



DRAFT

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of LEATHERHEAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**Held on Monday 4 October 2021 at 7.30 pm at the
Leatherhead Methodist Church, Church Road, Leatherhead**

Present: Caroline Brown*, Chairman; Hubert Carr*, Irene Seifert, Minuting Secretary; Louise Herrity*; Martyn Williams*; Ian Seifert; Hilary Porter; Paula Sabine* and Nigel Sabine, Fred Meynen, John & Audrey Cleeve, David Woodhead, Geoffrey West, John & Pam Wilson, Pat Harris, Percy Hawkins, Ray Brown, Tony Russell, Rosemary Dickson, Anna Graham, Nathan Andrews, Sara Kane, Andy Byrne, Helen Tribe, Carol Webster, Steve Day, Bridget Carr, Gillian and William Whiteman, Terry Richards, Jane Pratt, Diana Carr, Maureen Conrad, Kathy Grigson, Jean and Garry Cooksley, Jenny Day.

*Denotes Director

In Attendance Cllr Tim Hall; Cllr Simon Moss, Cllr. Emma Norman
(Total Attending 42)

AGENDA

1. **Apologies** – Mr & Mrs Shaw, Mr & Mrs Navin Mehta, Rory and Andi Ryan, Lesley Pearce, Paul Sutherland-Waite, Fran Smith, Keira Vyvian-Robinson .
2. **Minutes of last AGM held on Monday 5th October 2020**
Agreed.
3. **Matters Arising**
None.
4. **Re-election of Directors**
Not applicable this year.
5. **Accounts: Year Ending December 2020 (report on line)**
The Treasurers Report and Accounts have been approved by the Board and filed .However Martyn Williams made the following comments for the information of members. .On the Profit and Loss income was very similar to 2019 ,albeit from different sources as projects income was very significantly lower ,but donations very much higher .Expenditure was significantly lower due to the reduction in project costs and the lower costs of hiring meeting rooms . Hence the surplus was over double that for 2019. This surplus resulted in an improvement to the Balance Sheet from Members Funds of approx. £5,500 to approx. £8,000 . A question was raised about why membership cards are not still issued .The response was that the LRA is attempting to maximise the execution of membership functions by on-line means which membership cards are incompatible with.Also it had been noted that no other local associations still issue membership cards.

6. **Chairman's Report** (report online)

The Chairman introduced her report with a statement that she and other directors who have been on the LRA Board for many years would like to step down next April. New volunteers are sought and she will elaborate on this topic later in her report.

Summary of Activities:

- a. LRA activities had been constrained over the year by the pandemic.
- b. Donations from the Cheryl Allen Memorial Fund had been made to "The Meeting Room ", "The Leatherhead Revival Theatre Trust" and to "Leatherhead Start "
- c. Numerous responses had been received from members on the future of " Local Green Spaces " and as regards the Development Sites included in the draft Local Plan 2020.
- d. The "on demand" bus service from West Leatherhead has started thanks to the efforts of Pam Wilson and Tim Hall.
- e. Tim Dunsford and Val have offered to plant and weed the planters outside Nat West Bank and Percy will water them. Tim has also volunteered to assist improving the LRA's membership records
- f. Ward boundaries are being discussed which may affect the number of councillors in each ward.
- g. Transform Leatherhead is choosing development partners for the Swan Centre & Bull Hill.
- h. The North Leatherhead Community Centre has received a 25-year lease extension which will enable it to plan for the future.

New Volunteers. The Chairman repeated her appeal for new volunteers. The LRA will need a new Chairman, a Company Secretary and ideally a planning officer , together with other volunteers to get involved with enjoyable activities such as the environment and biodiversity; social events like Race Night and Open Gardens; planning; speakers for our meetings etc. Support and induction will be available for all those who step forward. Members are encouraged to consider if they can contribute and to get in touch to discuss or find out more. Hilary Porter was nominated by Bridget Carr and Hilary offered her service for one year ,which the Chairman undertook to consider.

7-AOB

The Chairman asked if there were any other matters to be discussed. There were none.

The Chairman then announced the end of the formal AGM proceedings and introduced Martyn Williams who would conduct a discussion on the latest Draft Local Plan

MVDC Draft Local Plan 2020 – 2037.

Martyn Williams explained that the draft Plan covers many aspects of life in the District but he intended to concentrate **on what he believed concerned members most:** the residential developments proposed for Leatherhead.

The proposed supply numbers throughout the District are 20% less than the first draft of the Plan, justified by the high proportion of Green Belt **land in the district.** MVDC think this is justifiable, **but MW cautioned** that it is possible that the Planning Inspector may not accept this **argument.**

In Leatherhead all the Green-belt sites have been dropped and 9 sites (**some from the last draft and some new ones**) now provide some 969 units compared with the last draft that provided 1575 units on 10 sites .However only about 10% of the 969 will be houses, the rest being flats- some at very high densities e.g. the Swan Centre with 150.

In addition there will be another approx. 830 units built on “windfall” sites or on the “densification of “development opportunity areas.” Many of the latter can **also** be expected to be flats.

Once again Leatherhead appears to be bearing the brunt of the **District's** new supply, being allocated 30%, c.f. Dorking at 24%, Ashted at 12% and Bookham at only 7%.

The plan does acknowledge that the increases in population will require improvements in infrastructure and services

Representations will not result in changes to the Draft by MVDC

~~MVDC will not change the Plan~~ but valid representations will be sent to the Inspector with the draft ~~Plan~~. Representations should be sent to MVDC Planning, by 7 November. There is information on MVDC's web-site as to what are valid representations and how to make them. Members were encouraged to submit their views in addition to any representation made by the LRA itself.

Members made the following points:

- a. The Fairfield Centre at the Swan Centre should not be moved. **as it is a valuable resource in the town and its present location makes it readily accessible.**
- b. The retention of the allotments should be supported
- c. The height of the new blocks of flats in Leatherhead ~~town~~ was of concern e.g., the Swan centre is proposed to have 150 flats **which can only be achieved by building very high.**
- d. Leatherhead hospital must retain its vital health **functions**, with housing built only on surplus land
- e. The plan mentions the need for new infrastructure **and services**, but is very unspecific as to what and when
- f. The town already has too many flats and the draft Plan exacerbates this, **although Cllr. Norman argued that flats will provide dwellings at the more affordable end of the price spectrum.**
- g. The proposed flats **are likely to** have little parking provision, **on the currently false assumption that their occupants have no or few cars.**
- h. It was noted that **the plan requires that** 40% of housing will **be required to** be affordable.
- i. **The majority would prefer that Surrey Police proceed with their new HQ in the town, rather than the relocation fall through and the site be used for housing.**
- j. **Leatherhead is bearing a disproportionate amount of the housing supply.**
- k. There is a move toward home working, and flats do not suit this trend
- l. Rather than keep expanding existing towns/villages it would be better to create a new town, with the associated infrastructure.

MW reiterated his advice to members to make their own representations following the guidance provided on the MVDC web-site and then the discussion ended.

Date of Next Open meeting is Monday 1st November