

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORT TO O.W.P.C. 10th
DECEMBER 2008
submitted by Cllr Malcolm Beer.

One or both Cllrs Beer and Wiles have attended and participated in the following Borough related meetings in the period 26th November to 10th December 2008:
Windsor Development Control Panel, Maidenhead ditto as a Deputy, Age Concern, Licensing Appeals, Old Windsor Youth Club, Committee, Heathrow Airport Consultative Committee (HACC) plus Seminar, Audit & Performance Review Panel, Local Authorities Aircraft Noise Council (LAANC) plus Executive Committee, Standards Board, Windsor Shopmobility, EA Thames Region Flood Defence Committee, and as a guest at Royal Borough Tree Wardens' AGM and social evening.

The email correspondence has continued regarding detailed concerns about more than 80 additional double bedrooms and increasing activity at the Beaumont House Conference Centre. This appears to have become a more contentious issue since the complex has been taken over by the Principal Hayley hotel group as I have just discovered that the entire enlarged complex now seems to be being promoted as a hotel.

Correspondence with Planning Officers seems to show that the latest Flood Maps provided by the EA do not supercede the Flood Risk Zone Maps adopted by RBWM for planning purposes.

I sent a detailed query list to the Highways Department regarding the proposed local footpath works in the current financial year and have received a full reply. The works which have been brought forward due to delays elsewhere include a pedestrian crossing island in the vicinity of the Harvester / Bells of Ouseley (as previously requested) and amending the cycleway traffic light controls to reduce stoppage time on the A308. I have asked for remedial works where roadways flood adjacent to dropped kerb crossings.

The HACC Executive meeting and separate Seminar witnessed the usual tensions between airport operators and users, who vigorously defended their needs for expansion at Heathrow and nowhere else, and the local authority representatives who offered objections and alternative solutions. There was however almost unanimous support for the proposed Airtrack rail link from Staines to T5 despite some serious concerns about greater increased down time of level crossings (Datchet excepted) resulting from the proposed extra trains to the link.

The Government's announcement that the decision on Heathrow Runway 3 and Terminal 6 would be deferred from the end of this month to the end of January created a lot of comment. I was contacted and was interviewed by Radio Berkshire.

The reasons behind the deferment were considered at the LAANC meetings. It appears that the groundswell of opposition among the public as well as MPs of ALL parties is causing the Government problems in making its decision and how it could deliver it without causing turmoil among its MPs and supporters. LAANC is recommending that everyone who is interested in the future of Heathrow should raise the profile of the issues among MPs and Ministers by filling their postbags with letters on the subject as soon as possible.

Other matters were considered including the HACC deliberations and, following local authorities contention that Heathrow should not be considered in isolation when comparing it with continental activity, the requested evidence was tabled showing that the five London airports catered for 1.13 million passengers last year - over twice that of any other European city.

The Youth Club Committee was very grateful for the broadband phone installation provided by the Parish Council to enable the members to access web facilities, and also of its offer to help improve the club buildings. An outreach worker may spend time with young people who gather outside the club but are not members of it.

Both of us have been involved in the usual ongoing queries and correspondence on planning, roads and housing matters, and anticipate involvement in about another half dozen meetings before we start the Christmas / New Year holiday break.

Malcolm Beer. 9/12/08.

MEETINGS, ETC., ATTENDED ON BEHALF OF O.W.P.C.

I attended a RBW&M District Association of Local Councils (DALC) meeting in the Guildhall with Cllr Troughton. The new Windsor & Maidenhead Area Police Commander, Supt Tim De Meyer, attended and gave an encouraging talk and answered questions on his outlook and plans for local policing including better feedback. Ian Trenholm, the new RBWM Chief Executive will be invited to the next meeting, when it was hoped the new version of the Parish Charter will be discussed. Bray PC have been having problems with delegated planning decisions going against their wishes, so a 3 month trial has been offered by the planning officers whereby Bray will be advised of intended delegated decisions and given 48 hours to ask their Borough Councillors to call-in items upon which they differ.

Having obtained the agreement of the Chairman, I adapted the comprehensive RBW&M submission to DEFRA regarding the Consultation on guidelines for Airport Operating Procedures and submitted it on behalf of the Parish Council. The main thrust was that the guidance was vague and should stipulate properly defined targets to positively reduce noise.

Having taken the trouble to submit a report to the last meeting noting that I attended the BALC Executive Meeting with Cllr Troughton, and also the Memorial Hall Half Yearly Meeting (at which I was the only Parish Council representative), it is disappointing that these duties on behalf of the Parish Council were not recorded in the minutes.

Malcolm Beer. 9/12/08.