

Minutes of Romsey Forum
Held at Romsey Town Hall, 13th July 2017

Present: A Duignan, D Chillingworth, G Darby, JH Jones, F Stokes, V Brice, J Haddon, F Pilkington, M Arney, R Prescott, J & C Tilley, S Bannerman, J Walker, C Wesson, D Baverstock, S Southern, J Mason, F & B Sweeny, R Jordan-Baker, J Bennett, J Adams, I & S Dickerson, K Westbrook, S Tyldesley, M Cooper.

Speakers: Mark Edgerley (Town Centre Manager); Cllr John Parker (Romsey Town Council) with Katie and Sophie (TVBC)

Chair: John Parker. Minutes: Carolyn Nixon

- 1. Apologies:** M Sawdy, S Smith, I Bullivant, J Burnage, R & E Pratt, S Derbyshire, A Hyde, D Hargeaves, S Leach, C Barrington-Brown, L Holloway, J Stone, A Chillingworth, R Dawkins, G Smith (TVBC)
- 2. Minutes 30th March 2017 :** Proposed : J Tilley, sec: F Pilkington. Agreed
- 3. Matters arising :** None, not covered elsewhere.
- 4. Town Centre Report :** Mark Edgerley (Town Centre Manager)

Getting Around : Additional lighting had been installed on the Bypass Road, to facilitate access to the town centre for users of the car parks at The Rapids. Improvements to signage for drivers had been made by TVBC/HCC, especially at Greatbridge and at the Luzborough roundabout, while the tourist fingerposts in the town had been upgraded. Railings at the bus station were being refurbished.

Charity collections : As from 1/9/17, responsibility had been devolved to the Town Council, to enable better monitoring. Forms now available at the Town Hall.

Past Events 2017 : the Antiques Market in the Town Centre had been a success, not mirrored unfortunately by a further one held at The Rapids. The Small Businesses Fair had not attracted large attendances but had enabled useful networking. The successful Romsey Festival had promoted 160 separate events, with the 'woolly bollards' (yarn bombing) throughout the Town Centre attracting particular media attention. The Beggars Fair had spread to 25 venues and attracted near record crowds, with retailers reporting good takings and the Youth Festival in the park proving to be a big draw.

Forthcoming Events : **Carnival**, 23 July, with the Parade reverting to its original route.
Hampshire Open Studios 19 -28 August, with over 250 artists, studios and groups (many in Romsey) opening their doors to exhibit original artwork to the visiting public.
Sun 3 September : **Romsey Food Festival, Teenage Market and Farmers' Market**
Sat 9 September : **Romsey Show;**
Sat 23 – Sat 30 September : **Romsey Film Festival**

Sunday Summer Bus : Three Rivers Rail Partnership was again organising its free bus service to connect Romsey railway station with venues between Romsey and Andover.

Bell Street Improvements : The street would be closed to traffic from September for 8-9 weeks, to enable drainage work to be carried out. It would then re-open for the Christmas period. Work would begin again in January with further street closures for 19-20 weeks. Further traffic calming measures would also be carried out in Church St. and traffic enforcement officers would be patrolling in their new electric vehicle.

From the floor, Cecily Tilley complimented the Town Council and local businesses on the floral arrangements in the town but asked that attention be given to the former Congressional burial ground tucked away between Abbey Water and Newton Lane car park. ME stated that he himself had often tried to keep the area clean but that he would consider what further measures could be taken to enhance a popular resting place.

5. Boundary Commission's draft proposals : John Parker

JP gave a detailed exposition of the various proposals currently being considered at parish, borough and constituency level. In each case, the aim was to cut the number of elected representatives and to even up the number of electors in each ward, based on the predicted population in 2022. Proposals for the re-drawing of parish boundaries were currently out for consultation and comments needed to be received by mid-August. The parish/ward of Romsey Extra would be particularly affected by the proposals. A copy of the presentation would be circulated immediately after the meeting and later with the minutes.

In answer to questions :

JP believed that comments made by the public were taken into account and cited an instance where a change to the proposals had been effected;
Any proposals for devolution of government in the south now seemed to be extinct.

6. Planning Update : written report from Graham Smith (TVBC)

Romsey Brewery site (app ref: 17/00966/OBLS). The Council is currently considering an application to modify the planning permission so that the mandatory affordable housing would now be delivered as 'starter homes', on the basis of 'viability grounds'.

Abbotsford, Braishfield Rd (46 dwellings) : application to be heard in early October. This site sits between the Abbotswood development and Ganger Farm.

Work had already begun on the Ganger Farm and Luzborough sites. It was thought that Timothy Knatchbull would not start work on the new Whitenap estate until after the Luzborough and Hoe Lane sites had been completed. It was very much hoped that the community, through Romsey Future, would be involved in early planning for Whitenap.

Next Local Plan : National planning guidance was likely to be changed in the next few months, as a result of the latest Housing White Paper. Thereafter, TVBC would be looking to produce an Issues and Options document. This would outline the issues which the Borough faces, what the Council is required to do and what realistic options are available to TVBC. The intention would then be to seek the views/ involvement of the public on which issues should be included in the Local Plan, building on the work achieved by Romsey Future, Andover Vision and Community Planning Toolkit projects.

7. Any Other Business

HCC Balancing the Budget consultation. Closing date 21/8/17

Mountbatten title : with the recent death of Countess Mountbatten, her son, formerly Lord Brabourne, inherits the title as the 3rd Earl. His son now becomes Lord Brabourne.

Date of next meeting: 21 September 2017 Romsey Town Hall 7.30 pm