



# ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

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Thursday 25 September 2014

**Attended:** Cllr Bob Backhouse, Sally Balcon, David Barnett, Cllr Ronen Basu, Lorna Blackmore, Mark Booker, June Bridgeman, Cllr Peter Bulman, David Bushell (sub), Adrian Cory, John Cunningham, Cllr Caroline Derrick, Michael Doyle, Helen Featherstone, John Forster, Alex Green, Tim Harper, Dorothea Holman, Michael Holman, Sue Kaner, Kyrios Kyriacou, George Lawson (sub), Cllr Mrs Catherine Mayhew, Chris Morris, Marguerita Morton, Cllr David Neve, Altan Omer, Nick Pope, Cllr James Scholes, Cllr David Scott, Peter Taylor, Alastair Tod, David Wakefield (Chairman), Mary Wardrop, Denise Watts, Cllr Lynne Weatherly and Philip Whitbourn (sub)

**TWBC officers present:** Adam Chalmers (Democratic and Engagement Manager), Dawn Gabriel (Operations and Events Manager) (Item 7), Giuliano Gianforte (Environment Officer) (Item 6), Kevin Hetherington (Head of Communities and Wellbeing) (Item 5), Sylvia Holman (Business Analyst) (Item 7), Mike McGeary (Democratic Services Officer) and Jo Wiltcher (Museum Manager) (Item 5)

**Also present:** Carolyn Gray (Friends of Grosvenor and Hilbert Park) (Item 7), Cllr David Jukes (Leader of the Council), James Maltby (Broomhill Bank School), Cllr Jane March (Cabinet Portfolio-holder for Tourism, Leisure and Economic Development), Cllr Alan McDermott (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Portfolio-holder for Planning and Transportation) and Bill Ronan (KCC Community Engagement Manager)

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were reported from: Cllr Ben Chapelard, Allan Gooda, Michaela van Halewyn, Katharina Mahler-Bech, Angela Phillips, Anne Stobo, Victor Webb and Cllrs Frank Williams and Chris Woodward.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Mike McGeary, TWBC's Democratic Services Officer, reported the following changes of representatives: (a) in place of Léonie Harrington (KCC's Community Engagement Officer), Bill Ronan (KCC's Community Engagement Manager) was welcomed to the meeting; and (b) Denise Watts was welcomed as the primary representative of the Tunbridge Wells Over 50s Forum, in place of David Morris.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2014, were presented.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2014 be agreed.

### 4. UPDATE REPORT FROM LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor David Jukes, Leader of the Council, provided the following update on issues of interest:

- (a) **Cinema site** – With the demolition of the cinema and adjoining buildings almost complete, Cllr Jukes advised that pre-planning discussions were due the following month on what redevelopment would be taking place. He added that he anticipated a formal planning application being submitted within the coming months. In the meantime, Cllr Jukes advised that TWBC would look to make the site available as a short-term surface car park in time for the Christmas trade, with the resultant revenue being put towards the cost of providing enhanced hoarding around the site.
- (b) **Longfield Road traffic de-congestion scheme** – Cllr Jukes advised that this scheme was progressing well and according to plan.
- (c) **Fiveways public realm scheme** – The Leader of the Council reported that this scheme was also progressing according to the agreed timetable. He added that phase II discussions (to extend the scheme to the Crescent Road/Church Road junction) were due to take place shortly.
- Cllr Jukes added that while phase I work would not include the actual provision of a water feature, discussions were taking place with a potential funder for its installation.
- (d) **Cultural and Learning Hub** – Cllr Jukes advised that this initiative was progressing although more slowly than he wished. Importantly, he added, KCC were committed to the proposal. Cllr Jukes reported that the process for securing Heritage Lottery Fund support had also started.
- (e) **Chalybeate Spring** – Cllr Jukes advised that he had met with Targetfollow and a hydrologist, to discuss the continuing problems of the lack of water flow at the Chalybeate Spring on the Pantiles. It was believed that the basis of the problem was a collapsed pipe which fed the Spring. It was noted that tests were continuing, led by Targetfollow and the Environment Agency.
- (f) **Mount Pleasant Avenue** – The Leader of the Council advised that the results of the soil testing for a possible office development on this site had proved positive. He added that he had instructed TWBC's Property Service to undertake the next stage of the preparatory work for this scheme.
- (g) **Assembly Hall** – Cllr Jukes drew attention to the deteriorating condition of many aspects of the Assembly Hall building, including its fabric, electricity supply, air-handling, facilities for disabled people, etc. He added that TWBC's preferred option was a replacement theatre, citing the success achieved by Canterbury City Council with its Marlowe Theatre as a case in point. Cllr Jukes reiterated his commitment that TWBC would not close the existing theatre until a replacement building was in place. He added that an estimated £1.6m was needed to be spent on the current building, adding that the Cabinet would consider this issue formally the following month.

