



A G E N D A

Wednesday 27 November 2019 at 6.30 pm
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 1 **Apologies for Absence**
- 2 **Voting Entitlement for Member Organisations and Councillors** (Pages 3 - 4)
- 3 **Minutes of the 2018 AGM** (Pages 5 - 16)
The minutes of the 2018 AGM were included in the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 22 November 2019 which were subsequently agreed as a correct record at the meeting on 24 January 2019. They are attached here for information.
- 4 **Chairman's Annual Report**
- 5 **Election of Officers** (Pages 17 - 20)

ORDINARY MEETING

- 6 **Declarations of Substitute Members**
- 7 **Membership Changes**
 - a) Changes to Membership
 - b) New Membership Applications
- 8 **Minutes of the Meeting dated 12 September 2019** (Pages 21 - 30)
 - a) Approval of the Minutes as a correct record
 - b) Matters Arising
- 9 **Update from the Leader of the Council**
- 10 **Updates from Local Residents' Groups**
- 11 **Civic Complex Cross-Party Working Group** (Pages 31 - 32)
A document presented as part of a report to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee is attached for reference.
- 12 **Public Realm works, Local Traders and Residents**

13 Tunbridge Wells in Bloom

14 Hawkenbury Pump Track

15 Reports from the Town Forum Working Groups (Pages 33 - 42)

- a) Water in the Wells Working Group
- b) Transport Strategy Working Group
- c) Culture, Leisure and Tourism Working Group
- d) Wellbeing Working Group
- e) Finance and Other Issues Working Group
- f) Strategic Planning Working Group

16 Any Other Business

17 Future Meetings

23 January 2020

29 March 2020

TOWN FORUM AGM 2019

VOTING ENTITLEMENT FOR MEMBER ORGANISATIONS AND COUNCILLORS

Member Organisations who have attended at least 50% of possible meetings:

Banner Farm Residents' Association
Benhall Mill Road Land Association
Beulah Road Residents' Association
Boyne Park Residents' Association*
Calverley Park Residents' Association
Calverley Park Crescent Association
Camden Park Residents' Association
Civic Society of Royal Tunbridge Wells
Clarence Road Users' Association
Culverden Residents' Association*
Friends of Grosvenor and Hilbert Park
Friends of the Commons
Friends of the Grove
Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery
Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library and Art Gallery
Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery
Grantley Court Residents' Association
Grove Hill House Residents' Association
Hawkenbury Village Association
Inner London Road Residents' Association
Kingswood Residents' Association
Molyneux Park Road Residents' Association
Nourish Community Foodbank
Poona Road Residents' Association

Agenda Item 2

Residents First

Soroptimist International of Tunbridge Wells and District*

St John's Road Residents' Association

Telephone House Neighbours' Association

The Avenues Residents' Association

The Forum

Trinity Theatre

Tunbridge Wells Anti-Aircraft Noise Group

Tunbridge Wells Bicycle User Group*

Tunbridge Wells Friends of the Earth

Tunbridge Wells Over Fifties Forum

Tunbridge Wells Puppetry Festival

Tunbridge Wells Twinning & Friendship Association*

Warwick Park Residents' Association

(* = 100% of 6 meetings)

(38 out of 50)

Councillor Members who have attended at least 50% of possible meetings

Councillor Woodward

Councillor Scott

Councillor Pope

Councillor Pound

Councillor Ellis

Councillor Morton

(6 out of 18)

Member Organisations and Councillor Members not listed above have not met the attendance requirement set out in the Constitution and will not be unable to vote at the AGM.

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

Thursday, 22 November 2018

Present: Caroline Auckland (Soroptomist International of Tunbridge Wells and District), Sally Balcon (Friends of the Commons), Tim Ball (Calverley Park Crescent Association), David Barnett (Friends of Grosvenor & Hilbert Parks), Adrian Berendt (Tunbridge Wells Bicycle User Group), Lorna Blackmore (Grantley Court Residents' Association), Mark Booker (Culverden Resident's Association), Stephen Bowser (Residents First), Diana Butler (Banner Farm Residents' Association), Councillor Ben Chapelard, Jocelyn Cheek (Trinity Theatre), Councillor Mrs Barbara Cobbold, John Cunningham (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Sue Diales (Calverley Park Gardens Residents Association), Rebecca Dodsworth (Friends of Calverley Grounds), Irene Fairbairn (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), Jane Fenwick (Calverley Park Residents' Association), Margeret Ginman (Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery), Carolyn Gray (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), Alex Green (Trinity Theatre), Tim Harper (Camden Park Residents' Association), Councillor Lawrence Heasman, Dorothea Holman (Boyne Park Residents' Association), Michael Holman (Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association), Veronika Segall Jones, Dean Kenward (Hawkenbury Village Association), Kyrios Kyriacou (Kingswood Residents' Association), Linda Lewis (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), John de Lucy (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), Marianne MacDonald (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), Katharina Mahler-Bech (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), Paul Mason (Tunbridge Wells Bicycle User Group), Helen Mitcham (Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library and Art Gallery), Samantha Morton (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), Marguerita Morton, Altan Omer (Benhall Mill Land Association), Karen Pengelly (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), Angust Stewart (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum substitute representative), Tim Tempest (Friends of the Grove), Alastair Tod (Poonah Road Resident's Association), Adrian Twinner (Tunbridge Wells U3A), Denise Watts (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative), Lucy Willis (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative) and Pat Wilson (Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum representative)

Officers in Attendance: David Candlin, Head of Economic Development and Property;

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1 Apologies were received from Brian Lippard (RTW Civic Society), David Bushell (Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery) and Borough Councillor David Scott.

VOTING ENTITLEMENT FOR MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- 2 The Scrutiny and Engagement Officer had circulated a list of organisations and borough council ward members which had achieved the required level of attendance at meetings to be able to vote at the AGM, as determined by the Town Forum's Constitution.

MINUTES OF THE 2017 AGM

- 3 The minutes of the 2017 AGM, held on 16 November 2017, were submitted. It was noted that these had been presented to the January 2017 meeting, where they had been noted.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the AGM, held on 16 November 2017, be approved.

TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN ON THE TOWN FORUM'S ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST YEAR

- 4 The Chairman of the Town Forum for 2017/18, Adrian Berendt, summarised his report on the work of the Forum over the past year, which was a requirement of its Constitution.

Mr Berendt highlighted the following points:

It was hoped that debates in Town Forum meetings, particularly around the Calverley Square Development, had been balanced and measured, and as a body, the Town Forum had tried to remain broadly neutral. The Town Forum had expressed support overall for the project and its ambitions and would continue to do so, although concerns had been voiced in some areas, for example the cost of a new car park.

The role of the Town Forum was to raise concerns, ask questions, make suggestions and to be a critical friend. The attendance by borough councillors to listen to the debate and respond to questions raised by the Town Forum members was appreciated. It was hoped that more Members from the unparished parts of the borough could attend more frequently – it was hoped that membership could be broadened to include county councillors

The Town Forum had 42 active organisations and 36 of those were eligible to vote at the meeting, demonstrating the level of commitment. One of the scheduled meetings had been held at the TN2 centre in Sherwood in an effort to engage with less well represented areas and a similar meeting would be held the following year, hopefully in Showfields.

A great deal of effort had been contributed by members of the working groups and it was within these groups that much of the Town Forum's work was done on a voluntary basis with many hours of work; participation in the groups was encouraged.

Outcomes from the previous year had been mixed:

Positive outcomes had been produced by Culture, Leisure and Tourism Working Group with work on the puppetry festival and the Calverley Square scheme, and with a large amount of work and expertise focused on the Amelia Scott.

The Finance Working Group had looked closely at the boroughs income an spending plans and looking at the critical expenditures decisions in the borough's budget.

The Strategic Planning Working Group's efforts had been recognised through the first confidential draft of the Local Plan. The Group's, and the Town Forum's response to the second phase of the public realm works was one of disappointment, as the latest design did not meet with the Town Forum's original expectation which was for a 'town square' space. Neither did the Group consider that the design justified the cost of the scheme and the disruption to the public realm. All Town forum

members were urged to look at the consultation.

Special thanks were made to Alistair Tod who had been a pivotal and inspirational member of the Town Forum, and although he would be standing down as vice-chair, would continue working as a member of the Town Forum.

The Water in Wells Group had continued its excellent work and the theme of water was now widely accepted as a key theme in any development in the town. The Group also continued its work in looking at the promotion of public art.

