

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 24th JUNE 2016 (FINAL)

Present:	
Name	Organisation
Cllr Gul Khan (Chair)	RBC
Cllr Sandra Vickers	
Cllr Rose Williams	
Miriam Sparkes	
Janette Searle	RBC
Nina Crispin	RBC
Tony Hall	Civil Service Pensioners Alliance, Reading Group
Pearl Gibson	
John Walford	Whitley Community Development Association
Peter Staples	
Patience Odunsi	Unison
Diane Hiles	
Douglas Dean	Thames Valley Pensioners Convention
Brenda Jenkins	Pegasus Court / MacMillan Cancer Support
Bridget Chubb	Firtree
Ann Coddington	
Barbara Hobbs	Age UK Reading
Joan Walker	NHS Retirement Fellowship
Brian Oatway	
Mark Drukker	
Laxmi Kachwala	Readibus
Caroline Langdon	U3A / Lower Caversham NAG
D M Heath	
Diane Seydoux	
Janice Scruby	Firtree
Laurence Napier-Peele	
Jill Hodges	Southcote Forum
Elaine Jalland	
Sylvia Page	
Valerie White	
Brian Haines	Southcote Forum
Mr & Mrs Lawlor	

Yvonne Antrobus	
A Ward	
Gina Harris	
Lilian Clifford	
Jean Hutton	U3A
Sonia Hicks	U3A
Barbara Hobbs	Grovelands Walking Group
Marrion Huggins	Civil Service Retirement Fellowship (CSRF)
Carol Froud	
Dianne Hilfi	
Wendy Preston	
Sheila Hobbs	
Heather Vice	
Margaret Wallace	
Rosemary Sildall	
Barbara Annells	MS Society Therapy Centre, Carers Group
Peter Beadon	Southcote Residents Association
Robert Monk	REMAP
David Wickens	
Lyle Brome	
Martijn Gilbert	CEO Reading Buses
Andy Phillips	Reading Buses
Dave Moore	RBC

Apologies	
Name	Organisation
Anjam Chaudhary	DWP
Sumita Nanda	Reading Crossroads
Jessie Serrano	
Liz Grugeon	
Lorna Walker	
Dan Harris	Intelligent Health
Norma Parris	
CIlr Rachel Eden	RBC (Lead Member Adult Social Care)
Debbie Holden	Arthritis Care
Brigid Dos Santos	Reading & West Berkshire Carers Hub
Melvyn Brant	John Lewis Partner Support
Ann Worsley	
Valerie Bond	
Sarah Hunneman	Older People Neighbourhood Services
Michelle Berry	Older People Neighbourhood Services

Agenda item 1: Welcome & matters arising
CIIR Gul Khan

The minutes of the meeting on 8th April 2016 were checked for accuracy.

Requested amendment noted:

- Page 5: Additional comment about the Bus stop in the town centre for bus routes 33/33a/15/15a/16
- Page 8: Documents can be printed at the Whitley Wood Library.
- Page 10: update to clarify point made re' Reading Policies on building bungalows

The amended and approved minutes from the meetings are available from the Older People's Working Group page on the RBC website at:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/opwg>

Agenda item 2: Reading Bus Routes
Martijn Gilbert, CEO Reading Buses

Martijn introduced the new Head of Commercial at Reading Buses, Andy Phillips. Neil Scott attends OPWG and gives routine updates to the group and to Reading Buses.

Updates:

- There will be a new Park & Ride site in East Reading / Winnersh Triangle
- The next timetable change date is on 25th July 2016
- Extended routes for bus routes 26 and 15 to IKEA in Calcot
- Bus route 15 has been extended to run 7 days/week (Tilehurst - IKEA/Sainsbury via Dee Park).
- Change to bus route 33 - Meadway route will cover the reverse direction
- The Community Link bus route 18 will be changed (this is a RBC bus)
- New timetables for September 2016 for bus routes 15, 26, 33.
- New routes for buses 9, 12, 13, 14.

You can download a copy of the updated bus routes from the Reading Services Guide by clicking on the link below:

<http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=InWb6stJI-o>

or by searching 'Reading Buses' at www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide

- The views and ideas of users were gathered through a community based

research project sponsored by Reading Buses. There will be to come following this in the near future.