Cllr Jukes advised that he had instructed the Deputy Chief Executive to examine how TWBC could achieve the best asset value from the civic complex, as part of the process of achieving a replacement theatre. Further progress reports would be made to the Town Forum in due course, he added.

Cllr David Neve voiced his support for the proposed way forward, adding that he felt the initiative being shown by the Leader of the Council was a positive move.

The Chairman of the Town Forum thanked the Leader of the Council for his very informative and helpful update, which he acknowledged included many elements of interest to Forum members.

## 5. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

10 July 2014

4 Evidence of formal appointment to the Town Forum

*Mike McGeary* *Representatives to submit evidence of their formal appointment to the Town Forum.*

Mike McGeary, TWBC Democratic Services Officer, advised that 24 out of the 35 active representative organisations had now submitted evidence of their formal appointment to the Town Forum. The Chairman of the meeting reiterated once more the importance of submitting this information, in the interests of good governance.

7(c) Public realm improvements

*Mike McGeary* *Mike McGeary to circulate Cllr Scott's paper on town centre bus routes to Town Forum members.*

Mike McGeary reported that this action had been completed by e-mail on 15 September.

8 Tunbridge Wells Cultural and Learning Hub

*Kevin Hetherington* *TWBC's Head of Communities and Wellbeing, Kevin Hetherington, to be invited back to subsequent meetings, to report on progress.*

Kevin Hetherington reported that a realistic timescale for implementation of the Cultural and Learning Hub was considered to be five years. He added that the application process for Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) support for the scheme was continuing, with HLF representatives visiting the Council for detailed discussions the following month.

Mr Hetherington also reported on a review of the Museum service which he was currently conducting. He advised that he would be reporting to the Cabinet in October, with a cost-saving proposal that the Museum be closed to the public on Sundays and Mondays, due to the low level of visitor numbers. He added that there would be a three-month period during the Summer when the Museum would still be open to the public on Sundays and school groups would still be able to visit the Museum on Mondays by prior agreement.

The Chairman, David Wakefield, on behalf of the Friends of the Museum, advised that he understood the rationale behind the proposal. He added that the Friends group would like to consider the proposals formally and provide a response as part of the consultation process.

9 2014 anniversaries

Although there had been no action points on this topic, Michael Holman provided a short update on the success of the TWBC civic visit to Wiesbaden, which took place from 19-22 September.

Mr Holman reminded the Town Forum that the Lord Mayor of Wiesbaden had visited Tunbridge Wells in July. The civic party visit to Germany had involved a reciprocal Twinning Charter re-affirmation signing. Mr Holman stressed the significance of having the Mayor, the Mayoress, the Chief Executive and a Cabinet member visit Wiesbaden, which enabled direct discussions to be held on the continuing benefits that the formal twinning process brought to both communities.

Mr Holman advised that this summer's exchange visits and the reaffirmation signings had strengthened the strong bond between the two towns, adding that further group visits were planned later in the year: one was a return of the 'Red Heralds', who would be performing in Tunbridge Wells alongside the TS Brilliant sea cadets; the other a new initiative – WiesPaten – under which a group of disadvantaged teenagers would be visiting the Borough in late October.

The Chairman of the Town Forum acknowledged the excellent achievements of the Twinning Association and thanked Mr Holman for his update.

#### 11(d) Aircraft noise

Again, although there had been no specific action points arising from this item, Adam Chalmers, TWBC's Democratic and Engagement Manager, advised that TWBC had submitted a formal response to Gatwick Airport's most recent consultation on air space linked to the Airport. He advised that a further consultation paper had subsequently been issued, on the issue of noise management, details of which can be found from the following link:

<http://www.gatwickairport.com/gatwickairspaceconsultation/>

Cllr Mrs Mayhew added that this topic had recently been considered by her Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She advised that some of the affected parish council areas had been quite active in arguing the case for protecting their own communities. Cllr Mrs Mayhew felt that the Town Forum was in a unique position to lobby for safeguarding the town area from further noise intrusion from aircraft activity. She proposed that the Transport Strategy Working Group might wish to maintain a close watch on current developments and respond robustly wherever and whenever it could.

