



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

Draft Minutes of Meeting, Thursday 25 May 2006

Present

Daniel Bech (Telephone House Neighbours' Association), Jennifer Blackburn (Rusthall Village Association), June Bridgeman (Soroptimist International of Tunbridge Wells & District), John Cunningham (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Betsey Dix (Calverley Park Crescent), Michael Doyle (Hawkenbury Village Association), John Goodfellow (Banner Farm Residents' Association), Bruce Goodwin (Grove Hill Residents' Association), Matt Goodwin (Chairman Town 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 Larsen (The Grove Residents' Association), George Lawson (Friends of the Common), Ian Naismith (Rock Villa & Hanover Residents' Association), Altan Omer (Benhall Mill Road Land Association), Keith Perry (Benhall Mill Road Land Association), Christine Phillip (Tunbridge Wells Twinning & Friendship Association), Fred Sirman (Warwick Park Area Residents' Association), Grace Thomsett-Hill (Clarence Road Users' Association), Gill Twells (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Mary Wardrop (Hawkenbury Village Association), Christopher Weller (Calverley Park Association), Philip Whitbourn (Beulah Road Residents' Association), Cllr Bulman, Cllr Cobbold, Cllr Ekins-Daukes, Cllr Mayhew, Cllr Wakefield, Cllr Williams

In Attendance:

Ellie Broughton (TWBC), Cllr Bullock (TWBC Cabinet)

Apologies:

1. Apologies were received from Jenny Alexander (Rusthall Village Association), Patrick Shovelton (Inner London Road Residents' Association), Patricia Smith (The Goodwins No 1/The Goodwins No 2 Residents' Company Ltd), Christopher Thomas (The Goodwins No 1/No 2 Residents' Company), Roger Walsh (Upper Stone Street Residents' Association), David Webster (Clarence Road Users' Association) and Cllr Crawford.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS MEETING

Kent Highways have agreed to consider the need for one or more new taxi ranks at the top end of the town. They have also clarified ownership of grot spots and started an improvement programme.

Grot Spot: work to clear land at Eridge Road filling station is imminent.

Final comments on the draft Community Plan are sought from residents.

Cllr Ekins-Daukes sought resident views about whether a cinema is needed in RTW Town Centre.

The Task Force seeks comments on its proposals for 'Seven Urgent Actions' to further the work of the Town Forum.

Minutes of the meeting of 24 April

2. The minutes were agreed.

Matters arising from the meeting of 24 April

3. Cllr Scholes had been in contact with Mr Lukacs who had requested a clock. Cllr Scholes addressing.
4. All other items covered by the agenda.

Feedback Reports

Highways Issues and Taxi Ranks

5. A small party representing the Soroptimists, RTW Town Forum and the Civic Society had accompanied Behdad Haratbar, Head of Transport & Planning at Kent County Council on a short tour around the town. Mr Haratbar had been sympathetic to the problems identified and agreed to address a future meeting of the Town Forum and to engage with residents.
6. The Borough Council had publicised the Taxi report on its website and June Bridgeman had met with taxi drivers who were supportive. Kent Highways are progressing the request for one or two ranks at the top of the town.

ACTIONS:

- Mr Haratbar to be invited to attend a Town Forum meeting in July (Matt Goodwin).
- All members to consult with their resident groups and to let the Chairman or Secretary have any requests for what Highways matters they would like Mr Haratbar to address (All members).

Town Centre Traders' Group

7. An inaugural meeting took place in April and the Town Forum was represented by John Goodfellow. Common issues of interest were the 'unwelcoming railway station' and the taxi rank report.

ACTIONS:

- John Goodfellow to represent RTW Town Forum as an observer at future Traders' Group meetings when invited.
- John Goodfellow to clarify by what mechanisms the Traders' Group will link to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) and others.
- Cllr Bullock to liaise with TWBC's CCTV Manager about the possible need for additional cameras at RTW Station.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Community Plan

8. The sub-committee circulated a draft paper for submission to the Borough's Community Plan Partnership in response to the publication of the draft Community Plan for consultation and invited comments from members (Appendix 1).

ACTIONS:

- Cllr Bullock to feed back comments to Estelle Grant (TWBC Community Planner) about the timescale, presentation and confusion over the consultation documents as well as Town Forum queries about the monitoring arrangements of future implementation.
- Estelle Grant to be invited to the next meeting of the sub-committee.
- All members to consult with their resident groups and feed back any suggested amendments to Daniel Bech or Commander Lawson of the sub-committee (please note the consultation deadline is 26 June so please make comments well in advance of that so that the sub-committee can coordinate them).
- All members also to consult about the perceived need for a cinema in the town centre and give feedback to Cllr Ekins-Daukes accordingly.
- Mr Higgs to be invited to join future sub-committee meetings.

Housing Partnership

9. Mary Wardrop had attended a meeting of the Housing Partnership the previous week.

'Brighten Up Tunbridge Wells' Focus Group

10. Kent Highways and TWBC had submitted a response to all the sub-committee's identified grot spots identifying ownership and with Kent Highways committing to improvement action. Work on clearing the site behind Eridge Road Filling Station is imminent.

AGREED:

- Daniel Bech to update the Town Forum's website with progress and comments.

Task Force

11. The Task Force circulated a paper (Appendix 2) proposing seven urgent items for discussion.

AGREED:

- The Town Forum will issue future press releases through TWBC Press Office.
- All members to consider the proposals, consulting their resident groups where possible, and give any comments to the Chairman as soon as possible.

Announcements

12. **Plastics Recycling** – a pilot scheme is about to be launched in the town.
13. **Heritage Open Days** – over 30 properties will be open 7 to 10 September. John Cunningham sought members' support in encouraging owners of other local heritage properties to open during the event.
14. **Mayor and Deputy Mayor** – the Town Forum congratulated Cllr Mrs Barbara Cobbold on her appointment as Deputy Mayor for the forthcoming Mayor. Cllr Ron Weeden has been appointed Mayor.
15. **TWBC Restructuring** – appointments to the posts of Directors are due to be announced shortly.
16. **Alcohol Control Zones** – on schedule for week commencing 2 June.
17. **Government White Paper** – the publication date has been postponed. No new date as yet.
18. **Sunrise Living** – Developers 'Sunrise Living' were hosting an exhibition to promote a proposal to replace five existing dwellings in Dunorlan Park with a 140 bed supported living home.

Future Meetings

19. 22 June – Museum and Art Gallery (Caroline Ellis, TWBC)

20 July – Highways

In due course – Community Safety: proposed to invite the new senior police officer as well as Linda Mortley of TWBC

Any Other Business

20. The Town Forum extended its best wishes to Louise Sanders for her forthcoming maternity leave, and its thanks for her considerable hard work and support of the Town Forum since its formation last year in 2005.