

## Minutes of the Romsey Forum 17 September 2015

**Present:** D Amery, S Bannerman, J Bennett, V Brice, J Burnage, M Cooper, J Coppard, J Critchley, G Darby, J Haddon, J Hawksley, R House, A Hyde, J Jones, G Morris, F Pilkington, R & E Pratt, R Prescott, I Richards, M & R Robinson, J Russell, T Sledge, J Stone, F & B Sweeny, J & C Tilley, J Walker, J & S Welch

**Speakers:** Mark Edgerley, Steve Lees, James Strachan  
**Chairman:** John Parker. **Minutes:** Sandra Smith

**1. Apologies:** Cllr Perry, Cllr Wesson, Chris Amery, Jane Brambley, Ian Bullivant, Sue Derbyshire, Andy Ferrier, Diane Kingston, Carolyn Nixon, Mavis Sawdey,

**2. Minutes 18 June 2015.** The notes on Fishlake Meadows omitted an option considered which was recreational use. With this correction acceptance was proposed by JJ, seconded by JB. Agreed.

### **3. Matters arising.**

Romsey "pong". Two weeks ago the smell was evident but otherwise has not been obvious over the summer. There is no evidence that the smell was a result of the flooding. The Environment Agency is putting in equipment and will update the Forum next year.

### **4. Elections**

Chairman: John Parker was proposed by SB, seconded by MC

Vice Chairman: Ian Richards was proposed by MC seconded by GM

Secretary: Carolyn Nixon and Sandra Smith were proposed by JP, seconded by IR

There being no other nominations all were returned.

### **5. Proposal for devolution of powers to Hampshire.** James Strachan HCC

JS gave examples of devolved powers in Scotland and Wales. Following these there was a feeling that English regions should have more control. Manchester and its surrounding areas have been given powers but must have an elected mayor. Other areas e.g. Sheffield and Cornwall are taking back powers from central government. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight region has developed a bid with 19 partners including 11 District councils, 2 cities, the Isle of Wight and 2 National parks. The area has the largest county economy (2 million people, 80,000 businesses and £47 billion economic activity.) Devolved powers would mean keeping the business rates and enable development of infrastructure, business and skills, housing and public services. The Chancellor will receive the bid by 4<sup>th</sup> September.

### **6. Planning update.** Steve Lees TVBC

#### **Policy Documents:**

Local plan inspector's report - expected in the autumn. Aware that inspectors have to consider the impact of latest Government guidance on range of issues e.g. wind turbines. Not been advised of impact on timetable.

Community Infrastructure Levy - not been advised of a date, inspector has asked for consultation on a technical issue on building costs. Comments received have been forwarded.

Supplementary Planning Documents - Romsey Town Access Plan approved on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

Test Valley Cycle Strategy - report recommending approval of a new version to Cabinet at end of September 2015

#### **Planning Applications**

Highwood Lane/Botley Road appeal set for 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Ganger Farm application resolution to grant permission in July 2015

Wrens Corner application to southern area committee - recommendation for approval

## **Romsey Town Centre Enhancement**

Church Street underway aiming for completion in November 2015

Bell Street - County working on initial design, will have public consultation early 2016

Market Place - County carrying out feasibility studies. May be able to include initial options in consultation on Bell St.

## **Housing Land Supply**

Government requires local planning authorities to have a 5 year supply. If not the NPPF says that local plan policies relevant housing are out of date. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The two together mean councils are at risk of losing appeals unless the adverse impact of development outweighs the benefits. Even with 5 years supply the presumption in favour of sustainable development and an up to date plan Councils may not be able to successfully defend appeals.

SL offered an explanation of housing supply calculations which mean that there are two housing supply figures which will be different as each has its own requirements Following a recent appeal decision and with benefit of advice from a barrister the Council is to use a borough-wide calculation until we receive the inspector's report. A new calculation has been done which means for the borough we have 5.57 years supply. This puts the Council in a better position to defend appeals as it could argue there isn't a shortfall. However the Council still needs to consider applications on their merits with reference to the NPPF approach in favour of sustainable development.

In response to questions SL stated that developments with small numbers of homes are included. The plans make allowance for some "windfalls". Affordable homes – judicial ruling is that Ministers cannot make policy by putting into guidance that affordable home need not be included in small developments. Sustainability – SL has no clear definition. Government has been scrapping some requirements e.g. on being carbon neutral. The ability of Local Authorities to insist on green development is limited.

## **7. Five minute updates.**

Mark Edgerley gave information on the Romsey Film Festival and on the Romsey Community Lantern Parade, its workshops and sponsorship opportunities.

He then presented information from Andy Ferrier on the **Romsey Future Project**.

This is a partnership project made up of the voluntary, business and statutory sectors. Its main aim is to establish a long term vision that will help improve the town and its facilities. The views of Romsey people drive the issues that will be in the vision document. The main themes at present are:

1. Getting round Romsey
2. Enhancing Romsey
3. Enjoying Romsey
4. Living in and around Romsey
5. The economy of Southern Test Valley

Over the summer months the co-ordinating group has been undertaking our final piece of public consultation before the first version of the Romsey Future Vision and Action Plan is published in December. Thank you to all people who stopped to talk at our market stall in August. Partners will be asked to sign up to the Vision document to show that the ideas are supported as aspirations. The funding and project development will require further work. It is envisaged that as each programme area develops it will require financial and staff resource from a number of organisations. However what has been great about the Romsey Future Partnership are the practical things on the ground it has already delivered.

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 10am we will be holding the launch event for our first Vision and Action Plan document in the Crosfield Hall. You would be all welcome to attend. This will become an annual event for stakeholders and the public to find out about progress. Additional public consultations will be carried out on specific projects.

**Fishlake Meadows:** a summary of responses and full responses (anonymised) can be found on the TVBC website. A summary of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) will be available shortly. These FAQs will be added to as work on this project progresses. Comments and feedback from the public will be worked into a set of management principles to guide the setting out and management of Fishlake Meadows as a Nature Reserve. This plan will be made available to the public for comment.

**Youth in Romsey** Tenders were over budget but HCC and TVBC have increased their contribution. The contract will go to Formans. There will be a reduced service in the new building due to loss of council revenue funding. MC noted other sources of funding are being sought.

#### **8. AOB**

There was none. The Chair encouraged people to put forward topics for next meetings

Date of next meeting: 19 November 2015

Dates for 2016: 17 March, 16 June, 29 September and 1 December