



In the Chair: Councillor Karen Dunleavy, Romsey Town Mayor

**ATTENDANCE:**

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P Councillor D. Baverstock	P Councillor N. Gwynne
A Councillor J. Cairney	P Councillor S. Lamb
P Councillor M. Cooper	A Councillor J. Parker
A Councillor J. Critchley	P Councillor J. Ray
A Councillor I. Culley	- Councillor M. Southey
P Councillor N. Daas	A Councillor C. Wise
P Councillor J. Burnage	P Councillor S. Wilkinson

Clerk. Judith Giles

Members of Public: 17

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr. J. Cairney, Cllr. J. Critchley, Cllr. I. Culley, Cllr. J. Parker,  
Cllr. C. Wise

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None

**3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 16<sup>TH</sup> April 2019 were agreed and signed as a true record

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. J. Burnage

**SECONDED:** Cllr. M. Cooper

**CARRIED**

**Matter Arising:-**

None

**4. ANNUAL REPORT**

**The Annual Report was received from the outgoing Mayor, Councillor K. Dunleavy and the Chief Officer, Judith Giles**

**Chief Officer Report from Judith Giles**

In view of COVID-19 restrictions an Annual Parish Meeting has not been held since April 2019. All Council meetings were held virtually. The Town Hall was completely closed in full lockdown periods and staff worked from home. Civic events did not take place as well as all Christmas Events, Antiques Fair, Markets etc. Covid guidelines were followed throughout this difficult time and the Town Hall is now open and staff back working in the office. Town Hall income was hit throughout this



period, but government grants have helped. Bookings are now good, in particular wedding ceremonies. The filmshows are back although still with reduced numbers. In 2021 a new lift was installed which has made a great difference to the hiring of the Council Chamber. Heather Stevens, Mayor's Secretary/Administrator retired in March 2022 and has been replaced by Nicqui Chatterley. Lisa Mortimer, Town & Tourism Officer left in March 2022. This role is currently being advertised as a full time position. The Piazza in the Market Place is proving to be very popular with café/bars having tables outside giving a continental atmosphere, The market is also popular on the Piazza which now includes a Romsey Makers Market every Sunday. It is hoped all town events are able to take place again in 2022.

#### **Mayor's Report from Cllr. Karen Dunleavy**

In view of the Covid restrictions in place the Council did not meet in person from March 2020 until May 2021. During this time all our meetings were held virtually chaired by the then Chair and Mayor of Romsey Town Council, Cllr Janet Burnage. Since May 2021 we have held all our meetings face to face in line with government guidelines. These meetings include: Full Council, Town and Buildings, Finance and Resources and Planning. Planning is now held jointly with Romsey Extra Parish Council and is working well.

The staff at the Town Hall have returned to working in the Town Hall after a year of working from home and have as always worked tirelessly for the good of the Council.

We have, at long last, had the lift installed in the Town Hall. I have found this a great asset and I know many others have as well. Having a lift installed has opened up the Council Chamber to use by a wider variety of groups and therefore better serves the town.

As Chair and Mayor, I have attended many events in the town representing the Council, including the Songs of Praise in the Market Place just after restrictions were lifted. It was wonderful to be back in the company of fellow Romsonians singing in the Market Place. Unfortunately, the Christmas Carol singing in the Market Place had to be cancelled due to Covid and I look forward to December 2022 being Covid free and able to meet as in years past.

I hand over the Chair of the Council on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and wish my Deputy, Cllr Neil Gwynne, all good wishes for his turn as Chair of Romsey Town Council for 2022-23

#### **5. AUDITED STATEMENT**

The Audited statement of accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 was approved.  
(Appendix 1)

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. M. Cooper

**SECONDED:** J. Ray

**CARRIED**

#### **6. FINANCES TO 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2021**

The accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 were approved (See Appendix 2)

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. J. Burnage

**SECONDED:** Cllr. N. Gwynne

**CARRIED**



## **7. MAYOR'S CHARITY**

Mayor's Charity Account was received. Total Funds as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 is currently £1,811.30.

