

Minutes of the Romsey Forum - 8th June 2005 held at Romsey Town Hall.

Present: Alexander Brundell, Kate Clark, Oliver Colvile, Marjorie Exall, Kevin Ford, Sue Ford, Diane Hargreaves, Julian Jones, Steve Lees, Brian Matthewson, Phoebe Merrick (Chairman), Barbara Milburn, Geoff Morris, Carolyn Nixon, Gill Roberts, Shirley Rogers, Euan Russell, Rod Simpson, Sandra Smith (Clerk to the Meeting).

Speakers: Michael Hedderley, Rail Officer, HCC; David Pinkney, Business Manger, Wessex Trains; Andrew Milne, Asst Chief Engineer, Highways, HCC.

Item 1: Apologies. Frank Akerman, Chris and Denise Amery, Neill Beasley, Clive Collier, Cheryl Collier, Mark Cooper, Anthony de Sigley, Sarah de Sigley, Sandra Gidley MP, Tom Gould, John Mason, Mike Richardson.

Item 2: Minutes. Correct Langton to Langdon; then approved and signed as a true record.

Item 3: Matters Arising:

(i) Update from Steve Lees. On June 24th TVBC will publish a new consultation document about consultation to comply with requirements of new planning system. It will be advertised in the local press and on TVBC website.

(ii) Look at Romsey:- 9th June, meeting in Town Hall for Romsey New Town area. Saturday 18th June there will be an exhibition of material from the historic core section.

(iii) Tadburn Meadows Conservation Group is having a working party on the morning of Saturday 11th June.

Item 4: Romsey Trains and Railway Station issues. Prior to the meeting the two speakers had received from the Chairman 35 pages of comments on these issues drawn from over 1000 responses in the Look at Romsey project.

Michael Hedderley outlined the current situation for rail and changes resulting from the Railways Bill. Nationally there is a major problem managing growth (usage is up 10% p.a.). Franchise changes are coming, but few affect Romsey (see SRA website for consultation). In Hampshire there is an issue of lack of car parking spaces at stations.

Questions followed; Disabled access to the Eastern platform at Romsey Station? This is being considered with related matters including pedestrian access on the eastern side, car parking, buses, issues about the station house which is now listed and TPO'd trees.

Who is responsible for station buildings and fabric? The owners are Network Rail; Wessex Trains lease the buildings. Responsibilities are complex, DPO will investigate.

Other questions covered punctuality, timetabling of Romsey/Totton service, door opening on late trains and information about Taxis.

A major cause of many problems experienced by TVBC, HCC and rail operators is complexity and lack of clarity of ownership and responsibility. Wessex Trains' priority is to keep the service going. Longer franchise periods would make the investment easier.

Item 5: Highways issues in Romsey: Andrew Milne outlined the wide range of HCC responsibilities and functions relating to highway management. Romsey is in the West Area and AM is based in Andover at Beech Hurst. Questions and discussion covered improvements to road junctions; Cupernham Lane junction and the stretch of road up past Romsey Hospital; road signs and street clutter; speeding; lack of pavement in Love Lane; wall and railings around Abbey Water. Responses made it clear that legislation and government guidelines covered many of these areas but excess of road signs could be considered. In response to a question asking where to report pot holes AM recommended emailing hampshirehighways.west@hants.gov.uk

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Item 6: Future of Romsey Hospital:- The Primary Care Trust had declined an invitation to speak as plans were not yet formed. May come at a later date.

Item 7: Dates and topics for future Forums:- Steve Lees suggested housing in the South East Region would be of interest in relation to local developments including Fishlake Meadows. Another suggestion was Waste Disposal - fortnightly collections. Mark Cooper outlined TVBC thinking on the need to increase recycling and reduce costs. There would be consultation over the summer. This could be brought forward to the Forum in the Autumn if the timetable fits.

The next two meetings are 7th September 2005 and 30th November 2005.

Item 8: Any other business:- Mark Cooper announced that he is standing down as Secretary of the Forum after the Autumn meeting having had the task for nearly five years; and the County Council is a demanding role. Phoebe Merrick is standing down as Chairman at the end of the year and suggested the Forum might consider having three officers instead of two. There being no other business the meeting closed.

Cllr Mark Cooper Romsey Town & Tadburn

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