

Minutes of the Romsey Forum

held at Romsey Town Hall, Wednesday September 16th 2009, 7.30 pm

Present: Chris & Denise Amery, David Barker, Dorothy Baverstock, John Edwards, R Grime, Mary Hill, Eunice Hutchinson, Sally Leach, Phoebe Merrick, Barbara Milburn, Brian Palmer, Tessa Parker, Roy Perry, Ian Richards, Ian Tripp, Mike Walker, A Wiltshire
In the chair: John Parker Minutes: Sandra Smith

1. Apologies: Sandra Gidley MP, The Mayor of Test Valley, Cllr Ian Hibberd, Mark Cooper, Sue and Aelred Derbyshire, Julian Jones, Caroline Nokes, Gill Roberts, Rod Simpson, Tim Sledge, Carolyn Nixon.

2. Minutes of the Romsey Forum held on June 17th 2009

The minutes issued at the meeting contained minor amendments to the circulated version. (Any Other Business, first paragraph). In response to a question the Chairman stated the minutes had been amended to show that Councillors declaring an interest was a general issue which applied to all councillors.

Proposed by David Barker, seconded by Ian Richards the minutes were accepted.

3. Matters Arising None

4. Viv Messenger – TVBC Transport Planner

VM gave feedback on the recent community street audit and the part this will play in formulating the Town Access Plan for Romsey.

Groups involved in the CSA included the Romsey Disability Forum, Romsey 2020, Romsey Primary School, R&DS, Romsey NCT, HCC.

VM showed the various radial routes into the town centre surveyed. Slides were shown illustrating some of the issues identified including poor sightlines and crossing points, surface problems, narrow pavements, inaccessible steps and kerbs.

The Town Access Plan, prepared by TVBC with HCC and one of 20 in the county, will inform the strategy for improving access to facilities and services. From it an action plan can be developed in response to identified needs to secure and direct funding from developers or grants. The initial plan will be shaped by key strategies at county level and take into account other studies and surveys including the Community Street Audit. It will show main access issues and options. There will be consultation on the draft and the final plan will be a living document which can be reviewed and updated.

The Town Access Plan for Andover can be seen on the Test Valley website

Questions about access included vehicles parked on pavements, sightlines at Mountbatten Avenue exit, footways used by scooters and cycles, traffic light settings and location, especially for Romsey Primary school. The pole reducing access to a disabled bay was mentioned and David Wilson promised action.

JP asked if rural areas were included. They are not but VM can be sent note of these for inclusion in a Test Valley action plan. There is a separate strategy for Cycleways which will feed into the Town Access Plan.

RP said HCC has a modest budget for dropped kerbs – advise the County Council of needs – and suggested using email to roads@hants.gov.uk to report any problems with roads, pavements, overgrown hedges etc..

JP enquired if there was an underlying strategy to guide access plans for new developments. VM said principles are set out in the Transport Plan – reduce traffic, manage traffic (ensure bus service etc.) and invest to pay for improvements.

5. David Wilson - TVBC Engineering & Transport Manager

DW explained that Prohibition of Driving Orders (the road sign shows a car or motor cycle inside a red circle) prevent access except for residents, tradesmen or visitors. They are enforceable by the police not the council and the police often have higher priorities. It has now been decided that where residents experience problems with commuter parking, a residents parking order, which the

council can enforce, could be put on these streets. Such street parking may become worse following restrictions on all day parking at the Crosfield Hall. D Barker visits a place where parking is restricted between 10 – 11am and 2 – 3pm and this seems to work well stopping all day parking. There were questions about yellow lines and reduction in parking bays in Newton Lane and more general questions about residents parking where there was need for lots of visitors. DW explained that visitor permits can be obtained and can be used by any visitor to the property.

DW said an exhibition would be at Duttons Road on 1st October where engineers would be on hand to answer questions. The display would be there for the full week but staffed only on the 1st.

DW described planned improvements at Canal Walk, either side of Romsey Station. Design work is being done to enhance the surface under the tunnel. There will be a footway and station enhancements and a ramp is proposed to platform 1.

After the review of on street parking a lot of restrictions were changed from 2 hours to 1 hour. This seems to work well.

6. Test Valley Notices and Consultations

The TVBC Core Strategy. The Secretary of State has been requested to withdraw the strategy. Consultation will take place in the New Year.

Romsey Extra Parish Council has received consultation from TVBC on Hackney Carriage Licensing, i.e. taxis that can be hailed rather than booked in advance. There are 35 in Test Valley but believed to be none in Romsey. There was discussion on taxis. Travellers arriving at Romsey station needing transport have to telephone for a hire car. Hire car numbers are displayed at the station. It is possible to walk into the car hire office in the bus station and book one of the waiting cabs. One hire car owner had relinquished the taxi licence as uneconomic and it was questioned whether anyone would be willing to provide a taxi service. MH noted that if it was not for the Good Neighbours scheme there would be real problems experienced by those using wheelchairs. Views on this can be put forward to Michael White at TVBC.

Statement of Community Involvement in planning matters. The documentation is on the TVBC website for comments.

D Baverstock: There is a consultation for over 50s on sport in Test Valley at the Age Concern building, 2.30pm on 13 November

Roy Perry: The recommended lorry routes in the Freight Transport Strategy are now M3, A34, A303 as Southampton to Andover route (was A3057) and M4, M3 as route to Bristol and south Wales (was A36)

7. Future Format and Topics for the Forum

The Chairman explained that the usual format was to have one or two speakers and asked if that should change. Sometimes a topic of interest was obvious but at others it would be possible to have speakers chosen by the chair or general discussions. JP asked if open sessions would be welcome. There was discussion on this and views were expressed in favour of speakers as this meant they would have appropriate expertise and could be questioned. JP asked for topics. Those suggested included: litter; street scene, posters and advertisements by plaza and on by pass; Community Wardens, PCSOs and possibly Police; Adult Services.

8. General Business

PM gave notice of the Stream Clean on Saturday 26 September, 9.15am at the Crosfield car park. On 29 September LTVAS was meeting to plan a future project on the history of the Romsey Show. The Show will make all its records available.

DB deplored the crazy bus route for Abbotswood. This goes through Fishlake Meadows, into Romsey centre and down Latimer Street but does not visit the Bus Station. VM responded it visits parts of the own not covered before and that Latimer Street is very accessible for the town centre. BM commented on the free bus between Romsey Station and Mottisfont Abbey. "What a delight"

9. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 18 November 2009 7.30 pm