## **8. COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

### **Cllr. Mark Cooper, County Councillor for Romsey Division Report 2019-2020, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 to Romsey Town Council**

The last Romsey Town Council Annual Parish Meeting was in April 2019 which reported on the year 2018 to 2019. The various lockdowns and cessation of meetings in public from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 onward meant no APM's in 2020 and 2021. This report, therefore, represents three council years. The first few weeks of 2020's lockdown were very quiet but by the summer my daily casework load was back to full volume and meetings of the Council were reinstated but only on Teams. On 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 Government legislation forced us to return to 'live' meetings. Councillor attendance at Teams meetings was very high; at the same time there was no travel involved. When one bears in mind that there are 78 County Councillors and also the large size of Hampshire the carbon footprint of meeting attendance in Winchester is considerable. Whilst I prefer live meetings and the face to face, (apparently now referred to as f2f), interaction involved, it does seem a retrograde step by the government to force all committee meetings at County, Borough and Town to be live. If we are to meet sustainability targets and 'carbon net zero' we need to move to a hybrid way of working; this is already happening with many businesses and professions. Why not Local Government as well. At least the many briefings councillors receive and informal panel meetings are now held on Teams.

**1 The County Council** In 2022 Hampshire County Council absorbs 74% of Romsey residents' Council Taxes. HCC's remit includes Adult Services; Children's Services; Property Services - there are 7,000 HCC buildings including schools, libraries, discovery centres and social care centres; Culture and Heritage Services such as Archives, three Arts Centres and 13 museums; Countryside, with 87 sites covering 4,000 hectares, including seven country parks, five national nature reserves, 14 scheduled ancient monuments, 34 SSSI's, five outdoor activity centres and the River Hamble. Hampshire is the highways, traffic and transport authority, whilst economic development and waste planning is also covered. The County is the waste disposal authority and owns 26 Household Waste Recycling Sites of which Bunny Lane, near Romsey, is one.

The last County Council elections were on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Romsey Town Division residents re-elected me to a fifth term on the County Council with 53% of the vote. Turn-out was 45% which was slightly higher than in 2017.

There's no better place on the planet than Romsey to represent at Hampshire County Council.

The boundary of the County Division is not coterminous with the three Test Valley Borough Council Romsey Wards. At present, the Town Council Wards do not match either. This is something Test Valley will try to sort out in the coming year. Suffice it to



say that the Romsey Town County Division coincides with the built up area of Romsey except the Abbotswood and Five Elms estates which are in the Romsey Rural County Division and the Parish of Romsey Extra.

My County colleagues voted me back on to the Regulatory Committee, which is the county's planning committee, very much my area of specialisation. Planning site visits are relatively common and over the last 17 years I've got to know some interesting and remote corners of Hampshire. The most recent site visit was to the Alton Incinerator site. County Councillors refused the application, 12 - 3, against officer advice. I remain Group spokesperson on Regulatory. I also continue to serve on the River Hamble Harbour Authority Management Committee which reflects my continuing interest in all matters maritime.

When the County Council's Annual Meeting took place Covid restrictions were still prevalent and we were required to sit at 2 metre intervals to minimise infection spread. As the County has 78 members that is not easy to achieve; the meeting took place at the Ageas Bowl - and, yes, we were all sat at 2 metre intervals. It was like being in the main hall at school sitting 'O' levels.

**2 The Market Place Enhancement** Through 2019 and 2021 I have served on the **Romsey Town Centre Enhancement Project Board**. This was a small Councillor and Officer group who designed and enabled the improvements in Bell Street, Church Street and the Market Place. Back in 1999 and 2000 I had campaigned for a Market Place Enhancement but the County withdrew the funding because of local opposition. This time a more enlightened County aided by Section 106 developer funding, pressed on with the enhancements despite a small but vociferous opposition who wanted to keep the Market Place as a roundabout for cars. I strongly supported the design, layout and colour palette and was especially keen to ensure the paved part of the Market Place was in full sunlight whilst the buff coloured running surface is redolent of the Hampshire rural roads I remember from the 1950's. I am pleased to say that I am frequently buttonholed by residents who have told me how much they are enjoying the new piazza. I am reminded of a Town Council meeting in 1986 or '87. We were discussing paving the Cornmarket. I opined how good it would be to have continental cafe tables and chairs in the open air here, in Romsey, 'just like being in France.' A voice from the public gallery scowled, "This ain't France, Councillor!"

**3 Pedestrianising The Hundred** In the Spring of 2020 the Town Centre Manager and I asked Hampshire County Council to make it easier for people to socially distance in Romsey Town centre by putting in place a temporary closure of The Hundred. The County Council responded, eventually, by installing temporary barriers.