June Bridgeman acknowledged this point, adding that the Gatwick authorities might only count the Town Forum view as a single representation; she therefore urged individuals to respond at the same time, to boost the impact that lobbying would have. Cllr James Scholes added that it was important to emphasise the size and range of organisations covered within the Town Forum's voice, in any formal response which it made on this issue.

## 6. TUNBRIDGE WELLS CAR CLUB

Ellie Grebenik from Co-Wheels, a social enterprise company which had been appointed by TWBC to operate a car hire scheme on a pilot basis, was introduced to the Town Forum. She was accompanied by Giuliano Gianforte, TWBC's Environment Officer. Ms Grebenik explained how the scheme operated, what the benefits were and what level of interest it had attracted to date.

Members of the Town Forum were advised that an independent study (by Car Plus) had shown some of the environmental benefits of the car club initiative, nationally: for each car club vehicle in use, between 15 and 25 private vehicles were no longer required. Ms Grebenik added that all the cars in the Co-Wheels scheme were either

low-carbon emitters or fully- or partly-electric, thereby emphasising the environmental benefits.

Members of the Forum raised the following issues:

- Sally Balcon asked if there were an age limit for users of the scheme. Ms Grebenik advised that there was no upper age limit;
- Mark Booker enquired how people could join the scheme if they did not have access to on-line banking. He also sought clarification of the insurance aspects in the event of damage to the vehicle. Ms Grebenik advised that bookings of a vehicle could be done by telephone, if users wished. On vehicle damage, Ms Grebenik advised that a fully comprehensive policy was in place. She confirmed the insurance excess position, and advised that minor damage to a vehicle was resolved without reference to the insurance company, on the basis that with so many users it was often too difficult to prove responsibility or fault. She added that there was a 24-hour emergency line available for users;
- Nick Pope advised that he had been part of another car club scheme, adding that he was a supporter of the initiative. He asked how Co-Wheels intended to market the scheme in order to achieve a good take-up. Ms Grebenik advised that marketing activity included: articles in local newspapers; promoting the scheme at the next Farmers' Market; and an interview on BBC Radio Kent.

In summing up the discussion, the Chairman asked the Traffic Strategy Working Group to examine this initiative in more detail and report back their findings.

At Michael Holman's suggestion, the following link is provided in order that Town Forum members can learn more about the scheme and how to become members, if they so wish:

<http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/residents/news/website-news-articles/2014/september/car-club-pilot-begins>

**RESOLVED** – That the Transport Strategy Working Group be asked to consider the Tunbridge Wells Car Club initiative in detail and report their findings to the full Town Forum.

## 7. EVENTS TOOLKIT

Sylvia Holman, TWBC Business Analyst, provided a demonstration of TWBC's new on-line 'events toolkit'; this, she advised, could be used by events' organisers around the Borough, to guide them in their role, to provide publicity and to improve co-ordination at a local level.

Miss Holman drew attention to the 'Can do' on-line guide, which provided organisers with full details of event management, risk assessment, permissions, licences etc. She asked the Town Forum representatives to refer events' organisers to the website, to help them in their work.

Miss Holman added that the system had been developed in close liaison with Dawn Gabriel, TWBC's Operations and Events Manager, who was also present to respond to Forum member questions.

Miss Holman advised that a number of organisations had been invited to use the on-line service and to provide TWBC with feedback as to its effectiveness. She added that, as a result, some minor changes were being made to its content.

- Cllr James Scholes asked if the on-line service included a calendar of events. Miss Holman advised that a link existed to an independently-provided events' calendar, which she demonstrated to Forum members.
- Carolyn Gray, from the Friends of Grosvenor and Hilbert Park, had been invited to test the on-line service and to feed back her views. She advised that, initially, she had found the new service difficult to use, adding that, with clarification on some specific aspects, she believed it would prove helpful to events' organisers, especially the 'Can do' guide.

The Chairman thanked Miss Holman and Mrs Gabriel for their presentation and encouraged Forum representatives to help publicise this service amongst resident and other groups. There were no other action points arising from this report.

## **8. 20MPH SPEED RESTRICTIONS IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH**

Cllr Caroline Derrick, who had led an initiative to help introduce 20mph speed restrictions in the Borough, advised Town Forum members of the continuing statistical evidence which showed that Tunbridge Wells was still performing badly in terms of the numbers of road casualties in both the adult and child categories.