The Transport Working Group had a number of areas that it had looked at including transport elements of the Local Plan, responses to the Council's Joint Transport Board, changes to Zone A parking restrictions, Linden Park coach parking proposals, the Council's air quality strategy, and the DfT strategy for major roads and networks/cycling and walking investment (members were encouraged to read the report on the positive impact of active travel on the economy in London). The Group had looked at KCC's proposals for moving St Peter's school to Hawkenbury and promoting 20mph zones.

A new Wellbeing group would be set up in 2019 to look at community focused issues in the town; members and a chair were being sought.

Work ahead for the Town Forum included the Local Plan, the borough council's Transport Strategy and a continued focus on the public realm works. More members were needed on the Town Forum and on the working groups, and more member involvement in the Management Group was needed.

Thanks were given to Katharina Mahler-Bech for maintaining the Town Forum website and other social media (including the Twitter account which had approximately 600 followers on @townforum). David Jukes, Leader of the Council and William Benson, Chief Executive, were thanked for their continuing support. Thanks were also given to Mat Jefferys, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager; Jane Clarke, Head of Performance and Governance, and Nick Peeters (Scrutiny and Engagement Officer). Thanks, in particular, were given to Mr Berendt's wife and Family for their long-term support.

A new Chairman was needed for 2019-2020 and volunteers would be sought

The Government's report into cycling and walking safety included a number of positive messages:

- Towns and cities designed for people of all ages and abilities ensuring they were active as part of every day life.
- Communities with access to green spaces connected by traffic free or traffic calmed networks for all.
- Rail and bus facilities suitable for people travelling on foot or by bike and children being able to walk or cycle safely to school.

TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMEN 2018/19 - TO FOLLOW

- 5 Nick Peeters, Scrutiny and Engagement Officer, summarised a report, which set out the election process for the appointment of a Chairman and up to two Deputy Chairmen of the Town Forum. Mr Peeters explained the following:

There had been one nomination for the position of Chairman one for the Deputy Chairmen positions, as follows: Chairman – Adrian Berendt; Deputy Chairmen – Alex Green

Mr Berendt had already served two terms as Chairman and Mr Green had served three terms of office as Deputy; while the Forum's Constitution specified two terms as the maximum for holding office, provision was also included for further terms of office, subject to the agreement of members at the AGM.

Mark Booker proposed the election of Adrian Berendt as Chairman for 2018/19; seconded by Jane Fenwick. proposed the re-election of Alex Green as Deputy Chairman for 2018/19; this was seconded by Alistair Tod. election of Alastair Tod as the second Deputy Chairman; this was seconded by Michael Holman. These nominations were endorsed unanimously.

Alistair Tod had stepped down and no nominations had been received for a second deputy chairman. The normal procedure would be followed in the lead up to the 28 January meeting with nominations requested three weeks prior to the meeting. Alex Green confirmed that, whilst he was happy to serve as a deputy chairman, a second position would need to be filled as he was unable to take the lead.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Adrian Berendt be formally declared elected to serve as Chairman for 2018/19, until the date of the 2019 AGM;
- (2) That Alex Green be formally declared re-elected to serve as the Deputy Chairmen for 2018/19, until the date of the 2019 AGM.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS (FOR NOTING)

- 6A There were no membership applications to note.

CHANGES OF REPRESENTATIVES (FOR INFORMATION)

- 6B Mr Peeters confirmed the following changes to the Town Forum Membership:
- Rebecca Dodsworth and Lisa Grant had been appointed as the new representatives for the Friends of Calverley Grounds.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2018

- 7 The minutes of the meeting dated 6 September 2018 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2018 be

approved.

Matters arising – Michael Holman expressed concern that the summary of the previous minutes indicated that the proposals for improvements to phase two of the public realm works produced more of a traffic management plan than the pedestrianised, public space originally indicated.

Councillor Heasman advised that:

A large part of the funding for the works had been provided through the sustainable public transport fund and the bus companies had objected to the original scheme as there was not a viable alternative for rerouting the buses and the bus companies would not be able to operate.

Although a fully pedestrianised space would not be included, the road itself would be considerably narrowed.

The following views were expressed by Town Forum members:

It was felt the Forum should be consulted on the materials to be used in the public realm works

Concern was expressed that the Town Forum had been presented with the public realm options too late in the day and was not being listened to; there appeared to be three sets of steps that were going to one point and there was no reference to water in the design and Tunbridge Wells's history as a spa town. It was felt that this was a broader issue in respect of other consultations and the Town Forum had a role as a critical friend to the Council.

There was also concern that a hypothetical approach had been taken by the bus companies towards the impact of the scheme on the bus routes rather than something more evidence based.

The Town Forum had been consulted during the early stages of the scheme and the design at that point had been much better than that what was now being presented.

ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS, HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER

8

Members discussed the following issues:

Phase two of the public realm works item was included in the agenda and members were encouraged to respond to the consultation. The most recent damage to the pedestrianised area in front of the clock was a result of heavy duty lorries backing on to the paved areas for shop deliveries. Planters had been placed in the area to prevent this.

Kent County Council (KCC) had a consultation on proposed traffic regulation orders which were for changes to use of the roads and were highways matters. There was a parking consultation, also managed by KCC, which would include a 'virtual parking' system allowing the vehicle owner's permit details to be identified directly through scanning the number plate. The scheme was due to be revisited to ensure that the needs of residents and businesses were met in terms of parking space provision. It was confirmed that residents who already held a permit were able to park in the town's car parks overnight.

REPORTS FROM THE WORKING GROUPS (10 MINS IN TOTAL)

9 The reports of the Town Forum working groups were presented.

REPORT OF THE TRANSPORT WORKING GROUP

9A Jane Fenwick, Chair of the Transport Working Group, advised that there were no additional comments regarding the report.

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP

9B Mark Booker, Chair of the Strategic Planning Working Group, updated members on the Groups work. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

Homelessness in the town - the opening of Dowding House as an initiative to reduce homelessness in the borough was welcome. The borough council was encouraged to engage with the Government's moves towards providing new social rented housing developments.

Local Plan - members of the Group had been invited to attend a half-day workshop supported by five planning officers. Confidential information had been shared which demonstrated that the views of the Town Forum were being considered. Work into the local plan was ongoing with continued evidence gathering and research into the development of a garden village in the second half of the 20 year period to alleviate some of the pressure on housing provision. The Council had been commended by other authorities for the broadness of its consultation process on the Local Plan.

Affordable housing provision – this had been difficult for the Council to maintain (normally 35 percent of a development over 10 units) and particularly on brownfield sites, as applicants often claimed through viability assessments that they were unable to afford the provision. This criteria was due to change and new regulations would focus on land costs/value and the affordability allocation. There was also a need for social housing that allowed key workers such as nurses and emergency services workers to be retained locally (£2 billion was being made available in the Government's budget for this sector).

Royal Victoria Place – British Land had made a significant investment in the RVP and there would be a period while the plans for the shopping centre were reviewed. British Land had already decided not to continue with the previous owner's proposals, however, as the owner of the five most successful shopping centres in the country, there would be a further, major investment. British Land specialised in managing this type of facility and were taking a long-term view of the market and how it had changed over the last five years. RVP had provided a unit to Nourish for free and had indicated that other units in Ely Court would be occupied.

REPORT OF THE CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM WORKING GROUP

9C Alex Green, a member of the Culture, Leisure and Tourism Working Group updated members on the Group's work. During discussion, the following points were highlighted:

Terms of reference - the Group's terms of reference had been reviewed and the issues it should look at were discussed; Town Forum members were encouraged to approach the Group with any issues they thought needed looking at. The Group was keen to get a younger and more diverse representation. A request was made for volunteers to promote the activities of the Town Forum to schools in the town. It was also proposed that a sub-group of the Town Forum could be initiated that exclusively included younger people and reflected their views.

Trinity Theatre – the heritage activities provided had been expanded on and this would continue with a change to the theatre's articles of association to include heritage as a key element and a specific objective. Part of the change would include the opening up of the clock tower (to include a viewing platform) as a visitor destination – this would be done in association with the Amelia centre operations; a short consultation had already been undertaken and the information was available in a temporary pop-up in RVP.

