



Minutes of Meeting for the Leatherhead Residents Association

Held on Monday 1st November 2021 at 7.30pm in the Leatherhead Methodist Church,

Church Road, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22

Present: Caroline Brown, Martyn Williams, Fran Smith, Ray Brown, Pauline Russell, Tony Russell, Louise Herrity, Hilary Porter, Percy Hawkins, Geoffrey West, Pat Harris, Kathleen Pike, Ian Seifert, Irene Seifert, Helen Tribe, Carol Webster, Meredith Shiers, Diana Carr, Jane Pratt, Andi Ryan, Elaine Arnold, Maureen Conrad, Margaret Sims, Peter Mayor, Ann Mayor, Vicky Wallace, Bridget Carr, Julia Jarrett, Paul Sutherland Waite.

In attendance: Speaker Pat Smith, Cllr Tim Hall.

1. Apologies received from: Sara Kane, Pam and John Wilson, Paula Sabine, Hubert Carr, Cllr Emma Norman, Cllr Simon Moss.

2. Minutes of the last meeting: the last meeting was the AGM and the minutes are on line. As is normal, approval to these will be sought at the next AGM.

3. Chairman's Report: The Chairman was pleased to report that her request, for members to assist with the running of the LRA, had been well received and had resulted in a number of discussions with volunteers. However, if others felt that they could also help, then further recruits were still being sought and the Chairman would welcome hearing from them.

The Chairman then invited discussion from the floor in respect to future vehicle access hours onto Leatherhead High Street, reminding the meeting that emergency regulations had been introduced during the pandemic, with the aim of balance between pedestrian and traffic usage. MVDC is now consulting, as to whether these arrangements are to be retained into the future, beyond the current expiry date of March 2022.

Cllr Tim Hall joined the Chairman in explaining that, at present, cars and vans can load and park every day from 8am to 10am and then again from 4.30pm until 6pm. The same vehicles may also use the High Street for general parking overnight from 6pm until 8am and these rules apply 7 days a week, including Sundays. However, if the regulations were to revert to pre-Covid arrangements, the difference would be an extra half hour in the evenings to load and park, i.e. up to 6.30pm but on Sundays the rules would be the same as during the week, i.e. no parking or driving between 10.00 am and 4.30 pm. It was additionally noted that the Swan Centre car park and indeed, all MVDC parking, was available and free to park on Sundays.

The views of members were sought, via a show of hands, providing an indicative opinion that:

6 (six) members preferred a return to pre-Covid and vehicles to be allowed on to the High Street all day on Sundays; 18 (eighteen) members preferred to maintain current arrangements.*

A secondary proposal was then raised, suggesting a summer/winter combination of both options. Again, the views of members were sought, providing an indicative opinion that:

6 (six) members supported the summer/winter proposal; 17 (seventeen) members preferred to maintain the same arrangements throughout the year.*

*Abstentions not counted.

4. Planning Report: Fran Smith reported on 2 planning issues, as follows:-

At 69 Highlands Road: 5 dwellings proposed to a site currently containing one large detached house plus garage. Refused by MVDC, gone to Appeal.

At Kingston House Gardens: An Application to plant trees - within the site has been submitted. An earlier one for planting on the frontage was refused (assumed to be due to highways issues). Andi Ryan asked if FS could find out more information as to where exactly it is now proposed to plant these trees. FS agreed to so and to report back.

In addition, a question was raised from the floor by Tony Russell regarding parking provision at Fountain House, Cleeve Road. Fran Smith confirmed that this had reverted back to the original application, (with no extra houses) which had already been granted.

5. Forward Planning : Martyn Williams provided a report in 2 parts: the Transform Leatherhead process and the Draft Local Plan.

For Transform Leatherhead, MVDC had reported that a new development partner had been identified for the Claire/James House site and, for the Bull Hill/Swan Centre site, MV had compiled a shortlist of potential development partners.

For the Draft Local Plan, the LRA had already lodged a statement of representation, but individuals were also encouraged to make representations by the deadline of Sunday 7th November 2021. Such representations would not lead to the alteration of the Draft, but would be included in the package of information submitted to the Inspector. General discussion from the floor ensued regarding the content of such representation and MW confirmed that website guidance was available but also emphasised that comment should be based on actual policies rather than personal or emotional 'opinion'.

6. AOB / Matters arising : The Chairman stated that small, low-key Games sessions were being arranged in the Swan Centre in the run up to Christmas, with proceeds going towards a Leatherhead Summer Music Festival.

From the floor, it was additionally stated that the Mansion House gardens and particularly the pond at the bottom of the hill had been noted as being in a very poor condition. A request was made that this should be taken up with MVDC. MW to investigate and report.

Again from the floor, the existence of a small, surface car park in what appeared to be the garden of a house in Poplar Road was queried. Agreed MW to investigate the background and report.

7. Speaker : Pat Smith from the Dorking Climate Emergency Group had been resident in the Climate Hub on Leatherhead High Street for the past nine weeks and came to give a talk on how we, as ordinary citizens, can make modest changes to the way we live our lives such that we can help reduce the effects of climate change.

In advance of her departure to the COP26 summit in Glasgow at the end of the week, Pat gave an excellent presentation, supported by a comprehensive slideshow, with a number of key messages including:

How Surrey was in the top-3 UK counties with the highest level of CO2 emissions and

How cars / power / the services industry / aviation and poorly insulated homes were the prime emission sources. Could we cycle more or change to a less polluting method of heating (eg air/ground source heat pump?)

Cruising and Flying are heavy polluters – can you travel by coach or train?

However, we were encouraged to think of the future as an opportunity to change for the better, plus to also remember that buying local helps! Consumption of products from abroad involves transport and hence emissions.

Booklets were made available to members at the end of the meeting, with particular emphasis given to “Six Shocking Truths (what Advertisers will never tell you about how your money is wrecking the world)”.

A vote of thanks was given to Pat Smith by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.