Cllr Derrick reported that she had had a series of meetings with KCC (as the highways authority) and undertaken extensive research, from which she had now obtained County Council support for the introduction of 20mph speed limits, where these were supported by local communities. She stressed that the key factors were: (a) their implementation must comply with Government guidelines; (b) the schemes had to be justified on sound evidence gathering; and (c) the funding for the schemes would not be via KCC but through, principally, the Borough Council.

Cllr Derrick added that she had secured KCC support for two pilot schemes: (i) with TWBC and KCC assistance, schools in the Borough would be helped in gathering evidence of 'damage only' incidents, which would include not just the area immediately adjacent to schools but also the routes followed by pupils on their way to and from schools. (ii) Secondly, in any area in the Borough, local communities could collect the same 'damage only' evidence in support of their own 20mph speed limits. In both cases, Cllr Derrick advised, KCC was asking for the 'damage only' evidence to be logged on their pro-formas, the deadline for the submission of which was being extended to 15 December.

- Bill Ronan acknowledged the importance of this issue, adding that it was far better to take preventative action rather than only react once a serious incident had occurred. He asked whether the approximate cost of implementing each 20mph scheme was known. Cllr Derrick advised that she had gained an idea of possible costs from her discussions with other districts. She added, however, that there were three different types of scheme, i.e. 20mph zones (which she advised were expensive to implement), 20mph limits (involving signage only but which had achieved excellent results elsewhere) and variable schemes (which, again, were expensive to put in place).

Cllr James Scholes advised that he had been involved in this process before, adding that, at Claremont School, a 20mph zone was being implemented. He added that there were a number of practical hurdles as part of the process and that the cost of the various solutions did vary considerably.

- Cllr David Neve stressed the importance of ensuring that whatever schemes were implemented in the Borough they must be self-enforcing, otherwise their effectiveness would be limited, he advised.

**RESOLVED** – That Cllr Caroline Derrick circulate full details of the two pilot schemes to all Town Forum representatives, in order to share with member organisations and enable them to collect evidence of ‘damage only’, should they wish to initiate a local scheme.

## 9. **UPDATE REPORT ON PURCHASE OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS AND RUSTHALL COMMONS**

Sally Balcon, on behalf of the Friends of Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons, summarised the current position regarding the intention of the Friends group to purchase the Commons.

Mrs Balcon advised that the Friends had been successful in having the Commons registered as an ‘asset of community value’ (for a five year period) under the provisions of the Localism Act. Subsequently, the owners of the Commons, Targetfollow, advised TWBC that they intended to sell the Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons. Members of the Forum were advised that the effect of this proposal was that the Friends then had a time-limited period (moratorium) in which to decide whether they wished to make a bid to purchase, although the owner was not bound to accept such a bid. At the end of that period, the owner could then sell the Commons to any purchaser, although it was noted that the listing of the asset would apply to any subsequent owner, for the remaining part of the five year period. Mrs Balcon advised that it seemed that Targetfollow had no intention of selling the Commons but had triggered the moratorium period merely to frustrate the intention of the Localism Act legislation.

The purpose of the verbal report to the Forum was to seek support for sending a letter to the Kent & Sussex Courier, setting out the Friends’ – and the community’s – concerns about the apparent mis-use of the ‘asset of community value’ legislation.

The Chairman asked whether there was Town Forum member support for a letter being sent to the Courier on the lines suggested, adding that it might be appropriate to authorise the Forum’s Management Committee to agree upon the appropriate wording. This proposal was endorsed.

Dorothea Holman suggested that it would be helpful for such a letter to be accompanied by a full list of the organisations that together comprised the Town Forum membership, to indicate the level of support, even if that information was not published by the Courier.

After the letter has been published, the Chairman asked that its contents be shared with members of all resident – and other – organisations on the Town Forum, in order to raise awareness and assist with the Friends’ attempts to submit a bid for the purchase of the Commons.

Cllr Catherine Mayhew reassured members that the Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons were already very well protected by a number of statutory (County of Kent Act) and other planning-related measures, so that if there were a sale to another commercial company there was no prospect of development taking place.

**RESOLVED** – That the Town Forum Management Committee be authorised to agree the wording of a letter to the Kent & Sussex Courier, setting out the concerns of the Friends of Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons regarding the actions of Targetfollow.