Library consultation – KCC was undertaking a consultation on the libraries 'Registration and Archives Draft Strategy' which would close on 29 January. Proposals included a county-wide, overall reduction in library opening hours and staff reductions (Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough were not included), saving KCC up to £1 million. The Group felt that libraries contributed to the mental health and wellbeing of communities. There was concern that the importance of the facilities to residents was not being considered. It was important that Town Forum members commented on the consultation. With the roll-out of universal credit, use of the internet for those without access at home was critical and libraries currently supported this facility. The proposed reduction in the opening hours was disappointing as it would impact on this group. An early response to the consultation was important and any social media outlets to express the Town Forum's views and contacting the local MP should be explored.

REPORT OF THE WATER IN THE WELLS WORKING GROUP

9D The Chair of the Water in the Wells Working Group, Michael Holman, updated members on the Group's work. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

Chalybeate spring - there was concern over the future management of the chalybeate spring in the Pantiles as there appeared to be confusion over who, between the borough council and Target Follow, was responsible as both organisations felt the other had the lead responsibility; Target Follow own the premises where the spring is located and the borough council (under an agreement with Target Follow) had a responsibility to maintain the fabric of the spring and to employ the dippers. As a result of this situation, little progress had been made. The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism and the Economic development Manager had both been written to regarding the issue. Discussions had also been held with the ward councillors who had agreed to look into the relevant policies. The spring was essential to Tunbridge Wells and featured in much of the tourism literature, but was now closed until further notice.

St John's Recreation Ground – Under a Section 106 agreement McCarthy and Stone allocated £10,000 for the refurbishment of the vandalised water

feature. It transpired that his sum was only sufficient to restore the fabric, not to provide the fountain with running water. Additionally, there were parts of the fountain still missing. A response from the Council as to how much additionally would be needed to fully restore the fountain with flowing water had not yet been received. The Head of Housing, Health and Environment would be approached for further information.

Wiesbaden Twinning Association – Town Forum members were invited by Adrian Berendt and the Twinning Association to an event on 16 December at the ice rink in Calverley Square.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND OTHER ISSUES WORKING GROUP

9E David Wakefield, Chair of the Finance and Other Issues working Group, updated members on the Group's work. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2019/20 - The Council's 'draft budget and MTFS 2019/20' had been published and included predicted income and expenditure over the following five years. The Council had succeeded in balancing the budget over the previous ten years despite a long period of austerity. However, as the years had passed, a number of risks had become more prevalent and the although the revenue deficit was small in 2019/20 it was predicted to increase to approximately £500,000 by 2020/2023 if left unchecked. The capital account would break even in 2019/20 but thereafter the reserves would not meet the estimated capital spend. Although explanations as to how the deficit would be met had been provided by the Director of Finance, there were further questions that could be asked by the Group and Town Forum members, and a more diverse representation of members and residents was needed to respond to the draft budget.

TWAANG - UPDATE ON GATWICK EXPANSION AND RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION

10 Irene Fairbairn and Angus Stewart, representatives of Tunbridge Wells Anti-Aircraft Noise Group (TWAANG), presented a report on Gatwick Airport noise issues including developments with the Noise Management Board, Gatwick's draft master plan, changes to the reduced night noise trial (including proposed preferred trial routes).

During discussion the following views were expressed:

GATWICK NOISE MANAGEMENT BOARD:

The eight community groups (including TWAANG) participating in the noise management board issued a letter of "no confidence" and the board is consequently under review and restructuring.

GATWICK EXPANSION:

The number of flights will be increased by 30% by 2028 and 40% by 2033. This increase will be achieved by increased use of current runway and by use of current standby runway for regular use.

They also want to safeguard land required for a third operational runway.

REASONS TO OBJECT TO EXPANSION:

Noise: 80,000 extra flights annually within 10 yrs. The noise problem is already severe over western Tunbridge Wells and the planes will fly further eastwards over the town as frequency increases, particularly in the evenings and early part of night. There are likely to be adverse effects on health and well being and adverse economic effects via reduced tourism , visitors, retail and property values.

TWAANG recommend strongly that Gatwick expansion is opposed by the Town Forum.

Comment was made that planes could fly higher over the town at 6000 ft rather than 3500ft .

It is often possible to fly higher than 3500ft but there are serious constraints on height created by planes flying above and the need to joins the ILS at 3000 feet. Some work is being done to minimise particularly low fliers (outliers) at night .

Unfortunately Gatwick are suggesting a concentrated track over Tunbridge Wells during the Reduced Night Noise Trial and TWAANG is resisting that strongly.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT - UPDATE FROM TOWN CENTRE MANAGER, KAREN PENGELLY

- 11 Karen Pengelly, representing Royal Tunbridge Wells Together (RTWT), updated members on the work towards establishing a Business Improvement District (BID). The following points were highlighted:

The four week ballot period concluded on the 8th November and the result was a positive outcome; there was a 38% turnout and a 74% vote of businesses in favour of establishing a BID. There were three BIDs in Kent – Canterbury, Maidstone and now Tunbridge Wells.

The BID would commence operations on 1April 2019 and exist for five years with a a rebalot held at the end of the five year period, and businesses asked to vote again. RTWT, as the Bid delivery company, was prepared and ready to commence operations on day one. Each year, we should be able to point to real cost savings that businesses have made through the BID. Real cost savings made by each year by businesses, through the BID, should be identified.

RTWT will maintain the BID structure as a Community Interest Company and will be accountable to all the BID members, ensuring that the BID delivers the services, projects and plans set out in the Business Plan.

The business plan for the BID was created following two lengthy consultations with local businesses, who were to outline their priorities for the town centre area. The four priorities that identified and that form the core areas are:

- Events
- Promotion
- Better town for Business
- Accessibility

It would be some months before definitive pledges and finer detail was available. However, the following day-to-day work was being undertaken:

Events - A £635,000 investment over 5 year into town centre area events. An increased grants fund would be created to support existing events such as The Puppetry Festival, Local & Live and the Lantern Parade. RTWT made £3,000 per year available for the previous three years and this would rise automatically to £20,000 in year one and £25,000 per annum by year five. The events attracted visitors and footfall into the town centre area and benefited the businesses there. In addition to grant funds, an increase in the number and variety of events would be looked at. An Events Group would be created to work on a possible arts festival for the town as well as additional seasonal after-work events for staff from local businesses and residents. The events would be spread across the town centre to ensure that all areas received equal focus. In the shorter term, meetings would be held with organisers and curators at other arts festivals in the South East to discuss further opportunities.

Promotion - the tourism and leisure industry was a competitive sector and the local restaurants, theatres, accommodation providers, attractions and businesses needed support to thrive. A sum of £495K will be invested over the 5 year BID term. This sum will be used to: fund press visits, place branding (so that we have a cohesive and promotable brand) out door advertising on trains and at railways stations, attendance at travel trade exhibitions and trade fairs and literature production and distribution

A Better Town for Business – approximately £300,000 would be invested in a range of services and initiatives such as training, waste and recycling collections for business, seminars, B2B events and recruitment initiatives intended to make the town centre a better place to work. The BID delivery would work with partner organisations or others to leverage greater levels of investment into some of these schemes and would work with Chambers of Commerce on events and training, helping to deliver the best value we to the local business community.

Accessibility - £200,000 would be invested by businesses into accessibility schemes over the next 5 years covering parking, public transport, cycling and work with Shopmobility to promote its services.

RTWT, through the BID was focused on achieving an increased footfall and vibrancy to the town centre. Many local businesses were thriving but needed support to maintain a competitive edge and the ability to access technology and incorporate it into businesses.

RTWT had funds to appoint industry experts where necessary in areas such as training, promotion or curating art events and other creative strategies.

Transport for London had recently published a report on cycling and parking provision that looked at making town centres and high streets more

accessible to active travel. It had been demonstrated that road widening and more parking provision did not benefit business and the retail sector in town centres, and that, where the ability to access high streets by car was taken away, people found other ways to travel such as walking and cycling. Fifty percent of the traffic in Tunbridge Wells travelled less than two miles. RTWT was happy to engage with members of Tunbridge Wells Bicycle User's Group in support of this area. The organisation was also happy to engage with Tunbridge Wells Heritage, particularly in respect of heritage open days.

There was encouragement that only 50 percent of the spend of RTWT focused solely on businesses and that a retention on making Tunbridge Wells a better place to live and enriching the lives of residents and visitors was equally as important.

RTWT provided assurance and was confident that that it would be able to cope with the huge amount of additional work involved with putting the BID programme into place and would be calling on assistance from organisations with which they would be cooperating.