The temporary closure proved popular with many Romsey residents and the ambience of the Town Centre was improved. However, the impact on the lives of residents living to the west of the town and in Cherville Street, Greatbridge Road and especially in Portersbridge Street was detrimental. I was in regular contact with County officers to try and seek a solution and a local developer told me he would finance a method to close The Hundred between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. However, the County took the view that even temporary daytime closure was not viable as it would require staff on site to open and close the barriers seven days a week.



I have now made the case that the vehicle running lane through the central part of The Hundred, east of Boots, needs to be made narrower to allow a wider and more comfortable space for pedestrians and the whole surface levelled using similar materials as were used in the Market Place. I think I'm pushing at an open door but the issue may be funding. Either way it is important that the Market Place and the potential new developments that are part of Romsey Future's 'South of the Town Centre' project are linked by an attractive 'corridor' which encourages pedestrians to move freely between the two areas. Additionally, I have met with the Romsey and District Society which is also concerned that The Hundred should be upgraded and made more pedestrian friendly.

**4 Grants to local organisations** County Councillors have a Devolved Grant Budget which is normally £8,000 a year. This provides seed-corn funding for small local charities and organisations. Applicants need to let me know whether I approve of the grant bids in principle and then apply on the County website; each set of forms is emailed to me before I decide whether or not to offer a grant. The scheme has been running since 2012 and over that time I have awarded 121 grants in total. Some of the grants awarded in the last three Council years include:-

- 1 Romsey Abbey Primary Sch. Funding to assist PTA install a large climbing frame.  
Paid June 2019 £1,000
- 2 Romsey Storytelling Festival. Paid June 2019  
£450
- 3 Romsey War Memorial Archive Exhibition costs. Paid June 2019  
£250
- 4 Youth in Romsey Music Festival. Funding youth participation in the Beggars' Fair.  
Paid July 2019 £750
- 5 Romsey Roses Back to Netball funding kit, equipment and insurance. Paid July 2019  
£500
- 6 Romsey Town Council Christmas Lights; replacement lamps and wiring. Paid August  
2019 £1,000
- 7 Romsey Abbey Primary School. Drawing Workshop Paid Sep 2019  
£250
- 8 Prescription Art Test Valley. Funding charity's courses and materials. Paid Oct 2019  
£500
- 9 Youth in Romsey. Charity craft and activity resources. Paid November 2019  
£800
- 10 Hampshire Youth Parliament funding via Dmitrijs Meiksans MYP. Paid January 2020  
£250
- 11 Friends of Romsey War Memorial Park 100th anniversary celebration. Paid Jan 2020  
£500
- 12 Romsey Festival. Funding contribution to the 12th Festival Brochure Paid Feb 2020  
£900
- 13 Romsey Chamber Music Festival. Charity costs to put on music concerts in Romsey.  
Paid Feb 2020 £400
- 14 Romsey ScrubHub. Materials for 224 volunteers making masks and scrubs for care  
homes. Paid Apr 2020 £500

**MINUTES**  
**ROMSEY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, ROMSEY**



6

- 15 MHA Test Valley Live at Home. A charity which supports the elderly in their own homes. Paid April 2020 £500
- 16 Romsey ScrubHub. Material for aprons for staff at the Leonard Cheshire Home, Romsey. Paid August 2020 £250
- 17 Romsey Town Youth Football Club Equipment. Paid Aug 2020 £400
- 18 FareShare Southern Central. This is a food redistribution charity; Paid Oct 2020 £1000
- 19 Prescription Art Test Valley Singing Courses, Oct £500
- 20 Youth in Romsey Club resources. Paid Oct 2020 £800
- 21 Youth in Romsey; furnishing of new counselling space Paid October 2020 £708
- 22 Prescription Art Test Valley, a charity support group for patients referred by local GPs . Paid Oct 2020 £750
- 23 Romsey Town Council. Romsey Christmas Lights. Renewal of lighting sets etc paid Nov 2020 £1000
- 24 Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership. Railway Station House. Legal and survey costs 2021 £1000
- 25 Greenbuttercup CIC Independent Living and Well Being workshops mainly for dementia. Paid Jan 2021 £650
- 26 Emergency Funding co-ordinated by Community First for Hampshire's vulnerable children/families 2021. £2000
- 27 Unity. Contribution to the Test Valley Covid Helpline. Paid Jan 2021 £500
- 28 Romsey Opportunity Group. Repair of playground equipment. Paid Feb 2021 £400
- 29 Romsey Town Council Romsey Christmas lights £1000
- 30 Youth in Romsey Counselling for Young People £2000
- 31 Artful Collective CIC Drawing Workshops in Romsey Abbey £250
- 32 Romsey Young Carers 2021 Christmas Appeal £500
- 33 Romsey Carnival 100s in The Hundred £500
- 34 Romsey Opportunity Group Makaton Sign Language Training £500
- 35 Romsey Chamber Music Festival 2021 paid August 2021 £500
- 36 Romsey Opportunity Group Playground repairs paid February 2022 £1500