- New buses have been introduced in an effort to increase the frequency of buses covering the Woodley area. Two loops have been joined to form one loop.
- Two new wheelchair buses have been introduced on bus route 33 - based on feedback from this group.
- Due to the amount of road/rail works and subsequent disruptions to road traffic in the town centre, it is not possible at this moment in time to decide on the definite location of bus stops.
- Roads infrastructure in Reading is very limited and tight and this limits the creation of new lanes.

Questions & Answers:

Q1. When will IKEA open?

A1. IKEA opens on 14th July. Bus route 17 will continue from Tilehurst Triangle to IKEA as from 15th July.

Q2. Are there any changes to bus route 23 from Caversham?

A2. No, not from July.

Q3. There are no bus stops in the town centre for bus routes going north. Users have to go to the back of Reading Station to access those bus routes. This is not acceptable. In addition, there are no toilet facilities near those bus stops.

A3. Bus shelters / access to toilets / lighting are not the responsibility of Reading Buses. These areas fall within the remits of the Council and the Highway Authority.

Q5. Some users put their feet on seats. Seats at the back of buses can't be used. People standing block the passage between the baggage area and the seats. Many letters sent to CEO raising those issues have not been acknowledged or responded to.

A5. It is a shame that people are causing safety issues. Bus drivers are getting trained on conflict awareness and management. Reading buses doesn't favor seats facing each other and are talking to manufacturers about this.

The issue of people standing in the passage way by the baggage area will be taken back to the team.

Letters to the CEO are not ignored. New Head of Commercial at Reading Buses will look at restructuring teams and sort things out. CEO apologized for

not responding to letters sent 18 months ago.

Q6. Will bus route 9 still go into Whitley Wood? We have to wait 30mins for the next bus, it's too long. Research was done for RG2 area only. There was no written communication about this, only video messages on buses.

A6. Yes, bus route 9 will still go into Whitley Wood and Royal Berkshire Hospital. Reading Buses have listened to what people want for this area/bus route. A consultation was run by Reading Buses alongside a comprehensive research done by the Whitley Project. Communication about this was also done via Press releases and posters at Community Centres.

It's a difficult situation as Reading Buses are not in a position to increase the frequency of bus route 9 at the moment. The punctuality of buses can be an issue due to the congestion and the junction in Shinfield.

Q7. Reading Buses have had a brilliant response to the request from residents at Pegasus Court. However, some drivers are saying that they can't drop people outside Pegasus Court. Residents need to know what the situation is.

A7. Reading Buses will follow this with drivers and reinforce the message that residents at Pegasus Court can stay on the bus and be dropped down outside the Court.

Q8. How do Reading Buses meet their costs?

A8. The money from tickets sold is divided between each area and reinvested. Reading Buses also gets funding from various sources for the free concessionary bus passes (OAP). All profits are reinvested to do more / set up new routes.

Q9. It would be healthier to have vinyl seats on buses rather than the material seats, as vinyl can be wiped over easily.

A9. Reading Buses have looked into this before and whether it is practical to have Vinyl seats (or Leather seats). Those materials can get sweaty. Two batches of buses are coming with different seats - it's worth trying different things to improve.

Q10. Can anything be done for bus routes 33/15? *Amendment: The bus stop which accomodates the 33 Bus is also expected to provide passengers with access to the 33a, 15, 16, 15a. As any passengers using this stop will verify, it causes much confusion and queuing is actually impossible - it DOES need to be addressed with some urgency! It also causes difficulties for drivers as there is insufficient space to accomodate more than two buses at any one time and frequently 3 or even four are at the bus stop at the same time.*

A10. This is a challenge as there are not enough bus stops and roads in the town centre. When things settle down in the town centre in terms of road works etc...Reading Buses are open to the idea of revisiting bus routes. A central bus stop area in the town centre could be looked into.

Q11. There have been great improvements done at Reading Buses. But when bus routes have to do a detour because of road works, there are no warnings. It would be helpful to warn people.

