to breakdown the expenditure of the precept, rather than creating WTC for this function alone.

Councillor Hilton, Forum Member and Lead Member Finance and Ascot, said the formation of WTC was a democratic process about how residents felt about representation in the area, rather than a decision made in relation to finances. He said it was an obligation for the council to publish where special expenses went. The Appendices of the Budget Setting Report from February 2020 detailed where the money was spent, such as allotments, street lighting, recreation grounds, open spaces and the administration of the Town Forum. It excluded the Guildhall and the Visitor Centre, and areas directly managed by parish councils, such as parks, gardens, and recreation grounds. He said the budget report next year could provide greater granularity of expenditure, which would be an estimate because the report was produced at the end of year rather than close of year. Councillor Hilton said the precept for unparished areas was £34.31 at Band E and the lowest precept set by a parish council was £0. The next lowest precept was £31 annually for Band E and the highest precept was £99.74. The average was £57.89, which was 68.7% more than parished areas than what unparished areas paid currently. The average was not weighted with the number of residents who lived in the parished areas. Adding another layer of government could lead to higher costs because of staffing.

Councillor Hilton said it was not possible to provide exact figures for what precept was spent in Windsor as the cost was for both Windsor and Maidenhead. He said it was possible to ascertain the expenditure for Windsor and Maidenhead in the next budget, though this would be further work.

- Did the Councillors of the Windsor ward believe their residents identified themselves primarily as Windsorians or something else?

Councillors Price, Tisi, Davey, Da Costa and the Vice Chairman said they believed residents of Windsor identified themselves as Windsorians. The Vice Chairman said residents had pride in where they lived.

- Please provide more details about how WTC could take shape.

Councillor Price said the WTC would run like existing parish councils. The Vice Chairman said the consultation was in place to understand what residents sought from the WTC, as there were diverse models.

- How easy did ward Councillors find to know and understand the needs of residents in individual neighbourhoods within their wards? Would they find it easier to represent their ward at RBWM meetings if parish Councillors were able to feedback issues, concerns and ideas, as parish wards may be smaller than RBWM council wards?

Councillors Price, Tisi, Davey, Da Costa and the Vice Chairman said it would be helpful to have ward Councillors support. Councillor Price said it would help with workload and Councillors Tisi, Da Costa and Davey said ward Councillors knew the neighbourhood well. The Vice Chairman said resident engagement and any feedback was welcome.

Councillor Bateson said Clewer South was part of the Bray Parish Council and she therefore felt that Bray should be involved in the consultation. Richard Endacott, Windsor resident and representing WTC steering group, said a part of Clewer and Dedworth West ward was in Bray parish and hoped that the review would correct this anomaly and bring this part of Bray into Windsor under a new Town Council.

Suzanne Martin clarified that it was correct that one polling district within Clewer & Dedworth West ward fell within Bray Parish (Dedworth ward). The review was focusing on the currently unparished parts of Windsor, which did not include Dedworth ward of Bray Parish. If the outcome of the review was to amend Bray Parish's boundaries and bring this area into a new Windsor Town Council, permission would need to be sought from the Local Government Boundary Commission to do so.

Richard Endacott said WTC would not be competing with RBWM but would be an additionality to RBWM. He wanted to know how much revenue was raised in the unparished areas of Windsor over the last 40 years, rather than just the cost incurred in the area as part of the budget review.

Richard Endacott asked the following question:

- Did Members believe existing parish council served an essential function, or if they should be removed.

Councillor Tisi said a WTC was not going to be above other parished areas, but in line with them, no parish councils should be abolished. Councillor Davey said parish councils were essential and helped bring the community together and showed professionalism. Councillors Price and Da Costa agreed.

Councillor Cannon said he was taking note of the points raised, but as a member of the CGR Working Group, he would not be answering any questions to ensure he attended the group with no expression of preference either way. The Vice Chairman said she would not comment and said each parish council was unique.

Claire Milne, Windsor resident and Co-Chairperson of the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan (WNP), asked the following question:

- The WNP had stalled due to the delay in the referendum and COVID-19, lack of responsiveness from RBWM, and limited correspondence on the decision notice. She felt there was a need for a body to be in place to monitor future plan-making. Could Councillors reassure how this may be achieved in the future and how WTC may contribute to this?

