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## ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

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#### Minutes of Meeting dated Thursday 28 October 2010

- 1. Present:** Jenina Bas Pendry (Residents First), Lorna Blackmore (Grantley Court Residents' Association), Andrew Bridge (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Linda Chamberlain (Tunbridge Wells & District CAB), John Cunningham (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Michael Doyle (Hawkenbury Village Association), Jane Fenwick (Calverley Park Residents' Association), Maggie Fraser (Tunbridge Wells Over 50's Forum), John Goodfellow (Banner Farm Residents' Association), John Higgs (Rock Villa & Hanover Road Residents' Association), Michael Holman (Tunbridge Wells Twinning & Friendship Association), Matt Goodwin (Village Residents' Association), Michael Larsen (Friends of the Grove), George Lawson (Inner London Road Residents' Association), Katharina Mahler-Bech (Telephone House Neighbours' Association), David Morris (Rusthall Village Association), Ian Naismith (Rock Villa and Hanover Road Residents' Association), Altan Omer (Benhall Mill Road Land Association), Peter Perry (Calverley Park Crescent Freeholders' Association), Kate Sergeant (Clarence Road Users' Association), Fred Sirman (Warwick Park Residents' Association), Christopher Thomas (The Chairman of the Town Forum and Woodbury Close Residents' Association), David Wakefield (Royal British Legion, Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library and Art Galleries), and Mary Wardrop (Hawkenbury Village Association).

RTW Ward Councillors: Ronen Basu (Culverden), Peter Bulman (Park), Peter Crawford (Broadwater), Lesley Herriot (St Johns & Skinners, 6 Roads Residents' Association), Catherine Mayhew (Park), John Miller (Culverden), Tracy Moore (St Johns), David Neve (St James'), Trevor Poile (St John's), and Len Price (Culverden).

Others in attendance: Helen Bouck (Soroptimist International), Roy Bullock (Leader of the Council), Sally Balcon (Friends of Tunbridge Wells Common/Observer), Ann Bates (Civic Society/ Observer), Mark Booker (Observer), Helen Clarke (Clarence Road Association /Observer), Norman Collings (Friends of Dunorlan Park/Observer), John Forster (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society/Observer), Anne Forster (Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library and Art Gallery/Observer), Paul Harrison (Telephone House Neighbours' Association/Observer), John Mattei (Royal British Legion/Observer), Patrick Moran (Observer), Mrs Mundy (Observer), Robert O'Callaghan (Residents First/Observer), David Powell ( Observer), Louise Sparks (Observer), Anne Stobo (Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library and Art Gallery/Observer), Christo Skelton (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society/Observer), and Philip Whitbourn (Beulah Road Residents' Association).

Paul Taylor (Director of Change and Communities, TWBC), Keith Hetherington (Head of Housing and Wellbeing, TWBC), Jo Wiltcher (Museum Manager, TWBC) and Samantha Timms (Senior Committee Administrator, TWBC).

**Apologies:** Councillor Ben Chapelard (St James), Betsey Dix (Calverley Park Crescent Freeholders' Association), Alastair Tod (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), and Chris Woodward (Federation of Small Businesses).

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**Christopher Thomas in the Chair for the Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 below.**

**1. Minutes of Last Meeting Dated 30 September 2010**

The minutes were agreed, subject to the following amendments:

***Amendment to minutes 'Present'***

Remove Dr Whitbourn and include in 'Others in Attendance'

Remove Michael Doyle and include in 'Apologies'

***Amendment to minutes 'Membership Changes'***

The Chairman announced at the meeting that Katharina Mahler-Bech was taking over from Daniel Bech on the Town Forum as Community Champion and represents Telephone House Neighbours' Association.