UPDATES FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS' GROUPS

- 12 Representatives from the Over Fifties Forum reported that twiddle boards had been created for bed-bound dementia patients in Pembury Hospital to aid mobility. Members were asked to provide donations of ironmongery so that more boards could be produced.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 13 There was no other business.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 21:00

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TOWN FORUM AGM 2019 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Introduction

1. The Town Forum is administered by a Management Committee of officers elected at the AGM and the leaders of the working groups.
2. The officers are:
 - the Chair, who must be a named representative of a member organisation; and
 - two Deputy Chairs, at least one of whom must be a named representative from a member organisation.

Nominations submitted

3. At the specified deadline for the submission of nominations, the following nominations had been submitted:

Chair

Adrian Berendt (fourth term)

Deputy Chair

Alistair Tod (third term)

Don Sloan (first term)

4. Statements from each of the candidates are set out at the end of this report.
5. The Town Forum's Constitution states: "The Chair and both Deputy Chairs shall be elected annually and will only be eligible to serve a maximum of two terms in any one office unless a majority of eligible voting Forum members agree to allow a further term of office." Thus, further terms of office is permissible, subject to the agreement of the majority of persons voting at the AGM.

Voting eligibility

6. The Constitution states that at least one third of nominated representatives who satisfy the voting entitlement requirements must be present for the AGM to take place and for the officers therefore to be elected.
7. 38 out of 50 member organisations of the Town Forum have met the necessary attendance requirements (i.e. have attended at least 50% of possible Town Forum meetings across the year) and their representatives will be entitled to vote.
8. 6 out of 18 Councillor members have also achieved the minimum meeting attendance requirement.

Statement from Adrian Berendt

While I am willing to serve as Chair of the Town Forum for one more year, I would really appreciate someone taking over from 2020/21.

Louise and I have lived in Queen's Road since 1993, our children have all grown up in Tunbridge Wells and went (or still go) to St. Gregory's School. As chair I have tried to represent the interests of Town Forum members and to increase develop its influence. I look forward to the opportunity to continuing that work.

Following the withdrawal of the Calverley Square project, a major challenge for the town and its residents is to decide what to do instead. I believe that the Town Forum's approach to this project, as critical friend to the Borough Council, has improved its reputation and standing and we are now engaged in discussing alternatives.

Equally important is to follow up the Town Forum's input to the new Local Plan and, in particular, the proposed Transport Strategy. Members of the Town Forum will be aware of my interests in giving residents a choice about how they travel. This means a greater ability to use public transport and to walk or cycle for their daily journeys. I am a fervent believer in road safety and the needs of vulnerable road users.

During my (?)final year in office, I want the Town Forum:

- To finalise its input to the Local Plan, to ensure a clear and coherent vision for the future of the whole town, particularly a comprehensive transport strategy to prevent the increase in housing leading to a corresponding increase in traffic congestion.
- To further widen its membership and to encourage community participation from those areas of the town and sections of the community – particularly younger residents – that are currently under-represented.
- To deepen engagement with borough and county councillors representing town wards. This has been successful on an individual basis, but I am disappointed by councillor attendance at Town Forum meetings.
- To build on the 20mph zones in St. John's, Banner Farm and elsewhere by establishing Tunbridge Wells as a "20's Plenty" town – with 20mph in all residential streets.

I continue to represent the Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group, formed to make Tunbridge Wells a cycling friendly town and I coordinate 20's Plenty for Tunbridge Wells and Kent

Statement from Alastair Tod

I am offering myself for election as Deputy Chairman of the Town Forum.

I have lived in Tunbridge Wells since 1998 and attended the Forum since 2006, for the last ten years as representative of the Poona Road residents. I was Chairman of the Forum from 2014 to 2016, Deputy Chairman 2016-2018, and am currently a member of the Management Group.

I have served as Chairman of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society twice and remain on the Executive with responsibility for Planning. I am on the Committee of the Friends of Calverley Grounds and the Friends of the Grove and a member of other town organisations. In my working career I spent twenty years on the policy side of local government, followed by roles in the voluntary sector and ten years in the renewable energy industry.

The Forum is an essential platform for communication between residents and the Council; a `talking shop` between residents on issues that concern us all; and a public voice for working groups on current issues. New groups have recently been formed to expand the Forum's scope. This is more important than ever in present circumstances and we are fortunate in those contributing to our work, and in the support of the Council.

Recent events have shown the importance of grassroots democracy and I look forward to the Forum doing more to represent public opinion by expanding its membership and its activities. With changes in local and national politics a vigorous and informed Forum is needed to represent Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Statement from Don Sloan

I have been a member of the Town Forum for several years now, first as a Borough Councillor (2014 -2018), and now representing residents of Molyneux Park Gardens as well as being on the Forum planning committee. Tunbridge Wells has been my base since 1975 though I was abroad with the British Council much of the time until 2001. Since then Helen and I have lived in Tunbridge Wells continuously. Besides the Forum my interests include membership of the Rotary Club of Tunbridge Wells and trying to keep fit.

I see the Town Forum as the channel for residents of unparished areas, through their representatives, to communicate effectively with the Borough Council and to respond to Council consultations. The work of the Forum and its committees is invaluable. Above all I want the Forum to continue to be highly trusted to give fair, balanced and considered views on the development of our town, and in a non-partisan way. A case in point is our Chairman currently guiding cross-party talks between councillors.

If elected as Deputy Chair I would promote and uphold the reputation and values of the Town Forum.

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ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

Thursday, 12 September 2019

Members: Stuart Anderson (Beulah Road Residents Association), Caroline Auckland (Soroptimist International of Tunbridge Wells District), Sally Balcon (Friends of the Commons), David Barnett (Friends of Grosvenor & Hilbert Parks), Adrian Berendt (Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group), Lorna Blackmore (Grantley Court Residents Association), Mark Booker (Culverden Residents Association), Diana Butler (Banner Farm Residents Association), John Cunningham (Civic Society of RTW & Warwick Park Residents' Association), Andy England (Tunbridge Wells Access Group), Jane Fenwick (Calverley Park Residents Association), Margaret Ginman (Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery), Carolyn Gray (The Forum), Delphine Hamilton (Hawkenbury Village Association), Dorothea Holman (Boyne Park Residents Association), Michael Holman (Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association), Marieke de Jonge (Tunbridge Wells Friends of the Earth), John de Lucy (Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery), Katharina Mahler-Beck (Telephone House Neighbours Association), Paul Mason (Tunbridge Wells Bicycle User Group), Angela McPherson (Soroptimist International of Tunbridge Wells and District), Alan Omer (Benhall Mill Road Land Association), Martin Sanderson (Tunbridge Wells Anti-Aircraft Noise Group), Don Sloan (Molyneux Park Gardens Residents Association), Tim Tempest (The Avenues Residents Association and Friends of the Grove), David Wakefield (Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association), Denise Watts (Tunbridge Wells Over Fifties Forum), Carol Wilson (Nourish Community Foodbank), Pat Wilson (Inner London Road Residents Association),

Borough Councillors: Councillors Mark Ellis (St John's Ward), Marguerita Morton (St John's Ward), Nick Pope (Park Ward), Hugo Pound (Sherwood Ward), David Scott (Culverden Ward), Chris Woodward (Broadwater Ward).

Others in Attendance: Councillor Jane March (Deputy Leader, TWBC), Lee Colyer (Director of Finance, Policy and Development), David Candlin (Head of Economic Development and Property), Karin Grey (Sustainability Manager), Finbar Gibbons (Head of Policy and Governance).

APOLOGIES

- 1 Apologies were received from Jenina Pendry (Residents' First), Brian Lippard (Civic Society of RTW) and Councillor McDermott.

DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

- 2 Delphine Hamilton was substituting for Hawkenbury Village Association, Carol Wilson for Nourish Community Foodbank and Martin Sanderson for Tunbridge Wells Anti Aircraft Noise Group and Councillor Jane March for the Leader.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 3 New membership applications had been accepted from the Tunbridge Wells Dementia Friendly Committee.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2019

- 4 The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2019 were agreed subject to the following amendments:

- Agenda item 10 – the reports from the working groups were not attached. It was confirmed that they would be circulated.
- Michael Holman, Dorothea Holman, Caroline Auckland and Councillor Chris Woodward to be recorded as having sent their apologies.

ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

4A There were no actions from the previous meeting.

MATTERS ARISING AND RESIDENTS' CONCERNS

5 There were no reported matters arising or residents' concerns.

UPDATE FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

6 Councillor March, deputising for the Leader gave an update and answered questions on the following subjects:

Before the update began Councillor March announced with great sadness the death of Councillor Dr Ronan Basu. A memorial service would be held on 4 October 2019.