The Vice Chairman said she was unaware of the delay issues and asked Claire Milne to write to her directly.

Suzanne Martin said all elections including any neighbourhood plan referendum were postponed to 6 May 2021 as a result of legislation relating to the coronavirus. The Chairman said an update could be given by Councillor Coppinger, Lead Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead, in conjunction with a boroughwide update. Claire Milne said residents would like to see one WTC rather than different town councils or different parishes.

ACTION: Councillor Coppinger to update on the progress of WNP offline.

Robert Peel, Windsor resident and Chairman of the WTC steering committee, asked the following questions:

- Why was it suggested that there were not enough signatories for the petition, when there were over 630 signatures for the e-petition and 1,675 on the hardcopy petition?

Suzanne Martin explained that the e-petition did not meet the 7.5% of the electorate threshold required to initiate a review, but the council had permitted to review the WTC on its own accord. Karen Shepherd, Head of Governance, said neither the e-petition nor hard copy petition had been formally submitted to the council.

Robert Peel said Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council and Chairman of Cabinet, Business, Economic Development and Property, advised to not formally submit the petitions. The Chairman said Councillor Johnson was not present to comment.

- Why was the election of the possible WTC delayed to 2023?

Suzanne Martin said that following the final recommendations time would be needed to undertake the legal processes, including the reorganisation order and arrangements for collecting parish council tax, precept and elections. The election would then take place in the next scheduled election in May 2023.

Robert Peel said he thought the Local Government Act allowed an out of sync first election, and the Chairman said a written answer could be given to this. Councillor Davey said the cost of campaigning and running elections was high, and therefore was in favour of an election in 2023. Councillor Da Costa said it would be good to know if it was legally feasible to have an earlier election.

ACTION: A written response to be given to Robert Peel and Members to confirm if the Local Government Act allowed an out of sync first election.

Robert Peel asked what the Chairman's view was on the WTC, and the Chairman said he would not respond to that question at the meeting.

John Holdstock, Windsor resident and an active member of Windsor for over 50 years, said he was in support of a WTC. He said there was an appetite and a sense of community evidenced by the work of Windsor Neighbourhood Planning Group, Resident's' Associations, churches and voluntary groups. He said more residents were spending time in Windsor as they were working from home, and therefore their community. There was a need for local democracy to support and listen to residents and a WTC would provide this, as well as liaise and work closely with voluntary groups and residents. Given the rising pressures due to COVID-19, such as isolation and unemployment, John Holdstock said local democracy had a duty to meet these challenges. Voluntary groups provided valuable services and support to residents, and with the limitation on the local authority budgets, the contribution of voluntary groups was ever more important.

John Holdstock asked the following questions:

- Did Councillors agree that that COVID-19 brought changes in the way residents lived and worked in Windsor, which provided a new dimension in support of the WTC. Was the council able to provide an interim arrangement which would serve the function of the WTC?

The Chairman said they were unable to speak on behalf of the entire borough, as all Councillors were not present in the meeting. The Vice Chairman said that RBWM had actively been involved with voluntary groups during COVID-19 and aimed to continue to work closely with them in future. The borough was open to work with organisations and voluntary groups and felt a WTC would not necessarily be needed for voluntary group engagement.

Councillor Price said the Cabinet Transformation Sub-Committee approved a paper on services being community-centric and a pilot was taking place in Windsor. Councillor W. Da Costa said that whilst the borough worked with other services, it did not engage well with local groups, which a WTC would. He felt having the setup of a WTC prior to 2023 would help in the learning process.

John Holland, representing WTC steering group, asked the following question:

- Did Councillors agree that the Windsor Town Forum and local democracy would benefit from input from a WTC?

Councillors Tisi, Price, Davey and the Vice Chairman said that the Windsor Town Forum would cease to exist if a WTC was created, as the Forum was covering unparished areas. Councillor Davey said that whilst Windsor was comprised of 9 Councillors, of which 6 were Liberal Democrats or Independents, the Forum was dominated by members of the Conservative group.

Councillor Price and John Holland said they did not think the Forum was effective and Councillor Price said a WTC would be an improvement, with greater resident participation. John Holland said there was a need for a Forum for matters that were beyond the remit of the WTC which were the responsibility of RBWM.