**Matters Arising:** None

**2. Actions from Previous Meetings**

**On-going Action Outstanding from meeting dated 27 May 2010**

- Councillor Mayhew mentioned that as of 30 September 2010 Town Forum meeting regarding boundary issues in Meadow Road. She is still awaiting clarification as to where the legal boundary of TWBC lay and will inform the Town Forum when she receives the information.
- Graham Goddard to find out if the hospital is to be named 'Acute or General'.
- Graham Goddard to investigate whereabouts of neurological unit in new hospital.
- That Alan Hewitt reports back to the Town Forum updates on bus provision for the new hospital.
- Debbie Stock, Strategic Commissioning Manager for West Kent PCT to look at possible sourcing/funding to encourage more interest in training up specialists for the Tunbridge Wells area – still awaiting reply

**On-going Action Outstanding from meeting dated 24 June 2010**

- Linda Chamberlain will report back to the Forum with the comments received from clients requesting services from the CAB.

**3. Briefing on the Museum**

Paul Taylor, Director of Change and Communities, gave a presentation (see Appendix B to these minutes) to the Forum and outlined the background to the possible opportunity 'to do' things differently with the Museum.

It was explained that the current situation of the Museum was limited both for storage and display space for collections, access was an issue also. The economic downturn had an impact on visitors' numbers.

Mr Taylor stated that the relationship between institutions and their audiences would be transformed by the internet. Museums would become more like multimedia organisations. According to MORI, respondents foresee an increased use of technology for the presentation of information, such as screens, gadgets, and virtual reality. They also anticipate more museum information on the internet although this was not seen as a threat to actual visits.

It was noted that museums of the future would face three changes namely:  
- leaving the building and entering public space (virtual or real), the changing relationship with the audience, and greater awareness of the social responsibilities of an institution. This would raise a question of 'would a physical building be necessary?' and the answer would be yes but it would be in a different much more flexible form.

The Forum was then shown examples of digital innovation. Representatives were impressed by the ability of the virtual world and by the ideas that could be carried out with museum collections.

In concluding, Mr Taylor stated that a museum was about having the best museum that the town could sustain and was about ambition.

The Chairman thanked Mr Taylor for his his time and presentation and asked representatives if they had any questions.

Altan Omer, on behalf of the Town Forum's Museum Working Group had previously submitted questions and Paul Taylor answered those questions he could. - **APPENDIX A**

Numerous questions were asked. Jane Fenwick asked what Paul Taylor's views were on the Library and Museum being in the same building but under different control. Paul replied that the Museum had a close working relationship with the Library and would like to build/expand on this in the future.

A question was asked as to whether the Museum went out and about in the borough to promote their collections and services. Jo Wiltcher, Museum Manager stated that she is currently leading a project, Kentish Delights, which puts museum objects in different locations. Currently there are displays in the Corn Exchange and Wetherspoons Opera House Pub. RVP were offered the opportunity to host a display but declined. In addition the Museum runs a proactive outreach service in which museum objects are taken to schools and community groups to raise awareness of the museum and its collections.

A representative asked whether there was a Collection Strategy. Paul stated that there was in fact a Collections Management Plan (Strategy) and that he would forward this (e Strategy) to the Museum Working Group.

The Forum thanked Paul again for his time and presentation.

#### **4. Reports from Councillors**

Councillor Basu – Informed representatives that at the previous meeting, the Primary Care Trust was asked whether a skin specialist would be available in Tunbridge Wells. After much consideration by the Trust, they had agreed that a specialist would hold clinic at the Gateway.

Councillor Mrs Mayhew – Representatives' attentions were drawn to the Dunorlan Park 2011 Calendar, produced by Friends of Dunorlan Park which was circulated. If any representative wishes to place an order, please simply complete the order form attach to the paper circulated.

The Town Forum was also informed that there had been some housing constraints placed for people who had local connections to Tunbridge Wells. The Tunbridge Wells Policy had been altered to reflect the 'local connection means' and identifies what is meant by 'local connection'.

Councillor Neve – drew representatives' attentions to a Portfolio Holder Non-Key Decision entitled 'Deed of Indemnity – Regeneration Consultation'. This decision had been called-in to the Economy and Governance Select Committee on 21 October, where it was recommended that the cost of indemnity should be divided between the Council and J Laing at £25,000 each and that the word unreasonable within the decision be clarified. The Select Committee did not receive a notice of a reply from the Portfolio Holder prior to an amended portfolio holder decision being released. Councillor Neve felt that it was not acceptable that the Select Committee was not formally responded to. Subsequently, Councillors had been advised by the Monitoring Officer that the Portfolio Holder Non-Key decision could not be called-in again.