### **5 Romsey's Causeway & Flood Alleviation**

After a long closure in 2020 the Causeway reopened with a new bridge installed. The bridge is part of Romsey's flood alleviation scheme and will allow water stored on the flood plain to the west to re-enter the River Test. The scheme, which has been overseen by the Environment Agency, cost £6.2 million in total with £1.49 million from Hampshire County Council, which is the flood authority for the area, £325,000 from TVBC and £1.15 million from the Southern Region Flood and Coastal Committee and the rest from central Government. The work included field bunds to the west of the town and drainage works in Middlebridge Street. The permanent flood alleviation scheme follows the severe flooding in Romsey in 2013-2014 when 186 properties and businesses were inundated. A formal opening of the Flood Alleviation Scheme is scheduled for 8th July 2022.

**6 Parking Permits up from £15 to £50 a year** A bad news story, I'm afraid. The administration of on-street Residents' Parking Permits has been taken back by Hampshire County Council (HCC) as from April 2020 which in turn has handed over the day-to-day administration to 'MiPermits'. £15 per household under Test Valley, the permit has increased to £50 a year under HCC. Existing permit holders had staged price increases year on year. The permits are now electronic only and the number of visits allowed by the Visitor Permit is only 100 in a year. On-street Parking Enforcement in Romsey has also been taken back by HCC which is employing a contractor, NSL, to do the enforcement. I believe the permit fee increase is most unfortunate. However, I've had very few complaints and when I do get them I contact the very helpful HCC Parking Enforcement Manager.

The need to make the Parking Permit Scheme entirely self-funding is caused by the Government continuously reducing grants to HCC amounting to £685 million over the last few years. It also explains why there are now parking charges at Hampshire's Country Parks, such that the Parks Service is now self-funded. There's another £80 million of funding cuts in the coming year. When I first became a Councillor it was relatively straightforward to achieve projects and improvements. Now every ounce of one's skill is used in trying to get Council to take action or to find cash from the Community Infrastructure Levy to fund schemes needed by the town.

**7 Botley Road Refuge** The new pedestrian refuge on Botley Road was completed and delivered in May 2020. Residents from both Romsey's Leonard Cheshire Home at Fryer's House and the residents at Hillier Court had approached me to see if a safe crossing could be created. I would have preferred a Puffin Crossing with traffic lights such as the one that was installed in Duttons Road relatively recently but the pedestrian/vehicle ratio did not justify it. Residents made an excellent case to me and Test Valley was persuaded to use funds from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), amounting to £35,000, to get a refuge delivered. The refuge is wide enough to allow wheelchair users to wait in the centre. Traffic in Botley Road is still travelling too fast and I've asked the Traffic Police to keep a watching brief on speeding. However, Hampshire Constabulary in Test Valley, who don't have any equipment to catch speeders, tell me that the Traffic Police have been told to focus on Motorways and trunk roads rather than town and residential streets.



**8 Speeding** One of the most frequent complaints I receive relate to speeding vehicles. Cupernham Lane, Botley Road and Fishlake Meadows are the most commonly mentioned. Yet again Hampshire Constabulary says it hasn't the equipment to enforce the speed limits. I do keep on at the police to be more proactive. The Town Council has access to speed limit reminder signs. However, the signs that show a vehicle's actual speed are more effective and I am happy to purchase additional signs using my Councillor's Devolved Grant. The problem, at present, is the lack of a qualified individual to install the signs and then move them to alternative locations on a regular basis. The police tell me that speed limit adherence is better when the roads are busy. This is because one in ten motorists adhere to the speed limit, forcing other traffic to convoy behind them.

**9 Hampshire's pot holes** The lack of funding in Hampshire is strongly evidenced by the condition of our roads and pavements. Hampshire has more pot holes than any other county except Kent. Last year alone there were 28,825 highway defects reported on Hampshire's 5,500 mile long road network. Please report highway defects online on the Hampshire website <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance>

I have to use this route to report in casework but I would also encourage Town Councillors and the public to report to the website themselves. Rather like reporting to the police on 101, the more reports there are the more the issue rises up the priority list. Please give a precise location on the website's map and a description of the depth and size of the pot hole. If there's a genuine danger to cyclists and motorcyclists that tends to elicit a faster response from the County's contractors. The recent situation west of the Sun Arch is a case in point. It took numerous complaints and emails which resulted in a temporary repair which lasted no more than a few hours. Many more emails were needed to get a permanent repair installed.