Amelia Scott

- Collaborative work was ongoing between the National Heritage Lottery Fund, Kent CC and TWBC to try to reduce the costs through valued engineering and to share the extra construction costs and meet the fundraising gap.
- Adult Education Centre had now relocated to the Corn Exchange and Royal Victoria Place and lessons had now resumed.

Ely Court

- Refurbishment was underway.

Full Council

- The next Full Council meeting was scheduled for 25 September 2019.

Tunbridge Wells Cultural Team

- The Tunbridge Wells Cultural Team took part in the Heritage Open Day which was held at the Camden Centre.
- Thanks were given to the support by TWBC and all the other sponsors of the event – without this support it would not have been possible to put the event on.
- The theme was local biscuit making with opportunities to get involved in the process.
- As part of the National Heritage Lottery Fund Activity Plan there was a young consultants programme to work with them to help pose questions about the Amelia Scott and the work of the museum.

Parking in Tunbridge Wells

- The Business Improvement District Bid had looked at the issue of parking in Tunbridge Wells and there was a proposal that related to Sunday parking that would include incentives to stay longer at a lower cost.
- The Parking Strategy for the rest of the Borough, further details would be included in the Local Plan – Councillor McDermott would be able to update further at the next meeting.

Public Art Guidance Document

- The Public Art Guidance was currently in draft.
- The Guidance would be included in the Local Plan with the consultation due to start on 20 September 2019.

Local Plan

- To note that the consultation would start on 20 September and that comments could only be accepted after this date and up to 31 October.

Action: Councillor McDermott to give an update on parking in Tunbridge Wells at the next meeting.

CLIMATE CHANGE - VIEWS FROM LOCAL SCHOOLS

- 7 Marieke de Jonge, Tunbridge Wells Friends of the Earth attended the meeting with representatives from a number of local schools to speak on the issue of Climate Change.

Tunbridge Wells Girls Grammar School

- Climate change was a national issue.
- At the local level it was important to ensure that there was better awareness to include better education and the availability of information on what can and cannot be recycled.
- How recycling could be made more easily available.
- More efficient use of bus services particularly for school journeys.
- Review of bus fares to help promote bus use and reduce reliance on cars.

Skinnners School

- Air pollution and in particular St John's Road which for a few years during peak time had been the most polluted road in Kent was a serious concern for children walking to school. The air particulates that were breathed in were shown to affect the development of children of a young age.
- Would like to see measures introduced to reduce the congestion on St John's Road and Pembury Road.
- Also concern about the infrequency of buses that make driving preferable and therefore exacerbate the congestion issues.
- Buses were a major pollutant in Tunbridge Wells. Newer models were more environmentally friendly but suggested that regulations were not sufficient and needed to be reviewed to make them stricter and more enforceable.
- Encouragement for more car share schemes. And for short journeys to consider the introduction of electric bikes and scooters in towns and cities that although expensive could be beneficial.

Beechwood Sacred Heart School

- Recycling was intrinsically flawed – instead of recycling, products should be introduced that could be used for a longer period e.g. a metal bottle that could be used for a 10 year period rather than using plastic bottles.
- Water stations to be introduced so bottles could be filled thereby reducing the need to buy single use bottles.
- The push to recycle gave the excuse to continue buying plastic which still often ended up in Landfill.

- There was a need to lobby to get supermarkets to remove all plastic to be replaced with paper or cotton based bags.
- There should be a promotion for the use of reusable food containers instead of clingfilm.
- Interest in animals promoted the interest in the environment and this should be encouraged. There should be more awareness of environmental issues in schools.
- 9 out of 10 people breath polluted air so an issue that had previously been recognised as one for the future had now become an issue for the present.
- 7 million people a year were being killed due to the effects of pollution.
- In 2018 The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Forum declared that coal fired electricity must end by 2050 and there must be a 1.5% reduction in the global temperature. Failure to do so would result in a major climate crisis in less than 20 years. In 2019 this had been reduced to 12 years. As Governments and Global Corporations were not taking enough action, it was time to take it on ourselves.

Homeward House School

- Important to reduce the use of plastics and cans. Had seen a lot of evidence of dropped litter around Tunbridge Wells. People should be encouraged to go out and collect litter.
- Would like to see a reduction in the use of cars and buses. There should be more cycle lanes that would provide safer travel for cyclists. It would also promote cycle use.
- To encourage the use of Tupperware in shops and reusable bottles.
- A lot of damage had already taken place and there had been a delay in taking relevant action was disappointing. More action needed to be taken now.
- A company called David Luke who produce clothing including school uniforms from plastic bottles. Over the last 8 years, 20 million plastic bottles had been taken from Land Fill for this purpose.

Councillor March welcomed the comments made by all the students. The first meeting of the Climate Emergency Action Working Group was due to take place later in September. It had already been agreed that a Climate Emergency conference would be organised and engagement from schools would be very welcome.

There was a Transport Forum in Tunbridge Wells. Bus fumes and congestion were issues brought up at the last Forum meeting. A representative from Arriva Buses was at the meeting and gave an assurance that bus drivers would be told to switch off their engines when at the bus stops – although to date this doesn't appear to have happened.

The issues raised where already included on the list of things to do by the Transport Working Group. The pollution problems on St John's Road was already included in the Local Plan. It was suggested that in the first instance it would be beneficial for students to highlight the transport issues that affected each of their schools and come up with some suggested solutions.

It would be useful for the students to find out whether their school had a Travel Plan and if so what it said.

Consideration should be given to alternatives to the car for school travel. Something that students who currently drive to school could look into.

The Council had a no idling policy. To consider how this information could be given to schools and then disseminated to drivers at school drop off and pick up.

Improvements for cyclists was something that TWBC had been working on some time, but there was a lack of confidence that cycling was safe.

To ask schools to become involved with the Ecobrick Campaign, that collected plastic to be sent to Africa to build eco-friendly houses. A way of putting used plastic to very good use.

Not all bus use was negative. An electric bus to be used for disabled people was being trialled. Technological advances in electric buses was progressing rapidly and should not be underestimated.

Action: Adrian Berendt to circulate the Roger Hallam (Extinction Rebellion) Video.

Action: To consider forming a Youth Forum with representatives from all the schools that would collate ideas that could be put forward not only to TWBC but also Kent CC.

AIR POLLUTION

8 Professor Stephen Peckham from the University of Kent was invited to give a presentation on the subject of Air Pollution which included the following:

- The impact on health needed to be considered at the early stages of both transport and development planning.
- Air pollution was the second biggest killer in the world.
- Where smoke used to be the biggest cause of air pollution that has now been replaced by traffic. In recent years the traffic in Kent had increased, with a marked increase in the number of lorries using the roads.
- Prior to 2000 about 10% of the vehicle fleet used diesel, this had now risen to 40%. Diesel cars use more nitrogen dioxide and more particulates than petrol cars so will continue to be a major concern. Petrol cars were better than diesel cars.
- Air pollution was a leading cause of ill health. Long term exposure to nitrogen dioxide and ozone where the particulates entered the blood stream could lead to a number of issues that included asthma and cardio vascular problems.
- Low levels of nitrogen dioxide in children's lungs resulted in stunted growth and this was permanent.
- Short term exposure was also a problem. Day to day changes in particulate levels was also a concern.
- The effects of air pollution also had a detrimental effect to the economy, causing 40,000 premature deaths and an estimated cost of £8-20bn a year (estimated in 2005). More recently Public Health England estimated the cost of dealing with and treating the additional illness caused by air pollution was in the region of £43-150m a year.
- Local authorities were legally required to produce a plan and as an authority reach the limits of 40 micrograms averaged over a year with no more than 35 breaches of which TWBC was compliant. The World Health Organisation (WHO) had determined that this was not good enough. A recent strategy published by Government had suggested

that we should now be looking at working towards or better than WHO limits.