Councillor Neve also informed representatives that the Economy and Governance Select Committee had held an earlier meeting on 6 October to discuss the regeneration company. The outcome of this meeting was that the Committee recommended an extraordinary meeting be arranged in order to allow it to scrutinise the questions that would go to the public for consultation on the Civic Site before they were released by the Regeneration Company consultant. Councillor Neve stated that, as of now, the Council did not have a date for the consultation as the regeneration company had only just appointed consultants.

Councillor Mrs Moore gave the background to the report and situation for representatives' information.

## **5. Reports from Transport Champion and Community Champion**

Transport – John Goodfellow informed representatives that Tunbridge Wells was not included within the Kent Local Transport Plan, this needed to be reviewed. Councillor Mayhew suggested that John speak with his Kent County Councillor to try and resolve this matter.

Community –

*Royal Tunbridge Wells in Bloom* - Katharina Mahler-Bech stated that for Bloom to be successful again next year, sponsors were needed and asked representatives to think about sponsors.

Concerning Bloom for the winter/spring 2011 season; on two October weekends, the Bloom Committee and volunteers replanted the Victoria Place Precinct's wooden planters and 3-tier displays with mixed coloured winter pansies and primula; the 6 large wooden troughs (sponsored in spring 2010) at The Pantiles were also replanted with white winter pansies and yellow primula. To look more attractive the big planters at the Union House will be replanted as well. - [www.royaltunbridgewellsinbloom.org.uk](http://www.royaltunbridgewellsinbloom.org.uk)

*Sherwood – 47 acres of woodland and lake are saved* - Kent County Council decided on Tuesday 26 October that the area of open space in Sherwood would now be protected from future development. Friends of Sherwood Lake, the housing association, Town & Country Housing Group and the Council were involved in the campaign to secure the future of the area.

**Matt Goodwin, former Chairman of the Town Forum took the Chair for Item 6 below.**

## **6. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair**

The election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman rules were circulated prior to the meeting for representatives' attentions.

It was agreed that the Forum would elect the Vice-Chairman first. Councillor Peter Crawford was elected Vice-Chair of the Forum. Michael Doyle had proposed, seconded by Michael Holman.

The next stage was to elect a Chairman to the Forum. After much debate, it was agreed that the two nominated names (submitted to the secretary) would be proposed, once seconded, representatives would then write their preferred choice of Chairman on their voting card. The voting cards were then collected and counting of the votes took place.

John Higgs proposed that Christopher Thomas be re-elected as Chairman, seconded by Jane Fenwick. John Goodfellow proposed David Wakefield to be Chairman, seconded by George Lawson. Voting took place and the results were as follows:

Christopher Thomas – 15 votes  
David Wakefield – 15 votes

As the votes were tied, the current Chairman used his casting vote and Christopher Thomas was re-elected as the Forum's Chairman for a further year.

The Town Forum also agreed that a working party be established to look at and amend if necessary, the Terms of Reference of the Town Forum. It was thought that the voting process for the Forum needed to be clarified for future elections and that the membership/representatives of the Town Forum needed to be reviewed. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Roy Bullock, informed the Forum that the Council's Legal Services would be made available should they need legal advice.

**AGREED –**

- (1) That Christopher Thomas and Councillor Peter Crawford be elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, for a further year; and
- (2) That a working party be established to review the Town Forum's Terms of Reference and membership.

**Newly elected Chairman, Christopher Thomas, took the Chair for the remaining items of business.**

**7. Membership Changes**

New Representative - Alan Bullion was announced as a representative of the Oak Road Community to the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum.

**8. Any Other Business**

Budget (Economy & Governance Select Committee) – Circulated to the Forum prior to the meeting was a Budget Questionnaire. The questionnaire had been produced by the Council's overview and Scrutiny Team. It was noted that the questionnaire was available on the Council's website: <http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=4017>. Paper copies of the questionnaire would be accepted. Please submit completed questionnaires to Andrew Goy, Senior Scrutiny Officer.