Ed Wilson, Windsor resident, asked the following questions:

- What was the truth behind the precept, as there was disagreement between Councillors Tisi and Hilton? He requested for further details.

Councillor Davey said the level of detail on the precept was minimal and it would be difficult to extract this in the meeting. Councillor Hilton said he could not promise providing granular details of the precept.

John Webb asked about the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) report, and the Chairman said the report was boroughwide and was not a matter for the Windsor Town Forum. John Webb referred to the special budget item and expenses and said RBWM should list these separately in the budget report in the CIPFA report. Councillor Hilton said this information was addressed in the CIPFA report, was acted upon and provided to a few Windsor residents. The Vice Chairman said the CIPFA report referred to the previous year's budget.

- Was the consultation on the terms of reference, as suggested on the RBWM website?

Ed Wilson felt the consultation was not regarding this and felt the small number of resident responses to the consultation may have been because people did not understand the questions they were being asked or there was not an appetite to respond.

Suzanne Martin said when conducting a Community Governance Review, the terminology 'consultation on terms of reference' was used. Further detailed questions were posted on the webpage to help guide electors and community groups to narrow down the findings.

Awareness and engagement were raised through borough bulletins, resident newsletter updates, direct communication with community groups and businesses operating in Windsor.

- Was a potential WTC going to cover unparished areas in Windsor?

Suzanne Martin informed the Forum that a WTC would cover the unparished areas, which covered five borough wards. Councillor W. Da Costa asked if the Working Group had powers to recommend moving the boundaries that a WTC would cover, and the Forum was informed this was possible.

- Who decided to hold this additional Windsor Town Forum meeting?

The Chairman said John Webb requested for another meeting because the Stage 1 consultation closed on 28 October, and the next scheduled Forum meeting was after the deadline.

On behalf of Elizabeth Jones, Windsor resident, the following question was asked:

- What was the perceived impact of WTC would have on democracy, as it would be closer to people and businesses?

-

The Chairman said businesses could not vote but could respond to the consultation. Councillor Price said residents and democracy would work closer together due to a WTC, and Councillor Tisi said a WTC would allow the devolution of power to the lowest practical level.

Councillor W. Da Costa said democracy could be brought to the lowest level, such as decisions on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 money use. The Chairman said Windsor had limited CIL money, such as the planning application on Alma Road was not subject to CIL due to the method of development. Councillor W. Da Costa said a significant amount of money had been attributed to Windsor over the years, and the Chairman said the money had been distributed to other areas.

Susy Shearer, resident of Windsor, said that the Windsor Town Forum was not a decision-making body, which was why a locally elected WTC was needed, as well as to help liaise with residents and local groups and give better support to the Borough councillors.

Sally Stevens, representing Windsor 2030 Business Neighbourhood Plan, asked the following question:

- Was there a recognised process for neighbourhood plans being adopted by WTC, despite its existence being after the plan's preparation.

She said there was a struggle to get through the process due to the delay as a result of COVID 19 and lack of responsiveness from RBWM. Suzanne Martin informed the Forum that the Neighbourhood Plan would either be endorsed by a Parish Council or a Neighbourhood Forum on the Parish Council so that the local planning authority could process it to examination.

Richard Endacott said a WTC would provide democratic accountability and would be a strong and coordinated voice on areas such as planning, bins, car parking, antisocial behaviour and so forth. He said it was mildly offensive to consider residents of Dedworth as not part of Windsor. He said community projects had a knock-on effect across Windsor and said the Windsor Town Forum had no purpose as it was not a decision-making body and disengaged residents. He felt a WTC needed to exist to ensure the democratic deficit between ordinary residents and RBWM was filled.

Claire Milne said if a WTC was formed, it would be the responsible decision-making body for neighbourhood plans but was unsure of the process if a Town Council was created but there was not yet a neighbourhood plan in place. The Chairman said it would be dependent on whether the business plan was accepted before or after the creation of the Town Council. Ed Wilson said his experience in Gloucestershire showed that it was up to the Town Council to decide the process, as the purpose of the Town Council was to give it autonomy as the decision-making body.