## 10. WORKING GROUPS

Update reports were made from the working groups as follows:

**Water in the Wells Working Group** – The Chairman, Michael Holman, reported on the following progress:

- (a) **North Farm** – Cllr David Scott, on behalf of the Water in the Wells Working Group, had received full support from the Leader of the Council for the provision of water and electricity services on the roundabouts in this scheme, which would allow the subsequent installation of water features. Michael Holman expressed the Group's gratitude for the significant progress which had been made on this;
- (b) **Fiveways public realm scheme** – Similarly, Mr Holman wished to record his thanks to the Leader of the Council for the same approach which TWBC had followed in this scheme, which would allow the subsequent installation of a water feature in the not-too-distant future;
- (c) **Union House** – Mr Holman advised that (Water in the Wells) Community Interest Company directors would be meeting with Dandara, the developers of the Knight's Wood housing site and the new owners of Union House, to discuss the prospects of a water feature at Knight's Wood and the 'public art' planning requirement of the future redevelopment of Union House, which it was hoped would be based on the water feature theme;
- (d) **Grosvenor and Hilbert Park** – Carolyn Gray advised that work on the lake would be starting the following week;
- (e) **Fountains Lodge** – The Town Forum was advised that the BUPA care home in Southborough was indeed to be known as 'Fountains Lodge', with the fountain to be operating throughout daylight hours;
- (f) **Cinema site** – If this site were to be developed soon, and the owners wished to follow a mixed use proposal, Mr Holman advised that early discussions should be conducted, to explore the potential for a water feature on the site;
- (g) **Leader's involvement** – Mr Holman wished to place on record the gratitude of the Water in the Wells Working Group for the positive involvement of the Leader of the Council in making progress with a number of town centre schemes where proposals for water features were being so actively encouraged and supported.

**RESOLVED** – That the progress report be accepted.

**Leisure, Culture and Tourism Working Group** – The Chairman, June Bridgeman, thanked TWBC for its help in making geographic data available to her working group.

Mrs Bridgeman asked Cllr Jane March if her working group could become involved in the current Crematorium feasibility study. Cllr March advised that, to date, this initiative had involved a first meeting with an architect, to look at initial ideas, based upon a 150-seat second chapel. Cllr March advised that there were no plans for this to impact adversely upon the green space at the Crematorium site, adding that she would report back to the Town Forum once further details had been worked up.

Mrs Bridgeman enquired if a progress report could also be made to the next meeting on TWBC's current work on developing its Tourism Strategy. Cllr March advised that TWBC's Economic Development Manager, Hilary Smith, would be meeting shortly with Mrs Bridgeman and Dorothea Holman to discuss current progress.

Mark Booker next reported on the working group's progress with its 'green networks' initiative. He advised that a considerable amount of work had already taken place to identify the town's green spaces; he now invited Town Forum members to use their local knowledge in completing a questionnaire – which had been tabled – to complete the study, towards the establishment of a strategic overview. He sought the Forum's endorsement of this approach, to which the Chairman signalled his full support.

Mr Booker also invited any Forum member with mapping skills to join the working group for this project. He added that the working group was keen to share its findings to date with the Transport Strategy Working Group because of cross-over issues.

Tim Harper advised that his residents' group had responsibility for an area of meadow; he asked how such an area might be relevant to the tourism aspect of this work. He added that, due to the 'safeguarding' element the residents had already addressed, there was a lot of relevant information on this site which was in the public domain.

Michael Holman sought clarification on the term 'green spaces', specifically whether this should include areas managed by resident associations. The Forum was advised that such areas were included within their remit.

**RESOLVED** – That all Town Forum members be encouraged to respond to the green networks questionnaire.

**Traffic Strategy** – Cllr David Scott summarised his proposals paper for future bus routes in the town centre, aimed at making the town centre as traffic-free as was practicable. He advised that all comments were welcomed, adding that KCC had also been invited to respond to the proposals. Cllr Scott felt that on the issue of car sharing (referring to the earlier item), he felt that there were opportunities afforded by looking at future technology in order to improve traffic management in the town centre.

There were no action points arising from this report.

**Planning and Development Strategy** – Michael Doyle, Chairman of this working group, referred to an article on page 11 of the latest Local magazine, where an explanation of the current position with TWBC's Site Allocations process was set out.

Cllr Mrs Mayhew drew attention to central government policy in respect of housing provision. She added that, while TWBC's existing Core Strategy set out a new housing allocation of 6,000 new homes by 2025, central government was exerting pressure for a review of this position, suggesting that a figure of 19,000 new homes should be achieved across the Borough. As matters stood, the town area of the Borough would be required to meet 75% of that figure, Cllr Mrs Mayhew advised, a policy to which she voiced strong opposition.