TWTF Meeting – Michael Holman informed representatives that an illustrated presentation was taking place on 22 November at 7.30pm at the King Charles Church Hall, everyone would be welcomed. Leaflets regarding the presentation was circulated prior to the meeting.

Membership Organisations' Reports – No reports of members were submitted.

Library Working Group – Jane Fenwick informed the Forum that her group had issued a questionnaire which was circulated to attending representatives and is also available on the website: <http://www.townforum.org.uk/planning/rtwtcaap-library-qartwtf281010.pdf>

Jane asked that representatives visit other libraries and asked that completed forms be returned to herself.

It was also noted by the Forum that the Civic Centre Site Working Group, which involves a number of groups such as: the Museum, Library, Adult Education Centre and Assembly Hall, would next meet on 22 November 2010.

**Meeting Closed at 8.30pm.**

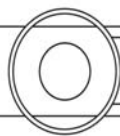
**9. *Dates of next meetings of the Town Forum***

**2010**

- 25 November 2010 at 6.30pm
  - Chief Superintendent Tony Thomas of West Kent Police and Elaine Bolton from Kent Police Authority on changes to the Police Authority and how these will affect the Kent Region.
  - Briefing on the Library, Des Crilley and Sue Sparkes, from Kent County Council
- 16 December 2010 meeting
  - provisional, there is a possibility of holding this meeting in a different venue and at a different time.

**2011**

- 27 January 2011 at 6.30pm
  - Briefing on the Assembly Hall, Paul Taylor, Director of Change and Communities, TWBC
- 24 February 2011 at 6.30pm
- 31 March 2011 at 6.30pm
- 28 April 2011 at 6.30pm
- 26 May 2011 at 6.30pm
- 30 June 2011 at 6.30pm
- 28 July 2011 at 6.30pm
- August – no meeting
- 29 September 2011 at 6.30pm
- 27 October 2011 at 6.30pm
- 24 November 2011 at 6.30pm
- 15 December 2011 at 6.30pm




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**Museum Working Group**  
 part of the “Civic Centre Site Working Group” and  
 “Town Centre Area Action Plan Working Group 2010”

Altan Omer (Benhall Mill Road Land Association)  
 Jenina Bas Pendry (Residents First)  
 Matt Goodwin (Village Residents Association)  
 Michael Holman (Tunbridge Wells Twinning & Friendship Association)

**Questions for Paul Taylor, TWBC Director of Change and Communities**

**Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum - Thursday 28 October 2010**

- **What are the current aims and objectives of the Museum and Art Gallery and how do they fit into the overall plan for the town’s development?**

To enrich the lives of the people of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells by sharing their collections in participative experiences through which they can learn, enjoy and be inspired.

Our Key Values:

- Community ownership
  - Increased access to collections
  - Excellence
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Museum and Art Gallery’s current buildings and location in the centre of town?
- **How do the Museum and Art Gallery engage with the public and both advertise and measure the success of their services to the community?**

**Engagement with the Public:**

We take a strategic approach to engaging with the public. Audience development is key to our aims and objectives. Engagement is based on an Audience development plan that was written in 2006 and is revised annually. Research for the audience development plan identified current users and non-users. Profiling this against the population of the borough has gives us a strategic overview of the gaps in our visitor profile and therefore who to target. Exhibitions and events are programmed to engage specific audiences as identified in the audience development plan. Audience engagement is done in many different ways and on many different levels. From events for pre-schoolers to high-quality art gallery exhibitions such as Eduardo Paolozzi; E-learning resources that can be used in the classroom to guided walks celebrating the unique natural and built environment of the area.

### **Advertising and Marketing:**

The bulk of the museum's marketing is based on targeted distribution of printed material (flyers, exhibition invites etc). This is supplemented by targeted adverts in relevant newspapers and magazines and a paid listing with 'Visit Kent'.

Via the council's press office we send out regular press releases for listings and editorial (although it should be noted that they are not always picked up by the media).

