

Minutes of Romsey Forum

17 November 2010 held at Romsey Town Hall

Present: Stuart Aiken, Chris Amery, David Barker, Janet Coppard, Robert Grime, Diane Hargreaves, Vic Hemmings, Eunice Hutchison, Anthony Hyde, Julian Jones, Barbara Milburn, Carolyn Nixson, Matt O'Connor, Nadine O'Conner, Brian Palmer, John Parker, Roy Perry, Ian Tripp, Geoff Uglow, Mike Wenman.

Speakers Julian Higgins, Steve Lees

Chair Mark Cooper **Minutes** Sandra Smith

1 **Apologies** were received from:

John Blackmore, Jane Brambley, Sue Darbyshire, Pat Francis, Olwen Greenwood, Sally Leach, Tessa Parker, Roger Prescott, Mike Richardson, Rev. Tim Sledge, Chris Lynn Mayor of Test Valley.

2 **Minutes** of the Romsey Forum held on September 15th 2010

A correction was noted to Item 7 Other Housing Proposals. The planning application for Halterworth was for 59 houses not 1500. With this correction the minutes were agreed.

3 **Matters arising**

JP enquired what was the outcome of the Town Centre meeting. SS reported that Dorothy Baverstock would come to the next Forum meeting to give an update. Concessionary Travel – this is now a HCC responsibility. It will be in line with the statutory scheme, i.e. travel after 9.30, but will include companion passes. There will be all day travel for the disabled and tokens for those who need to use taxis plus support for community transport. This extends the things some boroughs have done to the whole county. If funds become available travel before 9.30 may be considered.

4 **Lighting the Way:** Julian Higgins, HCC Street Lighting

JH opened with a short video on street lighting in Hampshire.

HCC's policy document on Street Lighting was revised this year. Copies were available at the meeting and can be downloaded from the HCC website. JH covered 2 aspects: Where Should Lighting be Provided and Energy and Climate Change.

Rural areas will generally not be lit except where safety requires it. Low crime urban areas will be lit to the level provided when roads were adopted. Higher crime urban locations will be lit to British Standard as lights are replaced. JH noted advantages of the new white lighting – it shows colours much better and it is directed downward which reduces light pollution.

Government targets require a 15% cut in CO2 emissions so many energy saving techniques are used including new energy efficient lights and solar powered bollards and equipment. Remote monitoring will bring lights on, check they are working, dim them (midnight to 5am) and switch on an off as required by light levels. This will be the largest monitoring system in the country. In a public survey 72% of residents agreed to dimming lights on main roads and highways late night to early morning and 66% agreed to this in residential areas. Less than 50% agreed to lights being switched off. In a trial in Fishlake Meadows switching off was not popular but in a dimming experiment residents did not appear to notice.

Questions

Q: lighting styles in conservation areas. JH: lights will be the same decorative style as at present but with the new white lights.

Q: how do you reconcile residents' wish for lighting when HCC wants to reduce lights e.g. in low crime areas. JH: lighting will only be installed if there is a demonstrable reason.

Q: Lighting on principal routes JH: Lighting currently there will be replaced but unlit stretches will not be lit.

Q: What about accident black spots? Is there flexibility? JH: yes, if there is a serious problem and lighting could contribute to safety.

Q: Mark Cooper enquired about contract time. JH: Contracts are for 25 years, lights must have a minimum of 5 years beyond that but should last 50 years.

Q: timescale? JH: Romsey will probably be affected in 2012 – 13. There will be consultation before that.

5 **Planning Update:** Steve Lees, TVBC Forward Planning.

When the SE Plan was abolished in July the council dropped the housing figure by a small amount. As of last week the plan is back and the housing requirements figure is back to what it was. This impacts on the 5 year land supply figure.

The Redbridge Lane appeal – TVBC had refused the planning application but the inspector viewed the land supply as inadequate and so granted the appeal for 350 houses. The Southern parishes will now need 2000 houses on greenfield sites in addition to the 350 for Nursling, 800 at Abbotswood and some others in the pipeline.

Brewery site: compulsory purchase may have to be considered.

2 developments are going to appeal – Halterworth Lane and Nutburn.

Some discussion followed about planning applications, the Planning Department and Inspectors.

Core Strategy: The new version will go to Cabinet in June or July. There will be public consultations and then another Public Enquiry. The issues for Southern Test Valley include – where should the required 2,000 houses go; what types of houses; what is the housing need; where will people work; what will be the impact on the town centre?

Town Access Plan: the closing date has gone, comments are in and a report will go to cabinet in 2011.

Abbotswood: ready to go if the developers finalise purchase from the Receiver. It could start in the Spring subject to some conditions. TVBC as agents for HCC will implement traffic management. There will be consultation in 2011

MC noted that he and Cllr Collier have asked for TVBC land in the town centre to be looked at. It includes the Bus station and Crosfield Hall sites. BP wanted reassurance about what may go in these sites. MC wants space for high order activity and more car parking.

JP asked about the Solent Enterprise Partnership which has been formed by PUSH (Partnership for Urban South Hants) SL: it is an economic development partnership set up by the Government but has no funding. It is not known if it will replace or absorb PUSH. Southern Test Valley is closely linked to the South Hants and Southampton area so TVBC is waiting to see.

Further discussion included the Localism Bill, “neighbourhoods” and local planning.

6 **Any Other Business**

It was suggested that the Forum follow up on the Town Centre meeting and consider a marketing plan for Romsey. MC reported that he has been asked to contribute to a tourism plan. This will be brought to a Forum meeting.

JP suggested that the Localism Bill could be a Forum topic.

7 **Dates of meetings for 2011**

The Forum will meet on 16th March, 15th June, 21st September and 16th November 2011.

Next meeting: Wednesday 16 March 2011, 7.30pm, Romsey Town Hall.