

# Minutes of the ROMSEY FORUM

Romsey Town Hall, Wednesday 21 September 2011

Present: Jane Allaway, Dorothy Baverstock, Ian Bullivant, Janet Burnage, Simon Clothier, Aiden Cooper, Mark Cooper, Janet Coppard, Steve Corbett, Doug Cramond, Peter Croft, Sara-Jayne Croft, Tim Crouch, Shirley Dawson, Olwen Greenwood, Robert Grime, Mary Hill, Peter Hurst, Eunice Hutchison, Julian Jones, Richard Jordan Baker, John Mason, Phoebe Merrick, Viv Messenger, Barbara J Milburn, Geoff Morris, Gordon O'Hara, Roger Prescott, Mike Richardson, Nikki Riches, John & Shirley Rogers, Mavis Sawdy, Graham Smith, Sandra Smith, Ian Tripp, David Willox ,

In the Chair Mark Cooper. Minutes Sandra Smith

**1. Apologies** were received from The Mayor of Test Valley, C & D Amery, Sue Derbyshire, Di Hargreaves, Carolyn Nixson, John Parker, Roy Perry, Hal Sanchez, Geoff Uglow.

## **2. Minutes of the Romsey Forum held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

It was proposed by M Richardson, seconded by J Parker that these be accepted. Agreed.

**3. Matters Arising Ashfield Bridge, Romsey:** Following consultation with a number of stakeholders it has been decided to postpone the road closure in connection with the works at Ashfield Bridge on the A27 between Romsey and Southampton. The most likely date for the road closure will now be March 2012 with demolition of the bridge taking place in April and road reopening to be in May or June of that year.

## **4. Election of Officers**

Chair: Mark Cooper - proposed by Phoebe Merrick, seconded by Dorothy Baverstock.

Vice Chair: John Parker proposed by Mark Cooper, seconded by Julian Jones.

Secretary: Caroline Nixson and Sandra Smith as joint secretaries - proposed by Mark Cooper, seconded by Mike Richardson.

There being no other candidates all were elected.

Mike Richardson moved a vote of thanks to the officers for the work they do.

## **4. Romsey Town Centre Enhancement: - Robert Grime of the RDS**

Proposals from 2001 had led to some town centre improvements but last year Romsey & District society decided to revisit the subject. At the March lecture "People Places and Traffic" Ben Hamilton Baillie showed examples of design that gave no priority to any class of user. A recent exhibition in the Town Hall showed examples for other towns and possible designs for Romsey in Bell Street, the Market Place and Church Street. There were comment sheets for visitors, not Questionnaires. The only question was Do you think this approach could be right for Romsey? – Yes or No. Very few respondents rejected the proposals outright and a significant number gave unqualified support. Most had points they wished to be considered. A report will go to TVBC and be made public. The aim is to produce an approved design for use when money becomes available. There is a film on Romsey town centre on the Chamber of Commerce website.

## **5. Planning update - Graham Smith TVBC**

GS gave a brief update on the changing planning system. TVBC wants to achieve the best for local people which does not conflict with national requirements. The SE Plan is on the way out as the Localism Bill comes in. The Core Strategy still covers housing but the Localism Bill allows more local control. Action plans will be replaced by a single document which will define local boundaries and gaps.

Core Strategy Timetable – documents go to the council in early November, to public consultation early in the New Year with a second round of consultation in early summer. It will go to the Inspector in early autumn and be adopted in 2013.

Housing Requirements - for the first time TVBC can set its own. The core strategy document will allocate housing sites.

Question from RP: given the timetable and national framework what assurances have you from the Secretary of State that existing plans will have weight prior to the adoption of the core strategy? GS said they stand until replaced or no longer needed and must be taken into account. Where the plan is silent, development could take place.

MC: the SE plan figures for housing need were based on demographic data. Will TVBC housing figures be based on the same data? GS: the proposed figures have considered demographic and economic data and housing need. Under the old system the Inspector's report was binding, in the new system it will not be so and there will be a possibility of challenge.

**7. Mark Cooper** presented a paper on section 106 requirements, the improvements triggered by Abbotswood development occupations. The paper outlines junction improvements and other planning gains including highway works, community facilities landscaping and conservation. The process is complicated, as some will be done by the developer and others using money paid by the developer. *(A copy of the papers is available from the Chairman. Comments or questions should go to Sarah Tose at TVBC [stose@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:stose@testvalley.gov.uk))*

There were questions on School Road and other works which should be done prior to commencement. VM clarified that the contribution comes prior to commencement but consultation is needed before work commences. The design is on the internet and there will be no decision prior to consultation.

The paper lists the amounts to be paid as: – Educational facilities £5,000,000; Transport contributions £2,646,932; Community/recreation/art/education contribution £7,318,499.

Further questions concerned junctions, access, drainage, sustainability, wildlife and newts.

**8. Tim Crouch** Romsey Waterways Enhancement Strategy:- a presentation from TVBC on the collaborative strategy which includes the Environment Agency, HCC, Natural England, Romsey & District Society and the Hampshire Wildlife Trust:-

TC introduced this emerging project about enhancing waterways around Romsey. The strategy will need to cover wildlife and landscape (the Test is an SSSI but not in good condition and needs positive management); water level and flow (including issues for spawning and migration); flood risk; public access and opportunities for enhancement. There will be consultation with the public then a strategy document and annual action plans working with landowners to make it happen. Questions concerned water abstraction and water resources, Fishlake meadows drainage and tree planting

The Chairman encouraged responses to the consultation when it comes.

## **9. Any Other Business**

Phoebe Merrick presented the RDS booklet "Walk the Water" and the Middlebridge St Exhibition papers.

There was a complaint that the developer's blurb in the Romsey Advertiser was very inaccurate.

**10. Dates for 2012: 21 March, 20 June, 19 September and 21 November.**

**Next meeting 16 November 2011**