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MGC 10 04 2022

## **Borough Councillor for Tadburn Ward Report 2019-2022 to Romsey**

**Town Council** There's quite a lot of overlap between borough and County on such matters as Whitenap, Town Centre enhancements and flooding. I will focus on a couple of issues.

**1 Whitenap 2007-2022: Battling on** Since 2019 the Ashfield Partnership has had a number of meetings with TVBC Planning officers and County Council Highways officers. Progress gets reported back to the Romsey Future members' panel. This consists of the six Romsey Ward members chaired by TVBC's deputy leader, Cllr Nick Adams-King.

The Whitenap site, to the south of Romsey between the railway and Beggarspath Wood, was first put forward by the landowner in 2007. Test Valley Borough Council then allocated 1,600 houses to the site. The insistence of central Government that we must provide a huge number of housing sites across Test Valley and the insistence of TVBC



that the development must be attached to the existing towns of Romsey and Andover has had very real consequences for Romsey. Councillors must be constantly vigilant to retain our 'small market town' character. Test Valley is currently reviewing the next iteration of the BLP and it is likely that future housing numbers will be more manageable and not all dumped on Romsey.

You will recall that sheer scale of Whitenap, following so soon after Abbotswood, produced huge opposition especially from those most affected in the Tadburn Road area. Over the years my Romsey Councillor colleagues and I have fought the size of housing allocations forced on to the town. Gradually concessions to local Romsey opinion were made. The most significant changes were firstly a reduction of the housing numbers from 1,600 to 1,500 and then to 1,300 in the 2016 Borough Local Plan; secondly, and most importantly, the creation of a new park which is, effectively an extension of the Whitenap Playspace on Botley Road southwards and westwards in order to both protect and benefit existing residents appeared, clearly defined in the 2016 BLP. Thirdly, the creation of a cycleway and pedestrian path over the railway and on into the town centre with no vehicle access via Tadburn Road was also in the BLP.

To their credit both the County and the Borough are holding out for open space south of Tadburn Road with the new Primary school at the northern end. Some residents who back on to the site would prefer to have a school field behind their houses rather than a park as some degree of security is retained. Having lived alongside the Mountbatten School site for nearly 40 years I can certainly vouch for that point of view. The planning authorities are adamant that the Borough Local Plan's insistence of a footpath and cycleway bridge over the railway giving quick access onto the town will be adhered to. It also seems that the site capacity will be down to 1,100... that's still a huge number but better than the 1,600 we started with.

The most recent information we have received is that an outline planning application will be submitted to Test Valley Borough Council at the end of April.

**2 Brewery Site Dereliction** That Romsey's Brewery Site remains undeveloped is a disgrace. The 2006 planning permission for 211 dwellings has only been partly enacted by Stanborough Developments which has owned the site since 1989. The occupants of the flats and houses which have been completed have every right to be angry at the lack of progress. A few dwellings at the northern end of the site are completed. But once development starts there is no straightforward way to enforce completion. And once a permission is issued it cannot be withdrawn. The law is stacked in favour of the developer.

Over the years I have proposed formal motions at TVBC to seek a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) on the land, of itself a very expensive legal process; Councils have to pay market value which is now in the region of £15 million to £20 million because of the existing, partly implemented planning permission. Contrast that with Stanborough Development's purchase cost of £1.1 million in 1989.

Some time ago the Borough's planning consultants (the £28,000 cost was funded by two Government grants of £14,000) were asked to seek ways to bring about the site's



completion. They failed to achieve any significant progress. **Test Valley needs to proceed with a Compulsory Purchase Order.**

**3 Romsey Bandstand** One of the pleasures of a Romsey summer Sunday afternoon is listen to one of the local bands perform on the War Memorial Park Bandstand. The Bandstand Trust was set up by a council colleague, Jack Kemish, and me in 2001. Cast in Glasgow from Victorian mouldings, the bandstand was erected in the winter of 2001-02 after a donation from Miss Madge Saunders in memory of her father, Alfred George Saunders. The site now occupied by the bandstand was occupied by the Japanese gun brought back to England by Lord Mountbatten. The Borough agreed that the bandstand should be to focal point in the War Memorial Park, with the gun refurbished and moved to a less high profile location south of the kiosk. Only one person objected to the gun being moved to a less prominent location.

