



# ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

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### Minutes of Meeting dated Thursday 29 July 2010

**Present:** Michael Doyle (Hawkenbury Village Association), Jane Fenwick (Calverley Park Association), John Goodfellow (Banner Farm Residents' Association), Peter Perry (Calverley Park Crescent Freeholders' Association), Christopher Thomas (The Chairman of the Town Forum and The Goodwins No's 1 & 2 Residents' Company/Woodbury Close Residents' Association and Chair of Sherborne Close), Altan Omer (Benhall Mill Road Land Association), George Lawson (Inner London Road Residents' Association), John Hodge (Beulah Road Resident's Association), Betsey Dix, (Calverley Park Crescent Freeholders' Association), Kate Sergeant (Clarence Road Association), Alastair Tod (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Alison Finlay (London Road Residents Association), Michael Holman (Tunbridge Wells Twinning & Friendship Association), John Cunningham, (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Dorothea Holman (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Don Welch (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), David Wakefield (Royal British Legion, Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library and Art Galleries)

**RTW Ward Councillors:** Ronen Basu (Culverden), Peter Crawford (Broadwater), Lesley Herriot (St Johns & Skinners, 6 Roads Residents Association) and David Neve (St James), Peter Bulman (Park), Len Price (Culverden), James Scholes (Pantiles & St Marks), Tracy Moore (St Johns), Sean Lockhart (Park)

#### Other Tunbridge Wells Borough Councillors in Attendance

Julia Soyke (Speldhurst & Bidborough), Bill Hills (Paddock Wood East), Brian Ransley (Capel)

#### Others in attendance:

Barbara Varney (Chair TWBC Standards Committee), Paul Cummins (Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer), and Sue French (Committee Administrator)

Margaret Bailey (Observer), Katrina Gilman, (Observer), Helen Featherstone (Observer), Judith Waters (Observer), Patrick Moran (Observer), Edward Peacock (Observer), Clare Donavon (Observer), John Davie (Observer), Ronald Rowley (Observer), M Booker (Observer), Alex Green (Observer), Louise Sparkes (St James Residents' Association), Philip Whitbourn (Beulah Road Residents' Association).

**Apologies:** John Higgs (Hanover & Rock Villa Association), David Webster (Clarence Road Users Association ), Councillor Mrs Catherine Mayhew (Park), Maggie Fraser (Tunbridge Wells Over Fifties' Forum), Katharina Bech (The Telephone House Neighbours Association), Mary Wardrop (Hawkenbury Village Association),

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#### Membership Changes

New members – David Wakefield representative of Royal British Legion, Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library and Art Gallery.  
Lorna Blackmore representative of Grantley Court Residents Association.

#### Minutes of Last Meeting Dated 24 June 2010

#### **Matters Arising:**

Judith Waters' name was misspelt as Walters and misquoted in Item 5:- The Future of the Town Hall. She would like it known that her comments were on behalf of the young adults of Tunbridge Wells who did not wish for the town centre complex and regeneration to be moved out of the town centre.

## **Previous Minutes**

The minutes were agreed

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

**Action:** Councillor Mayhew referred to Councillor Williams' post-meeting email from 27 May 2010 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.

**Action:** Graham Goddard to find out if the hospital is to be named 'Acute or General'

**Action:** Graham Goddard to investigate whereabouts of neurological unit in new hospital

**Action:** That Alan Hewitt reports back to the Town Forum updates on bus provision for the new hospital

**Action:** 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**

**Action:** Linda Chamberlain will report back to the Forum with the comments received from clients requesting services from the CAB

Christopher Thomas advised that Inspector Simon Wilshaw and Chief Inspector Martin Wilson from the Community Safety Partnership will be attending the September Town Forum to bring the Town Forum up to date with the activities of the Community Safety Partnership and to discuss the possible re-location of the Police Station.

He also reported that there would be the following briefings held:-

A briefing on the Museum for the October meeting.

A briefing for the Library for the November meeting

A briefing regarding the Assembly will be in the January meeting

In October or near to as, it is expected that consultation will start on matters relating to the Town Hall.

The Chairman also reported that the building which houses the Adult Education Centre will not be touched as part of the regeneration although the exact future and siting of where the Adult Education Centre will be is currently unknown. Adult Education is run and managed by Kent County Council.

## **Reports from Councillors**

Councillor Ransley read out a report to Town Forum member representatives (see attached Appendix A) on the regeneration of the Town Hall.

Chairman's comment:

Cllr Ransley does not represent the unparished area, but represents Capel. Cllr Ransley was given the chance to speak as Michael Doyle asked for Cllr Ransley to speak, even though Councillor Reports is part of the Agenda for Unparished area Councillors only.