- There were many areas in the UK that the Government didn't recognise as having an air quality problem, Kent included.
- The Government had provided funding for its 35 cities, but there were over 600 areas of the country where air quality breached the UK guidelines.
- There were two ways of taking measurements – Diffusion tubes (a chemical analyser) which were placed in places where it was thought that air pollution was high. The second was an Automatic Measurement Station. Measurements were taken based on the nearest dwelling which could at times be some distance from where the Station/Tube was located. This resulted in occasions where results were distorted depending on how far away from the road the measurements were taken. It was argued that if the measurements were taken closer and lower to the road there would be areas that were currently recorded as within the Guidelines, that would actually be in breach of the Guidelines.
- Ozone was now seen as one of the major causes of short term respiratory and cardio vascular problems. To tackle ozone would require a dramatic drop in nitrogen dioxide.
- Locally and in line with the Legal Guidelines Tunbridge Wells did not breach the UK limit but it was in breach of the WHO Guidelines. If the UK adopted the WHO Guidelines, it would be a major concern locally.
- Medway had a major mortality issue around PM_{2.5} - no significant funding had been allocated by the Government as the area had not been identified as having a pollution problem.
- The key was to focus on planning and transport in order to find suitable solutions.
- Quality restrictions undertaken by developers should be tighter – at present they use models for air quality. They should be required to monitor levels so that predictions were based on fact.
- More pressure to be put on Government (Defra) to ensure they were aware that problems existed at the Local level and that resources be made available to help tackle the issue.
- Health considerations needed to be taken into account at the planning stage.
- There were lots of things that could be done to ameliorate the effects of air pollution. More pressure locally to try and push the agenda forward.

Discussion included the following comments:

- Work was being undertaken to combat the effects of air pollution associated with shipping.
- Masks used in Japan are mainly for allergies and not air pollution.
- Trees were helpful but their contribution to the absorption of pollution was very small.
- The benefits associated with cycling outweigh the adverse effects caused by pollution.
- A need to rethink infrastructure to change the emphasis from car travel.
- Pollution from aircrafts (in the local area) was not significant in comparison to vehicles on the road.
- Better train services would reduce reliance on cars.

- In general, biomass and wood burning stoves particularly in town centres were not recommended. That said, in rural areas biomass burners where locally sourced wood was used, then it was a very good way of producing heat and hot water (e.g. Bedgebury Pinetum).
- Evidence suggested that 20mph Zones were beneficial for both lowering emissions and encouraging more cycling.

Karin Grey, Sustainability Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council gave an update on what the Council was doing in terms of air quality.

- The Air Quality Action Plan was approved in March 2019 and included a number of actions that could be taken forward, particularly through infrastructure in terms of cycling, walking, public transport and behavioural changes.
- The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and the Local Plan also offered opportunities for action in this area.
- The Kent Air Quality Website which, where possible showed real time information and where it was possible to download air quality reports that detailed what was happening in Kent.
- Behaviour change programmes had been started that included 'The Clean Air for School' where Environmental Health Officers went into Primary Schools to talk about the problems of pollution and alternative ways to get to school – walking, walking buses etc.
- 'The Anti Idling Campaign' launched on 20 June 2019 and aimed at encouraging car users not to idle unnecessarily.
- Air quality modelling was assessed on planning applications and conditions were applied where necessary.
- Air quality monitoring was regularly undertaken, the information gathered then informed on decisions.
- Membership of the Car Club in Tunbridge Wells had grown – from around 60 members as at April 2015, now 270. There was now a need to expand and add more cars. This encouraged people to use the most appropriate form of transport.
- The increased use of electric vehicles was being encouraged by Government. TWBC was looking at where to put electrical charging points, but it would include a charging point for taxis on Mount Pleasant Road.
- There would be a lot of guidance coming forward in the Local Plan. There would also be an Air Quality Guidance Document.
- Key aim was to work towards Active Travel.

Discussion included the following comments:

- Restrictions relating to domestic burning, bonfires etc. came under Statutory Nuisance – if the result of domestic burning was deemed a nuisance there was legislation available that allow action to be taken. There were restrictions on the burning of plastic or metal, but not on coal fires, bonfires or wood burners.

Action: To circulate the slides to Members.

CALVERLEY SQUARE

- 9 Lee Colyer, Director of Finance, Policy and Development and David Candlin, Head of Economic Development and Property provided an update on the Calverley Square Project which included the following:

- The first stage of the two stage design and build was now at the point of being completed.
- The technical design was carried out by Mace's Design Team. The project had been broken down into 31 trade packages. Each package had been out to competitive tender – between 3 and 5 trade contractors within Mace's supply chain. All tenders had been open and recorded jointly by Mace, Avison Young and AECOM on behalf of TWBC.
- Final tenders had been received and the cost of the development was now known.
- Cost benchmarking had been done. In terms of the theatre and based on the cost today to build The Marlow Theatre, the current proposal was slightly less.
- Work had been undertaken on the detailed design – determining how the buildings would actually work.
- The new theatre would have a 5% reduction in carbon footprint over the current theatre. The office would have 35% reduction in carbon footprint in comparison to the Town Hall.
- Part of the design and build phase was to reduce the risk to the Local Authority by putting that risk onto the contractor as it moved to the next stages, e.g. construction risks, design development and price increases.
- Project was not risk free with some risk remaining with the Council – changes as instructed by the Council, postponement of the works as ordered by the Council, a delay or to stop the work of a contractor, asbestos, antiquities, archaeology or any unexploded ordinance.
- Cost assessment had been made and a contingency sum included.
- Following the completion of RIBA Stage 4 the Council had now received the costings report from AECOM. External market factors had had adversely impacted on all construction projects – this included Calverley Square. Factors included the uncertainty around Brexit and its knock on effects including the availability of labour, tariffs and import delays. In addition the Grenfell tragedy, the collapse of Carillion and the collapse of British Steel.
- In terms of costings, in December 2017 the gross construction cost was £90m – a sub total of £77m to be funded from borrowing – with a final cost to the Council of £2.3m fixed over the next 50 years. The Council had approved a separate funding strategy that would meet this funding requirement.
- The final contract sum now submitted by Mace was a total of £108m – a sub total of £95m. Additional funding contribution of £5m was expected from Kent CC and an additional £3m from fund raising. This would give a total of £87m to be funded from borrowing. It was now possible to borrow the higher figure at a lower interest rate of 2.15%, the result of which was the cost to the council remained unchanged at £2.3m.
- An assessment of the economic benefits undertaken in 2017 showed a gross value added from the new offices of £24.3m. At the end of Stage 4 the economic benefit had remained the same, but the repurposing of the current offices added a net economic benefit of £10m – therefore a substantial improvement from December 2017.
- In December 2018 a place shaping assessment was undertaken on the current buildings, including the police station. A short list of 6 potential options were identified against a set of relevant criteria.

- New workspace, re-using the majority of spaces for office, co-working and creative industries.
- Boutique hotel, restaurant and new workspace, with residential uses in Calverley Terrace.
- Residential led mix of uses, new leisure uses and some workspace.
- Hotel, residential and workspace.
- Residential development with community, event and work spaces.
- Residential across the site with some business space.
- The range of assessment options demonstrated a wide range of approaches that could be pursued to ensure that the Civic Complex had a sustainable and beneficial future for the town centre and borough.
- The next approval stage was Full Council on 25 September 2019 with a planned start on site of January 2020.

Discussion included the following comments:

- Part of the Construction Management Plan included a plan to manage vehicles which included the allocation of time slots to minimise traffic congestion and details of how vehicles would access the site.
- Further details of the 6 options for the Civic Complex was available in the Committee Reports. Not yet in a position to take a decision on which option might be taken forward.
- Final decision for the next stages of the project rested with Councillors.
- The Council had met with the owners of the Cinema Site on a number of occasions. Final approval had just been given with a start on site expected later in 2019. The owners were familiar and very supportive of the plans for Calverley Square. Going forward, information would be shared for both sites.
- Some value engineering had been done but it didn't affect the overall specification of the project.
- The final decision for the £5m funding contribution from Kent CC rested with them, but they were very supportive of the scheme. There was also confidence regarding the £3m in fundraising.
- The Report included 2 recommendations, the approval to proceed with the project and to delegate authority to the s151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio holder that should funding not be forthcoming it would be underwritten by borrowing and that there was sufficient headroom to do this. As such it was fully compliant with the constitution.
- There was recognition that a new Theatre and offices would be a benefit to the area. But the consensus was that there should be a pause so that further consideration could be given to current market conditions/uncertainties. In addition, that there should be a more detailed look at the different component parts of the scheme. It was further suggested that public engagement should be improved that would better bring the public on board with the scheme.
- Concern that the scheme that included a new car park would bring more cars into the town centre, which contradicts the work being undertaken to reduce air pollution in the area.

