

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE LRA MEETING HELD  
on MONDAY, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 7.30 PM AT LETHERHEAD INSTITUTE**

**Present:** Caroline Brown\* (CB) (Chairman), Hubert Carr\*(HC) (Vice Chairman), Susan Leveritt (SL) (Secretary), Cheryl Allen\* (CA), Louise Herrity\* (LH), Hilary Porter (HP), Fran Smith\* (FS), Martyn Williams\* (MW), Ian Seifert, Ann Cardew, Ray Brown, Irene Seifert, John & Pam Wilson, Bridget Carr, Evelyn Wightman, Celia & Alan Thornhill, Headley Kay, Frank Lynes, Percy Hawkins, Carol Thrift, Elizabeth Millross, Chris Evans, Judy Harris, John & Audrey Cleeve, Bill & Gill Whitman, Margaret Ludford, Sheila Baddeley, Bob & JP Lines, Geoffrey West, Jenny Christie, Stan Maiden, E Walton, K Walton, Jill West, Joseph R Hankins, Dave Sinclair, Tim Jones, Jill Rose, Pam Chouls, Emma Cussell, Alexander Norman, Katherine Decker, Fred Meynen, Simon Ritchie, Graham Pountney.                      \* = Director

**In Attendance:** Surrey County Councillor Tim Hall, Cllr Metin Huseyin, guest speaker Colin Mills, Marketing Consultant MV.      53 Attended.

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies:</b> David Woodhead, Peter & Ann Mayor, Maarten Velzeboer, Paula Sabine, Cllr. Rosemary Dickson & Cllr Joe Crome	
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of the Open Meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017:</b> The Minutes were approved with no changes	
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters Arising:</b> There were no matters arising.	
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Chairman’s Report:</b> The Chairman reported on the ongoing consultations on hospital services in the area and the part Epsom Hospital might play in the future. Epsom &amp; St Helier NHS Trust CEO Daniel Elkeles has now been booked to speak to us on 6<sup>th</sup> October at the Letherhead Institute. Elkeles apparently favours building a new acute hospital in Sutton. MP Chris Grayling, however, feels Epsom Hospital services should be maintained and even perhaps increased, possibly with a split from St Helier. (See link on this website to a booklet on the subject).</p> <p>We were reminded of the River Mole Discovery Day on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September from 12 - 4pm.</p> <p>Important road closures announced are: Church St (and thus High Street) closure now for 6 weeks AND Town Bridge (thus Bridge Street) 6 weeks from 18 Sept AND Resurfacing of By-Pass Road near Plough roundabout</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Online</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>All attending</b></p>

**5 Reports from Committees:**

**Planning.** ([Full Report Online](#)) FS reported her correspondence on three applications, (1268,1354 and 1328). It was noted 1328 is a resubmission on Grantham House in North Street where the criticism of the previous application had led to its withdrawal. FS is in dialogue with one of the occupiers.

FS reported on decisions including the approval of the conversion of the offices of Buchanan & Curwen to flats. Jill Rose commented that the conversion of offices to flats will mean less lunchtime business for Leatherhead, and Roy Allen asked about parking for all these flats. A response was that there is generally one parking space per flat.

Susan Leveritt noted the increasing percentage of total homes represented by flats - up from 30% to 40% to a current (as estimated by FS) 50% .She regretted that this trend is converting Leatherhead into a “dormitory town”. FS reported on the various applications lodged since the last meeting, including that on Grantham House.

**Forward Planning Group.** ([Full Report Online](#)) MW commented reference the planning report that only having one parking space per flat may not be regarded as so inadequate by younger occupiers, who are not so “car-centric” as more older occupiers.

**Local Plan (labelled “Future MV”)** -following the views expressed at the last meeting the LRA submission was finalised and submitted by the due date. Apart from responses to the specific questions the submission argues that more residential development needs to take place in the south of the District, including very modest additions to a number of villages, a bigger expansion of one or two other villages and the creation of a new settlement. The easy option of cramming more and more into Leatherhead/Ashted/Bookham/Fetcham cannot continue without spoiling the ambience that makes them such popular locations.

**Transform Leatherhead,-** the next public meeting will be held in the Leatherhead Theatre on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November at 7pm. The Community Reference Group (CRG) will meet the week before.