A11. Diversions will be added to the 'talk and tell' messages on the buses.

Q12. Some drivers lose their temper and shout at passengers.

A12. Drivers need to get trained to deal better with their stress level and not lash out at customers.

Agenda item 3: Street Lighting

Dave Moore, RBC

In Law, Local Authorities do not have to provide street lighting - but if they do, they have an obligation to maintain it.

Dave Moore did a presentation covering the following items:

- How many street lights are there in Reading Borough?
- *Answer: 13,791 / 3,926 (LED's)*
- How many illuminated bollards?
- Answer: 900 (of which 144 are solar powered or reflective)
- How many illuminated signs?
- Answer: 2,698 / 30 LED's
- What is the current cost of energy for street lighting a year?
- *Answer: £600,000 / year - this is a significant cost to the Council, in particular in times of austerity.*

Benefits of LED Street Lights:

- Better colour and object definition than orange light sources (SOX -Low Pressure Sodium and SOX - High Pressure Sodium).
- 50-60% reduction in energy consumption.
- Clarity of light means lighting class can be dropped by 1 level, resulting in lower wattages and energy costs.
- Longer replacement intervals, LED's up to 25 years.
- Lower traffic management costs.
- Lower maintenance costs.
- Dimmable to 50% (LED).
- LED's can be controlled remotely. Better electronic control

mechanisms.

Upgrade to LED stock 2016-2018:

- Reading has a joint contract with Slough and Wokingham. Shared procurement means cheaper prices. Reading's share is £11,300.
- £6.86million grant from the DfT (Department for Transport)
- Mayflower Central Management System dimming up to 50%.

Maintenance Regimes for LED's

- Maintenance visit every 6 years including electrical test.
- Repainting as required
- Non-Destructive column testing every 6-8 years
- Painting is very expensive, Council can't afford it.
- Savings on maintenance is around 65%/year.

Benefits of the Mayflower Central Management System:

- Constant accurate energy consumption monitoring.
- Remote fault detection and reporting to fault ordering system.
- Dimming and switching off capability (with suitable light source).
- Manual checking can be done every 3 years.

Questions & Answers

Q1. Who operates repairs to street lights? We have been waiting for 6 months. (Coronation Square)

A1. Some street lights are managed by Housing, some are managed by Highways. Usually, Highways respond to repairs requests within 28 days. ACTION: DM will find out which street light it is and look into it as it is not acceptable to have to wait that long.

Q2. Yellow lights are ok. Can't see clearly with LED lights on Bath Road. The columns are not properly spaced.

A2. The columns' spacing in Reading is historic and many don't apply to current British standards. The Council doesn't have the cash to upgrade the columns and can't just move the lights. More evidence is needed before a decision is made to dim the LED lights down to 50%.

Q3. How secure is the central management system?

A3. Only 3 to 5 staff members can access it. There is a secure access to the system. In Reading, the street lights won't be switched off. The Council wants people to be able to go out and about safely.

When faults are detected, the databases 'talk' to each other and report directly to the engineers. Physical checks will still be done to interrogate the system.

Q4. Issue of edges growing high and stopping lights onto the road. This needs to be looked into.

A4. This can be put on the agenda for a future meeting.

Agenda item 4: REMAP Berkshire

Robert Monk

What is REMAP?

- REMAP designs & manufactures, or adapts, special equipment for people with disabilities, that are not available to buy
- It is a registered charity established 50 years ago
- It is also a national charity with branches covering the UK, including Berkshire
- REMAP creates bespoke designs for a particular purpose.