Councillor Price asked if the Chairman felt the four areas that were due to be covered in the Forum meeting were sufficiently covered and the Chairman said these areas were aptly covered. Councillor Price asked how the Working Group would be made aware of the discussion from the Forum. Karen Shepherd explained that individual Members could respond to the consultation as Councillors and residents, and the minutes of the Forum meeting could be forwarded to the Community Governance Review Working Group as a representation.

Councillor W. Da Costa asked if the draft minutes could be commented on by all Forum Members before publication and the Chairman said this was possible.

Councillor Davies and Knowles said they were unable to comment in the meeting as Members of the CGR Working Group and thanked residents for their comments, which were heard with interest.

Councillor Davey said it was important to listen to the residents and keep those in power accountable, without causing increased pressures on the town's finances. He said the CIPFA report showed wider financial and governance issues that the council needed to address with transparency.

John Webb thanked those who contributed in the meeting. He asked if the WTC steering committee could comment on the minutes before they were published. The Chairman said comments could be made by any individual attendees of the Forum meeting.

The Chairman said he attempted to be a Chairman and not a person of power. He found groups of individuals referring to themselves as the Boltons and from West Windsor, when he viewed these areas as Windsor. He said there did not appear to be any clear boundaries, therefore a WTC should be called Windsor Council. He had reservations about how a WTC would be funded and felt the Borough performed ceremonial matters over the last few years in a safe manner, which were viewed nationally and globally. He said he was neither for nor against a WTC.

WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Tisi requested for an item on Windsor Yards, to be reported by the management company. The Chairman said he would contact Forum Members offline regarding confidential information regarding this.

Councillor Davies said an update on the air pollution statistics would be useful. The Chairman said it was likely the pollution levels would be low, due to the lack of vehicle use due to COVID 19.

Councillor Price asked to go through the items suggested but not yet programmed. It was agreed that:

- Royal British Legion to be removed as it was out of date. Councillor Knowles said the legion guidance was ever-changing, the poppy appeal was to be brought online with contactless options rather than face-to-face to reduce risk of the spread of COVID-19.

To avoid mass attendance, no comment was made on the borough's plans for Remembrance Day.

- Councillor Knowles to update on the Army covenant in the next meeting.
- Windsor & Eton Town Partnership item to be added to the Work Programme.
- It was noted that Radian had been renamed as Abri. The Vice Chairman requested to invite Abri to the forum to share the work they were doing for a future Forum.
- COVID-19 Update to be added to all upcoming meetings.
- The Chairman said there was commercial confidentiality regarding the Royal Windsor Station.
- Councillor Cannon and Paul Roach, Windsor Town Manager, to update on the CCTV item. Councillor Davey said the item could also discuss the District Environmental Crime Officers enforcement. The Chairman said this may be a question to put forward to Full Council.
- Claire Milne requested for the WNP to be added to the Work Programme, and this was agreed for the January 2021 meeting. Susy Shearer said she was given permission to relay a question on behalf of Claire Milne at the previous Forum meeting on 23 September 2020. The report related to progressing the WNP prior to referendum and to what amount of planning "weight" it could be, given it had successfully passed its examination by an officer in Planning Policy, to be considered by Cabinet at the end of October 2020. The question was raised again today as the date was fast approaching.

ACTION: Councillor Knowles to invite Windsor Chamber of Commerce representative.

John Holland asked to have written reports before the meeting so that questions could be prepared in advance of the meeting, rather than verbal updates. The Forum was informed this was dependent on officer workload and resource availability.

The Chairman thanked all officers, Members and residents.

The meeting, which began at 6.15 pm, finished at 8.55 pm

CHAIRMAN.....
DATE.....

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Response 5

Hello,

It strikes me that there is a small minority of people, who want to get elected to something, driving this process. The general town population is ambivalent to the situation. The town is well managed through Paul Roche and team and I can see little need to have an elected body driving the decisions he makes. It will only slow the process down and add an additional cost to the running of the council as a whole.

The Windsor Town council will have no identifiable decision making of the area so it seems little point in pursuing the idea.