- The current Civic Complex had a value of £9m (figure based on a residential development). The Report had identified the optimum time for the site to come to the market – between 18-24 months prior to it becoming vacant. Any earlier would be an increased risk to any developer which in turn would result in a decrease in the value of the building.
- The Independent Panel Report had been submitted to a cross party group and Borough Council Cabinet. Very happy to send it to members of the Town Forum. There was a plan to present it to the next Full Council meeting scheduled for 25 September 2019.

Action: David Candlin to circulate slides

Adrian Berendt to circulate the Independent Panel Report

DRAFT LOCAL PLAN BRIEFING 5 SEPTEMBER & UPDATE FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP

10 Mark Booker agreed to circulate the notes from the Town Forum's briefing on the Draft Local Plan. But to highlight a couple of issues:

- Following the opening of the consultation on 20 September, 2 public exhibitions would take place in the Royal Victoria Place, the first on Thursday 20 September and Saturday 28 September 2019.
- A draft response would be prepared and circulated. Residents' Associations would then be encouraged to do the same.

Action – To circulate the notes of the Town Forum's briefing held on 5 September 2019.

REPORTS FROM THE TOWN FORUM WORKING GROUPS

11 The Reports from the Town Forum Working Groups were not discussed at the meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12 There was no other business.

FUTURE MEETINGS

13 21 November 2019
23 January 2020
19 March 2020

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 9.15 pm.

Appendix A: Civic Complex Cross-Party Working Group Update (C-P Working Group)

Objective

To examine the business case and other aspects for options for the 4 key sites owned by the Council (the Town Hall, Assembly Hall Theatre, Mount Pleasant Car Park and the Great Hall Car Park) together with other sites which might become available.

The Working Group's role is solely to facilitate and inform the decision-making process within the Council.

The Working Group is not a decision-making body.

Background

The C-P Working Group report (23rd September 2019) to Members identified 12 areas of agreement, 4 assumptions considered unproven by some members and 3 areas of disagreement. This report and that of the Non-Political Panel headed by Adrian Berendt provided an initial basis to proceed on the evaluation as set out in the Objective above. These reports are attached.

Members of the Working Group agreed to act on a non-political basis and to consider the alternatives objectively. It is recognised that various issues may be passed to other Working Parties that may be formed to consider specific aspects of the functions envisaged within the Civic Complex, such as culture, transport and others.

To ensure dialogue can be open between members it was agreed that members would avoid open discussion of the workings of the Working Group and specific comments made by members.

The Working Group is supported by relevant officers as required. Adrian Berendt has attended each of the meetings to help facilitate discussion. Councillor Andrew Hickey has also been recently co-opted.

Initial Review

An initial draft report in respect of the first stage of C-P Working Party is attached. The C-P Working Group identified four aspects for consideration:

- Initial pressing issues which the Calverley Square project was designed to solve;
- Economic, social and environmental objectives of the Borough that any proposed short-term solution should take into account;
- Key areas of concern raised by residents about (1) the Calverley Square project and (2) previous proposals for the Civic Complex in 2010/12; and
- Financial aspects.

The C-P Working Group has commenced reviewing the above relative to

- Functions needed or desired; and
- Sites identified as within the scope.

It is recognised that the success of initiatives in the centre of the Borough will help the whole of the Borough through growth of the Borough as a cultural and commercial hub. This is also aimed to increase income and prosperity, while also increasing TWBC business tax base and reduce operational costs.

Three time horizons are identified:

Short-term: What can be done now both financially and physically. This should be a step towards our medium-term goals. Maintenance is an important factor within the scope of the short-term goals and medium-term uses.

Medium-term: Which goals can be achieved within 5 to 10 years using available buildings encompassing existing activities/function but also including new functions. This potentially requires radical re-thing of the area. It also needs to be 'complete' as a vision that may be extended rather than purely a stage in the achievement of the end game.

Long-term: It will be determined by events and needs at the time, not predetermined irrespective of whatever else is occurring across the Borough and hopefully based on the achievements of the goals identified by the Working Party.

Initial repair and maintenance costs likely to be incurred by TWBC in 2020/21 were identified and are being presented to the Finance CAB.

Most significantly, the Working party has found much common ground which it hopes the Council can embrace unanimously.

Next Stages:

The Working Party aims to provide a report to the Full Council on 18th December 2019. A briefing paper will be provided prior to that meeting for discussion at a Full Member Briefing on Monday 9th December. The Working Party will meet following this to consider points arising and any verbal or other updates to be given to the Full Council meeting the following week.

TOWN FORUM – 27 NOVEMBER 2019

REPORTS FROM THE TOWN FORUM WORKING GROUPS

a)	Water in the Wells Working Group	Attached
b)	Transport Strategy Working Group	Attached
c)	Culture, Leisure and Tourism Working Group	Attached
d)	Wellbeing Working Group	Verbal
e)	Finance and Other Issues Working Group	Verbal
f)	Strategic Planning Working Group	Verbal

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WATER IN THE WELLS WORKING GROUP

REPORT TO THE TOWN FORUM 27 November 2019

Current membership: Bob Atwood, John Cunningham, Jane Fenwick, Carolyn Gray, Michael Holman (Chair), Mike McGeary, Altan Omer, David Scott, Alastair Tod, Pat Wilson.

We met on 19 November 2019 and will meet again on 14 January 2020.

1. Planning

Two major strategic planning documents have been progressed since my last report.

Thanks to last-minute intervention by Water in the Wells, *The Draft Local Plan*, although primarily concerned with land and housebuilding, now includes a key phrase that should make it easier for Section 106 monies to be channelled into public art and water features. The all-important underlined phrase is contained in the following passage:

“In order to mitigate the impact on infrastructure, the development of sites allocated under Policies AL/RTW 1 to AL/RTW 32, and all other development within Royal Tunbridge Wells that creates a requirement for new or improved infrastructure beyond existing provision, contributions must be provided to mitigate that impact... including 1) the provision of buildings and spaces to provide cultural opportunities and 2) through public art, which may include water features to reflect the connections with water, health and the spa heritage of the town, in accordance with the Tunbridge Wells Borough Public Art guidance 2019.”

The long-awaited *Public Art Guidance Document* was finally adopted at the Cabinet Meeting on 24 October. This document has Borough-wide implications, and although it offers guidance rather than defining policy, its adoption should eventually make it easier for TWBC to obtain funding for public art programming from future major developments. This has to be a step in the right direction.

A copy of the 16-page document can be found in the Cabinet Minutes for 24 October, Agenda item 13, Public Art Guidance, Appendix A. We trust it will eventually be available in a more easily accessible location.

2. Drinking water fountains

Dunorlan: We continue to work closely with the Friends of Dunorlan and the Parks Department. The plan is to install a combined drinking water fountain and bottle-filling station near the notice board at the confluence of paths from the café and the top car park. Pipework is of the appropriate blue plastic, and a route for the pipe has been agreed.

Royal Victoria Place: As part of the current refurbishment, a bottle-filling station will be installed on the upper level on the wall between Burrells and Pandora. The main artwork, inspired by water, has been signed off and will form a major feature of roof areas throughout the centre.

St. John's Rec. and the Grove: It is proposed to install in each park a drinking water fountain /bottle-filling station identical to the model planned for Dunorlan.

The Amelia Scott Centre: We are informed that, in line with the Council's agenda to reduce single use plastics, drinking water fountains will be installed. Positioning and number will depend on final floorplans and layouts.

3. Other water features

Calverley Grounds: The Ice Rink – the town's major frozen water feature - is now again installed, operating and pulling in the punters. This year it boasts an additional small side rink for junior skaters.

Arriva Bus Station (Pegasus): Demolition apparently halted. We await a response from Pegasus to our inquiry concerning the planned water wall on either side of the entrance on St John's Road.

Owlsnest Wood, Tonbridge Road, Pembury (Affordable Housing and Healthcare): A decision on the re-submitted planning application is expected before Christmas. The application includes renovation of the lake and provision of public access but no reference to restoration of the original fountain.

St John's Rec.: We continue to gather information about Joseph Horatio Love, donor of the original Doulton fountain. We hope that the Royal Doulton Archive, held by Wedgwood, might provide valuable leads. Reports in the local press in the 1920s mentioning the fountain are sadly few and far between, but on 23 May 1923 'The Courier' carried the following short piece:

"STJOHN'S FOUNTAIN. For the first time since the war the fountain at St John's Recreation Ground was played on Saturday on the occasion of the visit of the Corporation to the Culverden Bowling Club. The fountain will need cleaning if it is to be used frequently."