On-line: An e:news bulletin is sent monthly to a mailing list. Information is listed on a number of external websites such as Culture 24.

Additional marketing to support specific projects has included advertising at train stations, on buses and roadside hoardings.

### **Measuring success**

We measure success by a number of means, both qualitative and quantitative. At a very basic level we collect data such as visitor numbers from which we can measure the relative success of a project or exhibition and trends in visitor attendance.

We conduct a quarterly visitor survey to measure satisfaction with the service.

All projects, exhibitions and events are monitored and evaluated using the 'Generic Learning Outcomes' template developed by Museums Libraries and Archives. This gives us a recognized model for measuring outcomes such as knowledge, skills, enjoyment, and changes in behavior, attitudes and values as a result of the project.

In practice this means:

A project template is written identifying the aims and objectives of the project, learning outcomes and audiences. From this, means of evaluating are identified (comments cards, participant interviews, surveys, photography, film etc). At the end of the project the evidence gathered is measured against the original aims and objectives in order to ascertain whether the project has been successful.

For example, the Vic Reeves exhibition, despite large visitor numbers was not a complete success. The aim of the project was to attract visitors from outside the borough. Comments card analysis shows that the majority of visitors came from the borough of Tunbridge Wells and therefore the project did not achieve all of its aims.

### **• What is the policy for rotating the items in the central permanent exhibition?**

Exert from the Collections Management Plan

Written in 2006 to inform the HLF project and revised annually.

"In the case of changing displays, opportunities have been taken since 2003 to present collections in a way that better corresponds to a people-centred approach. However, lack of professional design input and the constraints of old-fashioned display furniture has left much of the Museum displayed in a style that is still rooted in its original 1950s fit out. The Museum has achieved remarkable levels of access with these existing materials through innovatory education, exhibition and outreach work, but intellectual access to the main displays of the museum urgently needs to both match this work and do full justice to the quality of the collections and the story of Tunbridge Wells.

It is recognised that the rotation of collections on display is, and will continue to be, an important part of providing access to the Museum's object resources. With a collection of over 60,000 objects, the ability to rotate collections on display and in use is vital.

Currently there are a number of showcases in the main museum, the shared first floor landing, the Town Hall, the Library and the Gateway which provide opportunities for regularly changing displays. The ability to easily change displays to facilitate rotation forms an important part of any future development brief which will inform the fitting out of a proposed new facility."



In addition, through specific projects, displays of objects have been put in pubs, supermarkets, shopping centers, sports centres and community centres.

- How do the Museum and Art Gallery enrich the lives of the residents and local community?
- How are the Museum and Art Gallery resourced and are the current human and financial resources adequate to display and conserve the collections held?
- To what extent does the catalogue reflect the full holdings and is this catalogue available to the general public, either on personal visit or on-line?
- **What efforts are made to display items from the collections at sites outside the museum building, for free or for a charge?**

As above – rotating the collections, plus through specific projects, displays of objects have been put in pubs, supermarkets, shopping centers, sports centres and community centres.

Free of charge – all activities are free to ensure they are accessible to all.

- How might the collections in the Museum and Art Gallery be used to raise funds to help realize the aims and objectives
- If the museum were to move from it's present location would there be a fitting building you would like to see being used for the museum and art gallery, and what vision for the future can you provide?

- **How can we as a Town Forum help the Museum and Art Gallery do a better job?**

Support us in our aspiration to develop the service:

- Advocacy – raise profile of the museum and the work we do.
- Fundraising – sponsorship of specific projects or by joining the Friends group
- Volunteering – via the Friends

- **Are there any plans to enhance the Museum's online presence and utilize it more proactively in delivering its service(s)?**

New website launched May 2010

- Includes on-line exhibitions of fine art, Tunbridge Ware and Subbuteo + the facility for visitors to upload their own comments.
- Includes an e:learning resource through which museum objects can support learning in the classroom (via interactive whiteboards).

Future plans:

- New e:learning resource to be launched later this year.
- Working toward making the object database available as an on-line resource
- Plans to trial the use of podcasts to add an additional 'voice' to the website.