Work on formulating improvements to the Swan Centre continues and the first improvements will be new lifts

	<p>which are likely to be installed during the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2018.</p> <p>Approval for a budget for consultants' fees in respect of drawing up development proposals for Claire and James House will be sought at the end of the month. Colin Mills confirmed the intention is flats on the upper floors and some form of café offer on the ground floor.</p> <p>Discussions on the form of development on Bull Hill and the commissioning of a transport study continue.</p> <p>SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT-The proposed cycle path on Randalls Road proceeds to the LEP for finance on 8/9/17.</p> <p>A member asked whether it is still proposed to construct a pedestrian bridge from the football ground to the Minchin Close area, crossing the river via one of the islands.CM confirmed that this is still a possibility.</p> <p>Concern was expressed that the town's features are ASSETS which should be modified only very carefully and no firm answer was given to this scheme.</p>	
6	<p><b>Guest Speaker, Colin Mills, MV Marketing Consultant, on Transform Leatherhead</b> - due to absence of Cllr Simon Edge. In the Q/A session that followed, Colin was assisted by Metin Huseyin, Councillor for Bookham but who lives and works in Leatherhead. Colin Mills also lives in Leatherhead. See notes on presentation.</p>	
7	<p><b>Any Other Business: Tim Jones</b> who took over dealing with the Leach Grove Wood Village Green appeal from Flip Cargill, spoke on the current situation, notably regarding the appeal hearing which is set to take place this October.</p>	
8	<p><b>Next LRA Meeting will be on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November in the Letherhead Institute at 7.30pm (note that there is no Open Meeting in October)</b>  <b><u>(The meeting on the future for our Hospitals will be on 6th October in the Letherhead Institute at 7.30)</u></b></p>	

### Notes on the Presentation

1 Colin Mills(CM)(MV Marketing Consultant) started by saying that he is speaking on behalf of Cllr Edge who, unfortunately, could not be present as had been planned. He said that Cllr Edge had recently been appointed to head up the TL project and

that he was passionate about making sure that it succeeds. Colin introduced Metin Huseyin, (MH), Councillor for Bookham North, who was present as an elected representative of MV. CM made the point that both councillors live in or very near Leatherhead. Attending member Roy Allen pointed out that none of the 5 Councillors representing Leatherhead was present, although apologies had been received for Cllrs. Dickson and Crome. MH suggested that if that is regarded as unsatisfactory then the matter should be raised with those Councillors.

2 CM started by saying that TL was required because Leatherhead town only receives some 6% of the annual sales generated by the area, the rest being spent in surrounding competing centres. Even the 13,500 people employed in Springfield Drive Business Park don't come into Leatherhead in sufficient numbers, many preferring to go to Cobham via the shuttle-bus provided for them.

3 CM then made the point that all TL proposals had to meet three criteria, demonstrated on a Venn diagram. They had to bring community benefits to the town, include positive change and bring economic benefit with financial viability. MH emphasized that financial viability was essential as Mole Valley now derives very little income from council tax and business rates, yet still manages to balance its budget based on the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest Council Tax in Surrey. Hubert Carr and Cheryl Allen commented that one of the casualties of the balanced budget is that highway/road congestion (considered to be urgent 20 years ago), still had not been addressed. CM noted that, to a certain extent, the Town's traffic problems are not just a result of the Town's own traffic but also a result of traffic passing through.

4-One member noted that MV seemed to be borrowing money to invest in commercial property well outside the area so why could this money not be spent in the town. MH responded that this investment was designed to produce a welcome addition to MV's income, based on the difference between the cost of finance and the investment return. The borrowing is only allowed if the investment meets strict criteria that require that the purchase provides secure long-term income. This does not preclude investing in the town and indeed two investments have recently been considered. But investment must meet the required criteria.

5. CM noted that TL is adding 4 new retail units to the Swan Centre, and would like to hear what tenants residents would like to occupy them.

6. CM noted that at Claire & James House, the residential portion will be the most profitable element, but the ground floor will have some sort of leisure/restaurant use. Bull Hill will be a £200m project, and there is plenty of interest from investors and businesses.

7. Headley Kay, long-time local resident and musician, said Leatherhead was a great town, the crossroads of Surrey, equidistant from Heathrow and Gatwick, well connected to London, ancient and full of character - it must be protected from drastic change.

8. Roy Allen acknowledged that fixing Leatherhead was a complex and difficult job and expressed appreciation for the efforts of the TL team, particularly the speakers who have real business experience and who live in Leatherhead. The remaining attendees confirmed with applause their agreement with the comments made.