

Minutes of Romsey Forum

Romsey Town Hall, 7.30pm Thursday 26 June 2014

1 Present: 52 Forum members including Rosalie Hall; Ron Batchelor; Pat Bachelor; Eileen Sadie; Tobie Sadie; David Dowdell; Sylvia Beckett; Peter Hurst; Geoff Uglow; Denise Amery; Chris Wesson; Liz Franklin; Jeff Hawksley; Geoff Moores; Stuart Bannerman; Jean Russell; John Welch; Sheridan Welch; Graham Shawley; Marianne Piggin; Dorothy Baverstock; Lilian Brimelow; Paul Burnage; Janet Burnage; Anthony Hyde; Richard Pratt; Elizabeth Pratt; Chris McCallion; Janet Coppard; Mavis Sawdy; John Bennett; Ian Tripp; Janet Moody; Barbara Long; Nigel Long; Franc Pilkington; Neill Beasley; Diane Hargreaves; Sue Taylor; Nigel Allen; Ian Bullivant; Richard Jordan-Baker; John Bignel; Julian H. Jones; Phil Marshall; Roger Prescott; Graham Smith; Mark Edgerley; Andy Ferrier; Glyn Darby; John Parker; Mark Cooper.

2 The Chairman, John Parker, requested the Forum add a presentation from the Romsey Town Centre Manager to this evening's meeting. Agreed. Mark Cooper was appointed Minute Secretary for this meeting.

3 Apologies :- Sandra Gidley, Jan Haddon, Vera Brice, Rosemary Dawkins, Barbara Milburn, Judy Walker, David Harris, Frances Sweeny, Ben Nicholls, Darren Paffey ; Cllr Jan Lovell, TVBC Mayor

4 Romsey Future: Andy Ferrier, Test Valley BC Corporate Director.

The Romsey Future project is a process to develop a plan of action which has the town's consent. That is... 'what do we want for our town and how do we get things moving?' In November 2013 TVBC put on an event for the town's organisations and from that meeting volunteers are now developing work streams. On 14th June, 400 people visited the town hall to see the progress of the work streams and shared their views on RF. Such consultations help the volunteers to look at certain issues in more depth. RF is a learning process for everyone including TVBC officers.

Roger Prescott asked if RF would inform the current Neighbourhood Plan process? Ans. All RF responses are available to the NP group. John Parker asked what the plan was for RF from now on? Ans. Over the Summer the Working Groups will meet again and start looking at action plans for each of their work streams. Marianne Piggin would place the 'priorities' set by the consultation on TV's web-site. Ques. Shouldn't 'health' be part of the RF's work. Ans. Probably. We are still developing and refining the process.

5 Planning Update. Graham Smith, Forward Plans, TVBC.

(i) The Revised Local Plan had been consulted on between January 2014 and March 2014. More than 2,000 comments received which are on TV's website. The RLP is scheduled to go to Cabinet on 16th July 5.30 in the Crosfield Hall and then Full Council on 24th July at 4.00pm, also in the Crosfield Hall. The RLP and any unresolved issues would then be handed over to the Planning Inspectorate. The name of the Programme Officer would be sent to all objectors.

(ii) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new tariff on development. the 16th July Cabinet would consider a draft charging schedule which would then be consulted on in August and September.

(iii) Neighbourhood Planning. Consultation on four Neighbourhood Areas covering five parishes (Andover, Ashley, Charlton and Romsey Town/Romsey Extra) finished 13th June. Romsey Town & Extra NP received 34 responses.

(iv) Romsey On-street Parking Review. Consultation on the amendments would happen in July and an exhibition of the proposals will be held in the Town Hall.

(v) HGV restrictions in the Town Centre have been reviewed. A number of problems including the fact that there are a lot of residences in and around the Town Centre who receive deliveries whilst the independent retailers in the town are unable to control their delivery times. TVBC is still looking at alternative options.

(vi) Church Street Enhancement. Consultation took place 28 February to 11th April 2014. Detailed design work is now being undertaken to include a number of the positive design inputs.

(vii) Planning Applications. (a) Tesco still ongoing. Hampshire is checking Tesco Consultant's Traffic analysis. (b) 19 dwellings at Peel Close is at Planning Control next week. (c) 275 dwellings at Ganger Farm is under consideration (d) Ditto the 64 dwellings at Oxlease. (d) Romsey Brewery. Members asking for CPO to be tried again. (e) Housing at the Luzborough Inn also under consideration. (f) Housing Land Supply. For Southern Test Valley's 7 Parishes it is 4.13 years. Government requires 5 years + 5% supply or 5 years + 20% if persistent under-delivery is proved.

A number of questions followed :- on CIL and the fact that it was eventually going to replace Section 106 agreements; but TVBC had opted for zero rate CIL on Strategic sites such as Whitenap. CIL went into a Borough wide spending pot whilst S106 had to be spent in the vicinity of the development... on the lack of development at the Brewery Site... on HGVs. Can they be re-routed? Difficult as the road through Romsey is classified as an A road... and Chris Wesson noted that neither Romsey Town nor Romsey Extra had objected to the Ganger Farm proposals.

6 Romsey Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Peter Hurst. Neighbourhood Planning is a component of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In Test Valley only Parishes can undertake an NP. The NP can set the planning policies for the Borough's Planning Development but it needs to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. An NP area goes through a designation process. TVBC had consulted on the designation of a Romsey Town and Romsey Extra Parish Neighbourhood Plan, and the Borough's response is awaited. Peter Hurst first raised the NP issue at TVBC in November 2011, but there was no enthusiasm for NPs from TVBC because of the cost and difficulty of achieving one. The DCLG reports that currently 1,000 areas have started an NP process, 75 have reached full draft stage, 17 have been through an examination and 7 plans have been made.

Pressure to press on with an NP locally has come via Romsey Forum, Romsey Future and the 1,100 objections to Whitenap in the RLP. There is a Neighbourhood Plan Management Group (NPMG) jointly chaired by Romsey Town Council and Romsey Extra Parish Council and a lot of preparation work has been done to the point where the NPMG has been awarded a £7,000 grant. John Parker added that an NP was challenging; it had to be a plan that the people of Romsey and Romsey Extra agreed. The example of Thame in South Oxfordshire was done with the active support of the District Council, who set the number of dwellings for Thame, which is the 'strategic' element, but Thame NP decided the locations. The key to an NP is to remember that the golden thread through the whole document is the NPPF. Janet Burnage asked about the fit between the NP and the RLP. JP replied that the only plan current was the 2006 BLP: the RLP is only a draft document. Mark Cooper noted that the body of objections to Whitenap (950 v. the Core Strategy, 915 to the next LP draft and 1,103 in the current RLP draft) might contribute to the RLP being found unsound. If that happened, the Romsey Parishes NP would come through the middle.

7 The Role of the Town Centre Manager. Mark Edgerley, Romsey's new Town Centre Manager, gave a Power-Point presentation which highlighted the assets Romsey had as a town and highlighted the issues that needed work. ME urged everyone to 'talk-up' the town if it was to continue to thrive, and reminded the Forum of the importance of the Net in generating both business and footfall.

At the end of the meeting, JP reported on the stair-lift scheduled for the Town Hall this summer; noted that HCC was consulting on the future of Household Waste Recycling Centres and noted the publication of the CH2M Consultant's report on flooding in Romsey.

8 Next Meeting. Thursday 18th September 2014 at 7.30 in Romsey Town Hall (then 20th Nov. 2014).