

## Aren't councillors there to represent electorate?

THE OUTCOME of the extraordinary meeting on the BLP was extremely disappointing. It was feared due to internal politics within RBWM, the result of the vote was a foregone conclusion.

However, due to the large turnout of dissident residents at the meeting, it had been hoped a different result could have been achieved – the rejection of the BLP in its present form.

Correct me if I am wrong, but it is my understanding that as elected councillors, their primary responsibility is to represent the interests and concerns of the residents in their wards.

Councillors will all be aware, due to coverage in the local press, of widespread condemnation and opposition to the BLP in its present form, from residents and neighbourhood groups throughout the borough.

They will also be aware of the two open letters sent to Simon Dudley, from 27 different local organisations, including neighbourhood groups, parish councils, residents' associations, Sportsable, and several religious groups, all testifying they have not been properly consulted on the BLP by RBWM.

In spite of this overwhelming evidence, RBWM is maintaining its position that full and thorough consultation has taken place with the public.

How can this situation be remotely credible? Either RBWM, or all of the 27 local bodies have been at the very least 'economical with the truth'. I cannot for one instance imagine all 27 organisations have made up the story they have not been consulted properly on this very important issue by RBWM.

Those councillors who voted in favour, should be ashamed of themselves. There is compelling evidence across the borough that residents are opposed to the BLP in its present form. How then, could councillors, in all conscience, vote in favour of this plan, which has been shown to be extremely unpopular, and also seriously flawed? The very councillors in office to represent and support the interests and concerns of their electorate?

It would appear the answer lies with the current leader of the council. Cllr Dudley's leadership has been described by many to be autocratic and dictatorial. Any dissent, or valid questioning of his policies, even by cabinet members, is rewarded by summary sacking from their post.

This is totally inappropriate in the RBWM which most residents would assume is governed as a democracy.

Although the vote was 'free', allowing councillors to vote with their beliefs and conscience, it was clear influence had been applied to make councillors vote in favour of the BLP.

It is a matter of common record Simon Dudley has political aspirations way beyond those of RBWM, to the extent of becoming an MP.

We should assist him by voting a motion of no confidence in his leadership of RBWM, and allowing him to pursue his other interests, which he appears to regard as more important than democratically representing the interests of RBWM residents.

6/7/17

**JOHN HUDSON**  
Chairman

Rushington Area Residents Association

## Appalled by arrogance shown by councillors

I ATTENDED the extraordinary meeting of the RBWM council on Monday, June 19, where the approval was sought for publication of the Borough Local Plan under Regulation 19.

I was appalled by the sickening display of arrogance and aggression by some of the borough councillors and wonder how some of them were ever elected.

I was particularly angered by the statement there was 'something rotten in Dedworth' in connection with disputes over the inclusion of area HA11 (the green fields and garden centres on the edge of Windsor) in the plan. I assume he was paraphrasing a quote from Hamlet.

This is certainly no way in which residents expect to be described by our representative councillors, whatever their views of the borough plan, and he most certainly does not deserve ever to be elected again.

I have not named the councillor but he knows who he is and I hope will issue a sincere apology to all West Windsor residents.

Thank you to the other councillors who presented their views in a balanced and civilised manner.

6/7/17

**ANN TAYLOR**  
Clewer North resident

## Too many restrictions on BLP comments

THE RBWM council now tells us our Borough Local Plan comments are to be confined to whether or not the plan is legally compliant (including duty to cooperate) and whether it has met the tests of soundness (being positively prepared – being based on a strategy that aims to meet objectively assessed needs for development and infrastructure

Other criteria we are told we can comment on are that it is justified (being the most appropriate strategy); effective – being deliverable over the plan period based on effective joint working; and consistent with national policy - enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the national planning policy framework (NPPF).

How do we know the answers to these questions?

Legally Compliant? Are we all lawyers?

Positively prepared? It is not specific about infrastructure, and does not deal well with the need for infrastructure improvement.

Justified? RBWM could put up more of a fight against central government saying infrastructure does not support accommodating more people.

Effective? Without improved infrastructure it will not be deliverable in a good manner.

Consistent with national policy? The NPPF is more in favour of greenbelt than is expressed in the plan.

I believe RBWM is wrong in attempting to limit our responses, and in doing so it is contravening its own rules. I believe there is no limit to what we can comment on.

For those who have commented before, I recommend they look at their previous comments and see if they have been incorporated. If not, make the same objections again.

For those who have not previously commented – look at the plan and comment as you wish.

No-one should waste their time commenting on the points RBWM tells us to focus on.

6/7/17

**ANDREW CORMIE**  
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Maidenhead

## Homes will put pressure on our infrastructure

CONCERNING Cllr Derek Wilson's comments in the latest edition of the council's Around The Royal Borough concerning the difficult decisions which have to be taken regarding the requirement for Maidenhead to be the development capital of Berkshire, I have the following points to make:

Cllr Wilson states: "We are building a borough for everyone. That means schools, doctors, leisure centres, roads, public transport, shops, offices and everything else that we rely on in our day-to-day lives."

In response to this comment, the pressure this will put on all forms of our infrastructure will be severe in the extreme. I am not just concerned about schools, the NHS and all other forms of public service as well as roads, but more fundamental issues such as provision of electricity supplies which appear to be overlooked by all concerned.

It's all very well owning your beautiful two bedroom flat overlooking the Thames at Maidenhead which cost £650,000, if the electricity fails every time more than 10 people in the block switch on the kettle at the same time for their morning brew.

Cllr Wilson goes onto to indicate the following with regard to affordability of property: "But it's one that we have to face, and face together. Because every day young families who have grown up in our towns and villages are faced with the reality that they might not be able to afford to live here."

As indicated, the idea that any form of property is affordable to young people attempting to get on the housing ladder is laughable. I mentioned the £650,000 two bedroom flats in the last comment.

In the publication there are more flats advertised in Staines priced at £359,000 for a one bedroom flat. So these prices are supposed to encourage school teachers to live in the Royal Borough.

No wonder we have a shortage of all forms of key workers. We don't need government cuts just extortionate property prices to keep essential services being run down.

I understand that national government has put the squeeze on local councils to come up with quotas for new stocks of houses to be built, but while greedy developers are in the equation the affordability of houses will always be an issue.

With regard to this squeeze I am sympathetic to the position not just our council is being put in but probably most councils across the country.

While this squeeze is going on national government seems unable to resolve the infrastructure issues which will be thrown up by this obsessive drive for house building and ownership.

6/7/17

**DAVID SMITH**  
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Maidenhead