



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

Minutes of Meeting, Thursday 22 June 2006

Present

Daniel Bech (Telephone House Neighbours' Association), Graham Bell (Pantiles Traders' Association and Pantiles resident), Jennifer Blackburn (Rusthall Village Association), Graham Bradley (Rock Villa & Hanover Residents' Association), John Cunningham (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Michael Doyle (Hawkenbury Village Association), John Goodfellow (Banner Farm Residents' Association), Bruce Goodwin (Grove Hill Residents' Association), Matt Goodwin (Chairman Forum / Tunbridge Wells Village Residents' Association), Richard Gould (Calverley Park Crescent), Michael Hicks (Inner London Road Association), John Higgs (Rock Villa & Hanover Residents' Association), Michael Holman (Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association) Michael Larsen (The Grove Residents' Association), George Lawson (Friends of the Common), Ian Naismith (Rock Villa & Hanover Residents' Association), Keith Perry (Benhall Mill Road Land Association), Angela Phillips (Soroptimist International of Tunbridge Wells & District), Patrick Shovelton (Inner London Road Residents' Association), Fred Sirman (Warwick Park Area Residents' Association), Christopher Thomas (The Goodwins No 1/No 2 Residents' Company), Grace Thomsett-Hill (Clarence Road Users' Association), Christopher Weller (Calverley Park Association), Philip Whitbourn (Beulah Road Residents' Association), Cllr Mrs Cobbold, Cllr Crawford, Cllr Ekins-Daukes, Cllr Mrs Mayhew, Cllr Price, Cllr Wakefield, Cllr Williams

In Attendance:

Ellie Broughton (TWBC), Cllr Bullock (TWBC Cabinet), Caroline Ellis (TWBC), Anthony Garnett (TWBC)

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Jenny Alexander (Rusthall Village Association), Patricia Smith (The Goodwins No 1/The Goodwins No 2 Residents' Company Ltd), Altan Omer (Benhall Mill Road Land Association), Gill Twells (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Roger Walsh (Upper Stone Street Residents' Association), Mary Wardrop (Hawkenbury Village Association), David Webster (Clarence Road Users' Association) and Cllr Bulman.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS MEETING

Progress reported on a number of the town's grot spots.

Licensing Manager attended to hear residents' concerns about proposed Spafest events

Minutes of the meeting of 25 May

The minutes were agreed.

Matters arising from the meeting of 25 May

Cllr Bullock reported progress on CCTV cameras at RTW station and Daniel Bech on a number of locations where problems have, or are being, addressed (see Appendix A). Cllr Mrs Cobbold reported clean ups at Willow Tree Road and land behind the Spa Valley Railway. The clean up was performed by High Weald Housing Association, the Spa Valley Association and with additional support from TWBC.

All other items covered by the agenda.

TWBC Update

Cllr Bullock reported on a number of items:

- Calverley Park - reduction in disturbances, particularly during the day and fewer people congregating at the Millennium Clock: Jenny Blackburn said there has been displacement of youths to the Common.
- TWBC Staff changes - Directors appointed to start in August and September. New Heads of Service posts have interviews scheduled. Interim arrangement details available on request.
- Government White Paper - date still to be confirmed but is due in Queens Speech with publication currently likely to be October / November.
- Future Support for Forum - Mike McGeary's team will be taking on responsibility for minutes and agendas.
- SE Plan - responses are now being analysed for submission to the Government. Understands Maidstone Local Authority is seeking additional housing allocation (TW isn't).
- Kent Minerals Extraction and Waste Strategy - KCC will be publishing consultation details shortly: contact KCC if interested in seeing / commenting.
- Towards 2010 - KCC consulting on this five year vision for Community Plan actions devised from 'Kent Vision'. Copies viewable on www.kent.gov.uk
- TWBC Planning and Development Control - consultants' report progress through General Purposes Committee and Cabinet over next few days. Agenda and report viewable on www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk or from Committee Section at Town Hall (01892 526121).

ACTIONS:

- Jenny Blackburn to formally notify the authorities about disturbances and rubbish on the Common and to ask whether the Alcohol Free Zone might be extended.

Highways - items for discussion with Behdad Haratbar at next meeting 20 July 2006

A number of issues for discussion were identified:

- Concerns that responsibility for managing parking issues may transfer to Kent Highways and that the local part-timer who has been so effective may be at risk.
- Request that KCC paint and maintain lamp posts and clean signs
- Concern that there is no evidence that reporting items to the advertised phone line results in any action.
- Communications need to be improved

ACTIONS:

- Any other items to be notified to Christopher Thomas as soon as possible to enable a co-ordinated list for Mr Haratbar in advance of his attendance at the July meeting. If not on email then write to Christopher Thomas at 3 Woodbury Close, Tunbridge Wells Kent TN4 9LE.

Museum and Library Re-development

Caroline Ellis, the TW Museum and Art Gallery Manager presented proposals for re-development and stated that there is still time to submit comments which might shape the final brief. The Forum gave her their full backing and said they would be willing to lend their name to future grant funding applications.

ACTIONS:

- All members to submit any comments on behalf of their associations (or individually) to caroline.ellis@tunbridgewells.gov.uk
- Caroline Ellis to investigate possibility of televising the proposals at the Museum on a 'loop' basis. Also to provide a copy of a powerpoint presentation to go on www.townforum.org.uk

Proposed Spafest Events

In order to reflect levels of concerns about proposals for the Spafest events TWBC's new Licensing Manager, Anthony Garnett, had been asked to attend. Anthony summarised the timetable and process for determining Premises Licencing applications submitted by the events organisers and took a number of questions from Forum members. Ward members and Licensing members explained their positions with Cllr Ekins-Daukes announcing his resignation as a member of the Licensing Committee in order to be able to better represent his constituents on this issue. There was an overwhelming feeling that the Spafest events were being steam-rolled without any consultation. The method of advertising an event prior to having received any agreement or licence could be seen as setting a dangerous precedent, especially when the hearing for the Licence application had been set so close to the event dates.

ACTIONS:

- Any representations that members wish to be made through the Forum should be submitted to Daniel Bech to co-ordinate in order to meet a timetable for the provisional July 19 hearings. (All / Daniel Bech)
- Councillor Ekins-Daukes to lend his support to Daniel with this work

Feedback Reports

Tunbridge Wells Borough Community Plan

Daniel Bech reported back on the main themes which had emerged through the sub-committees for representation to the Community Planner: Cleaner Town, Cinema, Major Conservation Area Buildings, Recycling and Promotion of Grey Water usage.

ACTIONS:

- Comments to be submitted on behalf of the Forum (Daniel / Community Plan sub-committee)

'Brighten Up Royal Tunbridge Wells' Focus Group

See paragraph 3.

Task Force

Matt Goodwin is due to meet Sheila Wheeler, Chief Executive of TWBC on 23 June and will report back at the next meeting.

Kent Vision

Dr Larsen has written on the Forum's behalf (see Appendix B).

Announcements

1. There was a presentation to Ellie Broughton to thank her for her help in developing and supporting the Forum and to wish her well on her departure from the Council. Ellie was invited to be the Forum's first honorary member which she was delighted to accept. She expressed her thanks and wished the Forum every success in the future.

Future Meetings

2. 20 July - Highways (Mr Haratbar, KCC), feedback from Chairman's meeting with Sheila Wheeler (Matt Goodwin)

In due course – Community Safety: proposed to invite the new senior police officer as well as representative of TWBC. Commons Conservators.