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Response 6

Community governance review
Stage 1 Consultation (July - October 2020)
Windsor Town Council
Submission by Windsor Town Council (Proposed) Steering Committee

Dated: 24th October 2020

The Windsor Town Council (Proposed) Steering Committee consists of a group of Windsor Residents from across the Town, from all backgrounds and political perspectives, who have come together to campaign for the formation of a Windsor Town Council.

Members of the committee include:

[REDACTED]

The Consultation asks:

We are interested in hearing views on the following:

- 1) What is the appetite for creating a new town council for Windsor? Is a parish council needed or desired?*
- 2) Is there a sense of community identity in the review area and should this community be represented by its own parish council?*
- 3) How could a new parish council take shape?*
- 4) Should a new parish council be warded to reflect the communities that exist in the review area? If so, how should these boundaries be drawn?*

Taking each question in turn please accept our submission:

- 1) What is the appetite for creating a new town council for Windsor? Is a parish council needed or desired?*

Our volunteers surveyed residents by going door to door across the town, talking with residents regarding the opportunity to form a Windsor Town Council. They found overwhelming support from residents with whom they could engage. Very few people were against the concept, and they encountered very large contingents who

were unaware that they even paid an unparished precept in lieu of a precept for a Town Council.

We gathered over 2000 signatures, both hard copy and online. This was achieved with limited resources. We have not yet needed to submit these as our request to initiate a Governance Review was pre-empted by the RBWM Cabinet.

We have evidence by the signatures obtained, gathered from all neighbourhoods and a range of groups in the area, including Windsor Neighbourhood Plan.

Other online activity via our website and social media, has drawn significant support from residents and stimulated debate in the local community. This was in addition to a public online meeting that the steering committee for proposed Windsor Town Council organised, where over 100 residents registered to attend – this took place on 1st October 2020.

During a Windsor Town Forum Meeting held on 12th October 2020 ward councillors have said that having Parish/Town councillors would help enormously with their workload.

There is no current focus for community activity in Windsor. A Windsor Town Council would be the perfect vehicle to bring community groups together to discuss challenges and organise responses in a coordinated fashion.

A primary purpose for the Windsor Town Council would be to promote residents' sense of community cohesion and pride in their town (making Windsor a better place to live), and it is proposed that it won't cost residents any more in precept than it costs now.

There is a democratic deficit in that local people are not represented in their local neighbourhoods and often find it difficult for their individual neighbourhood concerns to be heard at the borough level.

Creation of a Windsor Town Council addresses several existing anomalies:

- No taxation without representation
- We are one of the only areas in RBWM without a Parish or Town Council
- Accounting for the unparished precept would fall in line with other parishes providing more granular detail, auditability and control of finances.

2) Is there a sense of community identity in the review area and should this community be represented by its own parish council?

We believe that new Town Council should be one body covering the whole of the unparished areas of Windsor. This would also ensure that all areas remain united. We see a significant danger in splitting our town into multiple different parishes.

3) How could a new parish council take shape?

We would initially like to see an appointed provisional or shadow Town Council formed from 2021 once the governance review is agreed. This provisional administrative body would have minimum powers to oversee its constitutional formation and other legal processes.

Once established the Windsor Town Council should expect to initially only include minimal areas of operational competence, negotiating new competences with RBWM as confidence is demonstrated to the local community.

We would want the shadow administration to look at the following:

- Leadership**
- Central administration – Town Clerk, Officers etc.**
- Constitution**
- Operations**
- Assets**
- Business Improvement District**
- Planning**
- Mayoralty**
- Guild**
- Events, festivals, tourism & markets**
- Bringing in existing Civic Groups into an advisory framework.**

Should a new parish council be warded to reflect the communities that exist in the review area? If so, how should these boundaries be drawn?

Yes, we believe it should be warded to reflect the natural neighbourhood communities of Windsor.

The current ward boundaries are too big to be representative and the workload for a borough councillor is too great and would be overwhelming for Parish/Town councillor. It is expected that Parish/Town councillors will be unpaid.

When people see the Town Council ward list we want people to recognise where they live.

Parish/Town councils are not governed by voter parity.

We want to ensure that nobody feels left out of the democratic process. This, in turn, would have the effect of giving each neighbourhood the opportunity to elect Councillors who would represent their interests to the wider community.

We would expect to have 2 Town councillors elected in each ward (26-30 councillors).