

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORT 23rd MARCH 2011

This report covers the main activities of Old Windsor's Borough Councillors Malcolm Beer and Eric Wiles since 9th March. After an extremely busy period covered by the last report, we have moved into a quieter time where the usual tendency of programming business not to straddle two separate civic years has been accentuated by the oncoming period of purdah where potentially politically charged meetings have been avoided or cancelled in the run up to the Borough (and maybe Parish) Elections on Thursday 5th May.

We both contributed to the proceedings of another long Windsor Development Control Panel meeting which went on until after 10.30 pm. One of us eventually got the message across that a proposed amendment to defer granting a permission for 6 months to see if a refusal to change the hours of operation of a business generated increased traffic would have been utter nonsense!

One of us participated in the Sustainability Forum which is reducing future energy costs and carbon generation by taking advantage of a contribution of 50% toward costs of additional insulation and lighting efficiencies under the Salix scheme. Many of the Straight Road lights are now less bright under a trial scheme. The other one of us took part in the Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel which considered and endorsed reports on exercising greater control on companies digging up our roads for their services and also for a consultation and review of possible changes to provision of traffic lights.

We both attended the informative Environment Agency Presentation about the proposed replacement of the Flood Defence Embankment alongside the watercourse which joins the Thames near the Albert Bridge on the Datchet Road and will also extend alongside the main river as far as Ham Island Bridge. The Battle Bourne Feasibility Study as the current activity is called, and could protect 800 houses in the village in a 1 in 100 year flood, was held in the Day Centre, and we were among the members of the Parish Council and community who contributed to the helpful discussions. Much of the discussion focused on the fact that the EA will be looking for support funding. Malcolm expressed disappointment that although he had invited them, neither of the Borough Councillors responsible for flooding matters had turned up.

We will be drawing attention to the current ruling group of the Borough to demonstrate a far greater commitment to the Battle Bourne project at the Borough Flood Group meeting on Wednesday 23rd and will also once again be trying to get the EA to iron out ongoing problems with their flood warning system.

Concern has been expressed about the postponement of the Borough Aviation Forum until August despite a highly informative presentation on increased aircraft noise due to flight paths changes had already been postponed, consultations on several issues will be closing soon, and a hard won opportunity to have one or more BAA noise monitors in this area may be lost. As a 6 month gap in meetings is unacceptable, one in the near future is sought to ensure that the Borough fully participates in future noise mitigation schemes before flights increase over Old Windsor and other communities.

And a reminder about the Big Society open day next Saturday 26th March at Windsor Girls School, Imperial Road, Windsor from 10 am to 3 pm. It will be a good opportunity to look at exhibits, ask questions, comment, and maybe discover something in which you might like to get involved.

Malcolm Beer & Eric Wiles. 23rd March 2011.