

Minutes of Romsey Forum

18th November 2009 held at Romsey Town Hall

Present: Sandra Smith, Tessa Parker, Gill Roberts, Cllr Sally Leach, Mike Richardson, Eunice Hutchison, Ian Tripp, David Barker, Mary Hill, Brian Palmer, Richard Jordan-Baker (Broadlands), Julian Jones, Cllr Mark Cooper, Doug Cramond, Geoff Morris, Roger Prescott, Chris Thomason, Sarah Holmes, John Middleton, Keith Parker, Rod Hoyle, Phil Evans, Albert Duffield, John Blackmore, Peter Thompson, Janet Coppard, Imogen Ode, Brenda Langdon, EG Smith, PJ Smith, V Kingsland, Zoe Duke, Dr John Rawlins, Richard Howlett, Tim Bartlett, Roger House, Mike & Jan Gray, Barbara Milburn, Cllr Chris Lynn .

Speakers: Police Inspector Jacqueline Willson, Steve Lees

In the Chair: John Parker. **Minutes:** Carolyn Nixon.

Item 1: Apologies:- Phoebe Merrick, Rod Simpson, Cllr Roy Perry, Cllr Caroline Nokes, Sandra Gidley MP, Cllr Mrs P Mutton (Mayor of Test Valley), Cllr Ian Hibberd, Sue & Aelred Derbyshire, Jill Gethin, Ian Richards.

Item 2: Minutes of the Romsey Forum 16th September 2009

These had been circulated electronically and in hard copy at the meeting. it was proposed by D Barker, seconded by B Palmer that the minutes be approved. Carried

Item 3: Matters Arising. None

Item 4: Local Crime and Community Safety : Insp. Jackie Willson

Being new to Romsey, Insp. Wilson introduced herself and spoke of her past experience in Southampton City and the New Forest. She then described about how the force had been adapting to the relatively new policy of neighbourhood policing. Hampshire's record on dealing with major crime had in recent years been good, but it had been felt that not enough attention had been given to coping with anti-social behaviour, which has a big impact on quality of life for local residents. There was now much more emphasis on partnership working, both with other agencies and with local communities. In areas with particular problems, such as N Baddesley and Rownhams, the police were setting up 'street meets' to talk to residents about their concerns.

Safer Neighbourhood teams cover Romsey North (Romsey town centre, Baddesley, Tytherley, Ampfield, and the rural areas north of these) and Romsey South (Woodley & Whitenap; Romsey Extra; Nursling, Rownhams & Chilworth). The teams are charged with identifying vulnerable people and proactively managing core offenders. Full details of staffing and regular beat reports available on Hampshire Constabulary website (www.hampshire.police.uk).

Emergency Response team once more based in Romsey. 15 officers and two sergeants, which means 3 people on duty at any one time (6 on Saturdays). All cars have satellite tracking systems. 999 calls are graded. Grade 1 (life and death) : 5-15 mins; Grade 2 (no confrontation) : 30 mins. Dog units and traffic units can also be sent by Control at Netley.

Performance Rates : Romsey has the lowest rate for violent crime in the whole of Hampshire, with those allegedly responsible for the raid on Offord's, the jewellers, currently in court. A 5% reduction for the year in overall crime in the area was expected, with 15% reduction in theft from motors. It was hoped that the recent spate of burglaries had come to an end, with the jailing of two offenders. The teams were getting to grips with anti-social behaviour, by means of contracts which the youngsters had to adhere to or face stiffer penalties. Local Action Groups were assisting in this by liaising with the police and offering community projects to involve young people.

In answer to questions from the floor :

Day time shifts : foot patrols may be seen more often in the day because burglars tend to work in the day, when they are less obvious. Night patrols end at midnight (2.00am weekends).

Romsey Police Station : Open 9.00 – 19.00, Tuesday – Saturday. Contact by dialling 101 or 0845 045 4545.

Speed restrictions : County councillors set local speed limits according to wishes of parish councils. The police will enforce where necessary. Unlikely that new restrictions will be reviewed for some time. Speeding near schools should be reported, as can parked cars causing obstruction.

Neighbourhood wardens : They work closely with Police Community Support Officers and are much appreciated. Not known whether funding will continue in event of change of government

On being thanked for her contribution, Insp. Willson reiterated that the actual incidence of crime in the Romsey area was very limited.

**Item 6 : Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) :
Steve Lees, Head of Planning Policy and Transport, TVBC**

Steve Lees began by explaining that the SHLAA had to be drawn up in order to meet Government's requirement to show the availability of enough land to accommodate the required number of additional dwellings in each five-year period up to 2030. Approaches had to be made to developers and land owners, to ascertain what land was available. They were at liberty to put forward any land they wished, but the local authority could not force a landowner to build on any one site. The Planning Dept had then to consider all proposals, balancing against them any constraints, which were felt to rule out such land immediately. TVBC would then have to take a strategic view, to come up with their own proposals on possible sites. This was how the sites at Whitenap and Hoe Lane had been arrived at. However, because the Government Inspector had rejected the Core Strategy, all sites had to be looked at again.

The owner of the land rented by the Romsey Allotments Association had expressed a wish that this site should be included for consideration as possible housing land. The Planning Dept. now had to put forward any constraints it felt to be relevant. SL asked that all objectors make their points to him before the deadline that coming Friday. However, he pointed out that there would be further opportunity to raise objections if and when the site was included in the revised Core Strategy.

In answer to questions from the floor, it was pointed out by Steve Lees and Cllr Cooper that : the current number of dwellings required for the area could change but that the process of selecting sites would have to continue as presently; that the national housing requirement was set as a result of forecasts from the Office of National Statistics; that the required number for Southern Test Valley had already been much reduced and that it was unrealistic to expect all new housing to be built in Southampton City.

Any Other Business

Forum Magazine : Sandra Smith pointed out that the free magazine which was currently being delivered in the Romsey area had no connection with this Romsey Forum.

Orchard Day : Transitions Town Romsey had arranged for the planting of 5 fruit trees by the churches of Romsey on 28th November in the Memorial Park and would be holding events to accompany this and promote the sustainability message in the URC Hall.

Next meeting Wed 17 March 2010, 7.30pm, Romsey Town Hall
Followed by 16 June, 15 September, 17 November