Councillor Price commented that several Councillors including himself have attempted to obtain information from the Regeneration Company but so far to no avail.

Councillor Bulman also addressed the Town Forum, his report is also attached (see attached Appendix B) on the future of the Town Hall site.

Councillor Mrs Moore, who is the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Development also spoke (see attached Appendix C) to the Town Forum about the future of the Town Hall.

She went on to explain that there are no decisions to vacate the Town Hall, leaks to the press haven't helped the situation. She reported there are various partners who have registered interest in moving into the Land Registry building but she insisted that the final decision will be made by full Council later on in the year.

Councillor Scholes commented that the cinema site was a high risk venture. He expressed his concern that if money was spent and the building did not go ahead a large amount of money could be lost.

Councillor Mrs Moore explained that the site had to be a viable option. Suggestions for the site have included an ice skating rink and a new cinema. It was advised that to build an ice rink and provide an ice hockey team the company interested would need a catchment area of over 1m people, Tunbridge Wells' area is just 330k so it wouldn't be viable.

Mr Doyle commented that the shareholder regeneration company document was not available to the public, He went on to say that members of the Hawkenbury Villagers Association were very unhappy at the lack of consultation to them.

Councillor Neve commented that costs are now being quoted from £9m - £20m, he expressed his view that the Town Forum should be consulted regarding the Cinema site and reported that an Advisory Property Group was in the process of being formed with advice taken from Greg Clark.

John Cunningham asked if the statements made by all Councillors be attached to the minutes of the meeting be placed on the Town Forum website. Christopher Thomas informed John Cunningham that minutes of all Town Forum meetings are placed on the Town Forum website for anyone to read.

### **Road Traffic and Structural Ideas – Presentation by Gerald Plastow**

Christopher Thomas introduced Gerald Plastow to the Town Forum and thanked him for attending. Apology was also given to Mr Plastow for his long wait before he could give his presentation.

Mr Plastow gave a presentation on proposals for improving traffic flow in and around Tunbridge Wells, the Powerpoint Presentation handouts were distributed at the Forum.

After the presentation, Mr Doyle commented that for quite some time there has been a traffic plan with KCC Highways for the junction of Forest Road and Bayham Road to enable bus stops and parking for the shops of which we are still awaiting a decision. Mr Goodfellow commented that Longfield Road is greatly in need of a solution to the traffic congestion experienced there. Councillor Mrs Moore advised that the conclusion to the spending review will be known by 20 October 2010. Nick Chard (KCC) has already cut £4m from the budget and there will be cutbacks to the TWBC budget, actions of which would have an affect but are as a result of current financial pressures.

Christopher Thomas thanked Mr Plastow and urged the Town Forum to forward their comments to TWBC on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy (2010) by 9 August 2010.

Councillor Scholes reported that he is quite frustrated by always having to wait for responses from Kent Highways.

## **Standards Issues and Ethical Governance – Presentation by Paul Cummins (Legal Services Manager/Monitoring Officer and Barbara Varney (Chair of Standards Committee).**

Christopher Thomas introduced Paul and Barbara to the Town Forum and thanked them both for attending the Town Forum. Once again, an apology was given for the amount of time they had to wait to speak and indeed for the reduction in time to be able to speak.

Paul Cummins gave an outline of his role as Monitoring Officer and highlighted some of the statutory powers of the Monitoring Officer. He then spoke about the legislative background to the Member's Code of Conduct, Standards Board for England and the Standards Committee.

Barbara Varney spoke about the Standards Committee at Tunbridge Wells covering its remit and composition. Barbara went on to highlight the Standards Committee Annual Report and talked about the work of the Committee during the previous year and future work programme.

Various members of the Town Forum put forward questions which both Paul Cummins and Barbara Varney answered.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints the presentation had to finish sooner than hoped. Mr Thomas said that it was unfortunate that time was shortened as Standards and Ethics were of direct relevance to the concerns certain individuals were raising regarding the Civic complex.

Christopher Thomas thanked them both for attending the Town Forum and asked them if they would return to the Town Forum at a later date to further explain their roles. He suggested that a direct link from the Town Forum website to TWBC's Code of Conduct on their website would be very beneficial.

### **Meeting Closed.**

#### ***Dates of next meetings of the Town Forum***

- **2010**
  - *30 September 2010 at 6.30pm*
    - *Briefing on Community Safety Partnership/Possible re-location of Police Station*
  - *28 October 2010 at 6.30pm – Briefing on the Museum*
  - *25 November 2010 at 6.30pm – Briefing on the Library*
  - *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 Halls*
- *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*