Fonthill Cold Baths (Eridge Road): In cooperation with a local landscape architect, we are considering a maximum and minimum plan for renovation and restoration.

Knights Wood: Currently drained of water to permit replacement of vandalised lighting. Restoration of lettering: **SOMETHING IN THE WATER** still awaited

Finally, some welcome publicity: 'The Courier' of 22 November carried an upbeat and informative report by Mary Harris headed:

'Water features springing up everywhere in town'.

(Michael Holman, 22 November 2019)

(Michael Holman, Chairman, 'Water in the Wells'.
E-mail: michaeldekholman@gmail.com.)

News



Michael Holman



The feature at The Dairy in St John's Road by McCarthy and Stone



Left, the feature at Berkeley Homes development on Mount Ephraim



The water feature at Skinner's Kent Primary School at Knights Wood, the development by Dandara, lit up at night

Water features springing up everywhere in town

A STUNNING and transformative £100,000 water feature, which would incorporate the town's towering clock at Fiveways in Tunbridge Wells, is the 'magic wand' project.

That might be the ultimate goal of Water in the Wells but since the group was created in 2012 it has already chalked up some achievements celebrating the historic spa waters of Tunbridge

Wells. Working hand in hand with developers and the council, Water in the Wells has encouraged the building of high-quality water features at developments of new schools, offices and homes in Tunbridge Wells.

The group is so effective that not only has it seen the addition of beautiful fountains by working with companies such as Berkeley Homes, Dandara and McCarthy & Stone, but

it has also influenced the Local Plan so developers can be guided towards creating water features when they build in Tunbridge Wells.

Professor Michael Holman, of Water in the Wells, a community interest company, said: "The task was to convince developers who are not based in Tunbridge Wells that Tunbridge Wells has a brand and a patent and this is based on water and having health and having a few

pennies in your pocket: health, water and wealth and to give people a good time. Developers need to be aware of this because they can come from outside of Tunbridge Wells."

He added: "The town has a brand that says 'disusted' but that is not enough. It has a brand that people coming here have a healthy and full, rewarding life. That's the reason young families move out of London

to Tunbridge Wells, so kids can live in an environment of trees, green spaces and so on."

Projects in the pipeline include hopes for water features at new developments at Union House, Hawkenbury and Herdy on Mount Ephraim.

Anyone interested in joining Water in the Wells can email michaieldholman@gmail.com or waterinthewells@gmail.com

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Report from the Transport Working Group to the Town Forum on 27th November 2019

Present: Jane Fenwick (chair), Cllr David Scott, Pat Wilson, Adrian Berendt, Katharina Mahler Bech and Lorna Blackmore. Apologies: Ian Rennardson, Cllr Peter Lidstone,

1. **Draft local plan – town forum response.** The TF management group has prepared a response to the Draft Local Plan including the transport and parking sections. There are some policies for mitigating the impact of these developments and related traffic on RTW, but it is thought unlikely that this can be relied on. Throughout the plan there is an emphasis on ‘active travel’. Concern was expressed that priority should be given to developing bus services as alternatives to car travel locally. Cllr Scott commented how other communities had found that Uber-style taxi services had made a major impact on traffic levels and car ownership.
2. **Draft local plan – parking.** The Residential Parking Standards Topic Paper, August 2019 underpins the parking elements of the Draft Local Plan, and contains within it some significant changes to the previous approach. Parking department will be asked to present its findings to the Town Forum on 27th November.
3. **20mph extension to the historic centre of RTW**
JF explained that an accident in October caused by a speeding car had caused structural damage to the rear of a grade 2* building on Calverley park Crescent and demolished the railings of 3 other neighbouring properties. She proposed that this incident should be a trigger to request a 20mph zone covering the historic centre of RTW to protect its buildings as well as improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. This area already contains two 20mph school zones, York, Dudley and Newton Roads which are also 20mph, and the extended shared space/public realm area in the town centre. This new zone will enable the existing St Johns zone and proposed zones in Banner Farm and Culverden to connect across the town centre. JF agreed to work up the proposal and create a map to present to ward councillors, and JTB members at the JTB in January.
4. **Calverley Crescent and Carrs corner.** Following the accident at Calverley Park Crescent, TvdB and JF had met with Park ward councillor Nick Pope to view the damage and consider options. It was decided to revive the safety issues at Carrs Corner roundabout again and JF undertook to log the history of debate in previous JTB meetings.
5. **Public Realm works and traffic management.** JF and TvdB had unsuccessfully sought a meeting with Hilary Smith and KCC in October to consider traffic light phasing at Mount Pleasant and traffic signage at the new junction. The road has now opened but inadequate signage has resulted in traffic using the new space during the day when they should not be.
6. **Climate change.** The TWG decided to set some priorities and actions for the Town Forum starting with traffic pollution. AB is to see how the Town Forum can support the existing ‘anti-idling’ campaign.
7. **Public Transport Forum 28th November.** LB agreed to attend this meeting for the TWG.
8. **Roundabouts:** LB had met with Cllr Barrington King and reported that the roundabout planting will be completed by 10th April, Good Friday.

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RTW Town Forum

Report from the Culture Leisure and Tourism Group

The Group noted progress with the Amelia Scott Centre and regretted the fact that the vault was now to be almost entirely zinc covered, not glazed.

We were disappointed that the Public Art Strategy had not emerged, and neither the Public Art Strategy nor the Cultural Strategy is part of the evidence base for the draft Local Plan. The Council had commissioned a report from the cultural consultant Tom Fleming on the creative industries sector, but this had not been published. Michael Holman had sought to have included in the Local Plan strategy a reference to improvement of the cultural offer, including 'the provision of buildings and spaces to provide cultural opportunities, and through public art, which may include water features to reflect the connections with water, health and the spa heritage of the town.'

We discussed what had been learned from the Calverley Square project, now abandoned. The public relations for Calverley Square had been mishandled and the lack of real consultation had led to it being slaughtered on social media. We were now back to where we were five years ago, and there was a risk a future scheme might meet the same fate. It was felt some of the factors which had shaped the Calverley Square proposal, such as the wish to maintain continuous availability of a theatre, and the need for a minimum 1200 seats for financial viability, requiring a larger catchment, had prevented real consideration of alternatives.

The Group felt any future investment should be based on the work available on cultural strategy, the creative industries, and public art, as well as the studies done for Calverley Square. The Group endorsed the principle of meeting the cultural need in the town and maintaining Tunbridge Wells' position as the cultural capital of the High Weald. The town was flourishing in arts activity but it was uncoordinated. Independent arts organisations were producing their own plans, and a future strategy should seek to discover what restricts their activity. A single large institution might not provide what was required. A strategy should take into account identified cultural needs and maximise what we've already got in terms of structures and organisations, with a range of options offered for public consultation.

We questioned whether the proposed format of Calverley Square would have achieved this. We regretted the intention to use the Great Hall site for a theatre since this diverted from the cultural complex around the Amelia Scott Centre. The CLT group believed any future proposal should be multi-use and offer synergy with the Amelia Scott and community use of the Town Hall. The present facilities attracted large audiences for the right events. Large audiences were to be welcomed, but proposals should not be based on competing with other towns. Once the idea of an instantaneous transfer from the Assembly Hall to a new theatre was abandoned there were various possibilities, with temporary accommodation provided if required by those local groups most likely to be affected.

The Group thought the Assembly Hall could be adapted by sideways expansion to provide a flexible space which would give Tunbridge Wells facilities on an appropriate scale for the town. The vote in the Council had not been against a theatre, but against the particular theatre proposed. A problem emphasised to the Independent Panel had been the poor provision at Calverley Square for Food and Beverage sales and merchandising, thus underestimating the contribution of these to viability.

Appendix C

It was recognised that, if the Council's projections of attendances were fulfilled, the CS theatre would have broken even in Year 7, but the capital debt would remain. The `subsidy` needed to service this would apply to any similar proposal. Planning should recognise the need for a robust business plan but not be dominated by seeking to avoid an operating deficit, which could be traded against capital cost. A physical structure should provide a performance space which could be interactive and flexible, located in a cultural quarter based on the Amelia Scott but serving the whole borough. Any brief to consultants should be published and proposals fully consulted on, by traditional means and including social media.

The Group agreed to submit a recommendation on these lines to the Cross Party Group appointed by the Council to investigate options for the Town Hall and Assembly Hall.

ART/Town Forum/Groups/LCT Group Report 061119