Cllr Mrs Mayhew felt that the housing pressure on the Borough was not being evenly distributed; this, she added, was not helped by the imbalance of the membership of the Planning Policy Working Group – an informal, non-decision making discussion group appointed by TWBC's Cabinet but nevertheless an important one in terms of establishing TWBC policy.

Both Cllr Mrs Mayhew and Cllr James Scholes advised Town Forum members that, if they felt the housing pressures on the town area were too great, they should lobby

their ward members to argue the Borough's case against government-imposed targets. Cllr Mrs Mayhew provided some guidance on the timeline: she said that the position was not urgent at this point, adding that it was only once the Site Allocations process had been completed that the Government would demand an immediate review. On current expectations, the Site Allocations process was due for completion in the Autumn of 2015.

Several Town Forum members urged that this issue was of such importance as to warrant early discussion, beginning with the apparent imbalance on the Planning Policy Working Group which seemed to be working against the town's interests. The Chairman agreed that the Town Forum Management Committee should consider the issues this topic had raised and agree the best way forward.

Helen Featherstone felt this was an issue which resident associations would particularly be interested to learn more about; she enquired how residents could become better informed on the facts. Cllr Mrs Mayhew advised that she would ask for details, including the most up-to-date timetable, to be provided for the next meeting. The Chairman added that he had followed the Site Allocations process over the past 18 months very closely, through studying Cabinet and Cabinet Advisory Board agenda reports. It was agreed that a link to the most relevant reports and minutes would be provided for Town Forum members, for background information.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the Town Forum's Management Committee consider the best way forward in enabling the Forum to express its concerns about the Government's housing targets for the Borough;
- (2) That Cllr Mrs Mayhew provide details of the timetable for the Site Allocations process and possible subsequent review process; and
- (3) That Mike McGeary provide Town Forum members with a link to the most relevant reports on the Site Allocations process and the Government's review policy.

**Finance and Other Issues** – David Wakefield, Chairmen of this working group, advised that there were no items to report from this working group.

#### **11. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMEN**

Mike McGeary had circulated a report with the agenda, setting out the process to be followed at November's AGM for the election of a Chairman and two Deputy Chairmen for the Town Forum, for 2014/15.

The current Chairman, David Wakefield, drew attention to the need to make formal nominations for the key positions by 5pm on Thursday 13 November direct to the Secretary, Mike McGeary.

#### **12. TWBC CONSULTATION ISSUES AND ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

Mike McGeary had circulated a paper with the agenda in which items of forthcoming Council business had been listed, extracted from TWBC's 'Forward Plan'. This had been provided for information only.

### 13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**(a) Remembrance Sunday** – Philip Whitbourn drew attention to a previous decision that the Town Forum would be represented at the wreath-laying service on Remembrance Sunday. The Chairman, David Wakefield, advised that he would be providing the wreath; he added that, as he was representing the Tunbridge Wells branch of the Royal British Legion, he would like another member of the Town Forum to lay the wreath. In the absence of an immediate offer to do so, the Chairman advised that he would undertake this role.

June Bridgeman asked if the portrait bust of Charles Whitbourn Emson, Mayor of the Tunbridge Wells Corporation between 1913 and 1917, could be retrieved from the Town Hall vaults, and given some prominence for Remembrance Sunday; she indicated that the current commemorations surrounding the anniversary of World War One provided particular significance and resonance that lay behind the request. Adam Chalmers undertook to investigate this proposal.

**Action:** Adam Chalmers to investigate the possibility of having the Charles Whitbourn Emson portrait bust displayed in the Town Hall for Remembrance Sunday.

**(b) 'Local and Live'** – Cllr David Scott suggested that the Town Forum might wish to send its formal thanks to the organiser of the Local and Live Music Festival 2014 – Paul Dunton – for leading on such a successful event, following its relocation to Calverley Grounds. This proposal was fully endorsed.

**Action:** The Town Forum Chairman to write to Paul Dunton, expressing the Forum's thanks for organising a very successful music festival and its support for its continuation.

**(c) The Forum and local housing development** – Cllr David Scott also raised the issue of the recent planning approval for the redevelopment of the former Broadwater service station in London Road, and the concerns raised by the adjacent independent music venue, the Forum about the possible impact on its activities. The Chairman asked that this issue be considered at the next meeting of the Town Forum.

### 14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 27 November 2014 at 6.30pm – which includes the AGM, followed by a scheduled meeting of the Town Forum.

The meeting concluded at 8.38pm.