

MINUTES OF THE ROMSEY FORUM

Held in the Courtroom, Romsey Town Hall, Wednesday 16th June 2004 at 7.30pm.

Attendance list:-35 people including...Henry Maddick; Chris Amery, RDS; Julian Jones, RTC; Brian Palmer; Tom Gould; Mike Gray; Jan Gray; Paul Marke; Jill Gethin, RTC; Shirley Rogers; Alan Wiltshire; Mike Richardson, RTC; Sally Leach, TVBC; Jocelyn Head; Malcolm Hudson; Claire Bourne; D. Hallward; Helen Murray; Simon Atkinson; Jenny Woodley; Evelyn Caws; Andrea Light; Mark Taylor; Fred Gibbs; John Mason; Peter Phillips; Julian Gee, REPC; Euan Russell, Bdlds; Sue Ford; Kevin Ford; Steve Lees, TVBC; Laura Taylor, TVBC; Christine Cole, TVBC.

In the chair:- Phoebe Merrick; Clerk to the Forum, Mark Cooper, TVBC.

Item 1:- Apologies:- Sandra Gidley MP; Rita Mitchell; Tom Gould; John Parker; David Barker; Rod Simpson; Carolyn Nixon; Neill Beasley; Jack Kemish; Phil Warner; Anthony Porter; Elizabeth Porter; Gill Roberts; Liz Barron.

Item 2:- Minutes of the last Forum 17th June 2004. Approved.

Item 3:- Matters Arising:- None.

Item 4:- Town Diary. 6th November 2004, BBC. July 3rd 2004, RDS Hog Roast.

Item 5:- Romsey County Infant and Junior Schools.

The Chairman of the Junior School Governors, **Paul Marke**, gave a presentation.

By 2009 there will be severe over-capacity in Romsey Schools even taking into account new housing completions. Hampshire County Council's recommendation is to close both Romsey County Junior School and Romsey County Infant School.. There has been a strong community campaign and the parents' proposal is a Romsey Primary School on the Junior School site. An alternative is the Infant School site but most parents back the Junior School site. Both Schools have had good Ofsted Reports and there is community use at both schools. Parents have taken action including a petition, letter writing and demonstrations. The Governors need to prove the numbers: the catchment area population has all been surveyed and the result indicates adequate numbers to support a one-form entry Primary School. 210 are needed. A primary school will lead to higher participation rates than is currently the case with the two existing schools. The closure threat has had the effect of 'promoting' the schools. The Governors' proposal involves some additional building on the Junior School site, where there is room to expand and improved community facilities.

Malcolm Hudson, Chairman of the parents action group said that both were excellent schools. The great advantage was that children from the catchment could be walked to school. As many as possible should contact Alex Munro at HCC. The relevant website is www.hants.gov.uk/education/romseyreview

Item 6:- The Market Towns Conference and the role of a Town Centre Manager.

Presentation by **Christine Cole**:- Town Centre Manager.

Romsey and Andover Chambers of Commerce persuaded TVBC to help small businesses as a result of the 1990's recession. A 'Quality Retail Marketing' Consortium was set up in April 1996 consisting of the Chambers, the Southern Tourist Board, Businesslink and TVBC using £80,000 from TVBC over three years. What retailers were looking for was that the towns should be marketed. CC became an employee of TVBC in 1998; QRM has retail breakfast meetings at the Crosfield Hall on a regular basis. In 1999, CC and John Davis attended the Market Towns Conference in Shaftsbury. CC invited the Conference to come to Romsey. In 2003 it was announced that Romsey would be the 2004 venue. The Convention starts at the Town Hall on 23rd September. Workshop venues will be in other parts of central Romsey; on the Friday there is a dinner at the Hilliers' Arboretum and on Saturday Romsey will 'present itself' to the Convention. It is an important and prestigious event for Romsey and welcomed by the business community especially bearing in mind problems retailers have been having during the enhancement works.

Item 7:- Green Waste and other environmental issues.

A presentation by **Laura Taylor**, Head of E & H, TVBC.

For 10 years the Borough had been at the forefront of waste collection and the two bin and split-bin system is popular with local people but at a cost of £65 per household per year which is double the cost to other local authorities. TVBC collects about 50,000 tonnes of domestic refuse per year. In 2001 and 2002, 20%

was recycled, but in 2003 this dropped to 12% because the green waste component had to go to landfill. The Government target for 2004 is 33% to be recycled and 2006, 36%. Material taken to the Hampshire County Council site at Bunny Lane does not count towards the TVBC recycling total. TVBC's green waste collected from the kerbside in the current bins is not acceptable to the composting facility. It contains anaerobic sludge and doesn't get hot enough at the composting facility to kill e-coli. Additionally, the enclosed green-bins were being used by some to dispose of ordinary rubbish. Additionally the split bin vehicles created a risk of 'foot-and-mouth' contamination. The most effective way of recycling green waste is to use the green garden waste sacks. All the green waste is now good quality and accepted by the composting facility where it is turned into Pro-grow which is used, for example, at the Eden Project.

Eastleigh and East Hampshire had already introduced the green waste sack system and it worked well. In Test valley 11,500 bags have been sold to 8,800 properties, a 20% take-up. Take-up is highest in North Baddesley; in Romsey it is currently 17%. The crews are still learning and working towards greater reliability; 200 properties have requested assisted lifts. A few bags have been lost or stolen and a few are known to have ripped, especially if overloaded.

There have been reports of long queues at Bunny Lane but HCC claim the whole network is busy at this time of year; that figures are not yet available, but do not seem to be significantly higher.

TVBC is going to have to trial other types of waste collection if the Government targets are to be reached.

Forum members then asked questions and made comments.

Could the present recycling bins be adapted, say by drilling? No...the problem is rubbish contamination; other Councils have £5 million anaerobic digesters. Hampshire has not.

Could plastic stickers be attached to bins to clarify collection days?

The credibility of recycling had been damaged by news stories of the green waste going to landfill.

Litter picking and grass verge cutting needs to be co-ordinated; often cutting was done before litter was removed. Agreed; this needs co-ordinating.

Is it possible to have a glass picking machine for smashed bottles?

Is a weekly green bag collection in the growing season possible? This will be reviewed.

What will happen if there is an increase in fly-tipping? The removal of bulky materials is the priority.

Item 8:- AOB. Content for future Forums.

- 1) Disability Awareness in the Romsey Environment.
- 2) Post-implementation review of changes in Romsey as a result of the environmental enhancements.
- 3) Threat of closure of TVBC offices at Duttons Road.

Item 9:- Dates of future Romsey Forums. Wed. 8th September 2004. Wed. 8th December 2004.