The service is Free to clients

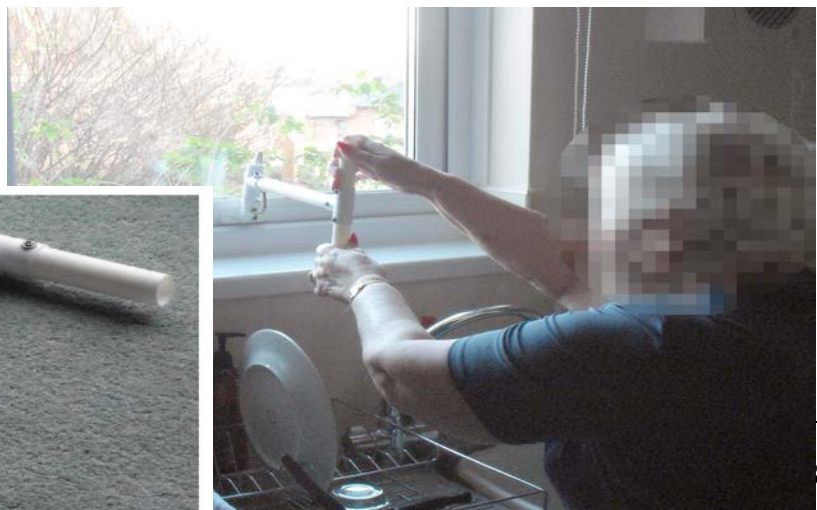
- The service is delivered entirely through volunteers
- It is supported by Reading Borough Council grant
- Every £1 spent produces £10 of aid

What REMAP does not do:

- Make what people can buy in shops
- Building work
- Repair or maintain broken equipment

An example of equipment designed by REMAP:

Window opener - depresses the button and turns the handle



To request work

- Contact Case Officer Robert Monk by email or telephone
- Self-referral requests or via professional are accepted
- An assigned engineer will visit the client and agree what is required, then make and deliver it.
- A case sheet will be raised and signed on successful completion

Contact details:

Websites: www.remap.org.uk / www.remapedia.org.uk

Email: BerksRemap@gmail.com

Tel: 077 90 127 123

Agenda item 5: Beat the Street

Dan Harris, Intelligent Health

This item has been postponed to a future meeting.

Agenda item 7: Current issues and suggestions for future meetings

Cllr Gul Khan

7.1 Currents issues:

- *Firtree*

Firtree are having a free open day event on TUESDAY 2nd August, to celebrate Fir-Tree's history and also their future at their new venue (Mormon Church, The Meadway).

There will be the opportunity to try out their activities such as table tennis, bowling, movement to music (seated exercise), crafts, scrabble, quizzes and bridge and also to find out about their outings, holidays and the welfare side of Fir-Tree with the support that they give their members.

Please note, some of Fir-Tree's activities are still at the YMCA, if anyone wants to confirm any details it's best for them to contact either Colin or Mark.

Contact details

Membership secretary - 0118 967 7130

Email colindf@btinternet.com

Website www.firtree-reading.com

- ***Older People's Day***

The planning process for Older People's Day is under way and quite a few members of the Older People's Working Group and voluntary organisations have attended the planning meetings.

There is a strong preference from the planning members for a town centre event. Various options for a venue are being looked at, such as the Rivermead Sports Centre.

The programme should be ready to share at the next Older People's Working Group on Friday 9th September.

- ***Moving the Maples Resources Centre to Rivermead***

Work is due to start next month. Meetings about the project are happening at Rivermead.

A few activities will be planned in conjunction with Rivermead Leisure and Sports.

The bus route to Rivermead hasn't been confirmed yet but information will become available nearer the time.

- ***Whitley Men's Shed***

Whitley Men's Shed is launching on Friday 1st July. This is actually open to women and men but it is aimed mainly at the men.

People can come along and bring small household items to be repaired for free or just to pop in and see what is happening.

It is at the New Directions on Northumberland Avenue, there is parking or people can take the number 5 bus.

7.2 Suggested items for future meetings:

- Police work in Reading town centre
- Proliferation of homeless people begging in the town centre/street sleepers
- Size of bins
- Reading policies on building bungalows - ***update: is it a fact that Reading Council are avoiding giving planning permission for bungalows -***

is this correct?

- Consultation for building house on Conwy Close, Tilehurst. Tilehurst residents not consulted. *Update: Residents in Tilehurst have not been properly consulted on the construction proposals at Conwy Close and have not received the relevant paperwork and information in the post.*
- Foliage/Trees - problem with foliage growing out of people's gardens and into main roads.

Next Meeting:

- Friday 9th September 2016
2 - 4 pm, Council Chamber, Civic Centre