I would like to thank the Town Council for its annual grant of £1,000 which, with the bucket collections made on the day, (thank you, Sally Lamb, who looks after these collections), contribute to the expenses of the bands. Additionally, the Town Council has taken on the Bandstand bookings for which I am very grateful. My remaining role is to act as Treasurer, do the annual Charity Commission submission and pay the bands' expenses by cheque.

**4 Southern Planning Committee** Since my last written report to you I have been Chairman of TVBC's Southern Planning Committee. This is a significant commitment but one which I am very happy to take on. The most significant part of the role is the long and detailed pre-meetings in which I test the officers recommendations and ask them the questions they are likely to receive from the committee. There has been a marked change in the committee reports; they used to contain many typographic errors, partly as a result of officers working under considerable pressure. The problem arises when members of the public pick on the typos to undermine the veracity of the officer recommendations which in turn undermines public confidence in the planning authority. That issue appears to have been resolved.

Before 2019 every southern TVBC borough councillor was a member of the Southern Planning Committee creating a committee of 24. Since then the committee size has been reduced to 13. The main drawback is that there is competition for places on the committee. With its three weekly cycle it is a busy committee. The current Planning Portfolio holder is Cllr Bundy who has indicated that he would like to increase the committee size in the coming year.

**5 The Borough Mayoralty** On 19th May 2021 my Borough colleagues elected me as Mayor of Test Valley. It is not a role I have sought but after 35 years of borough membership it was a responsibility that was getting increasingly difficult to avoid. In the post-Covid era there is a significantly reduced number of mayoral functions. I am told that Borough Mayors used to find themselves doing upwards of 400 events. My year will pan out at about 155 events. There's been a lot of tree planting as part of Test Valley's effort to assist in the Queen's Green Canopy national initiative as part of HM's Platinum Jubilee year. A number of tree plantings I have been involved with are relatively mature standards, mainly oaks, donated to schools and parish councils. In total TVBC is



planting 11,000 trees this year. Most consist of whips with a focus on hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, beech, alder, lime and oak.

I hosted Test Valley's Civic day last September at Mottisfont Abbey followed by a tour of Romsey Abbey. The Civic days around Hampshire have been a very enjoyable part of the Mayoral year.

In addition to the usual Civic events, much of the Mayoral activity has involved promoting Test Valley, local businesses, local charities and voluntary groups. It is really pleasing to see just how much good work is being done by volunteers across our community despite the negative impact of the pandemic and it is truly an honour to be able to thank people, on behalf of us all, for the work they do.

MGC 11

04 2022

### **Report from Cllr. N. Daas – Abbey Ward**

*Aster Housing* – Broadwater Flats, Linden Court, Wakeford Court and other locations. Since being elected as a councillor, I have had numerous correspondence about issues with Aster Housing and their responsibilities to their tenants. I have regular contact and a quarterly call with the Head of Housing for Aster and therefore been able to deal with these issues.

I have combined with Aster and the fire service to ensure that plans for a safe fire escape are being developed with the view to execute in the near future. Additionally, I have also been able to resolve issues on windows, intercoms, removal amenities and rent increases. As with many organisations, Aster Housing are transiting many of their accommodations to service a wider clientele. While this may be difficult in the short-term, overall further integration of different demographic ranges, if completed correctly, shall be good for our community. I will continue to closely monitor Aster's management of their properties, with the support of local residents to whom I am extremely grateful.

#### *Romsey Station House*

The Three Rivers Partnership has put forward ideas for the Romsey Station House to renovate the house adjacent to the Romsey Train Station. Potential ideas for a café and office space look exciting and will propel this area forward as the rest of Romsey has done. I look forward to continuing to support this project.

#### *Recycling Campaign*

On behalf of Abbey Ward and the wider Town Council, I have been campaigning for further recycling methods to be brought forward as early as possible. Other towns within Hampshire have easy access to recycling glass, tetra packs and metallic items; however, Romsey and Test Valley are behind the curve. I shall continue campaigning for the widest possible items to be recycled from our homes.

#### *Road Cycle Route*

Prior to being a Councillor, I lead the youth campaign group which campaigned on matters which meant to Romsey's young people. I am pleased to see the Southampton



Road cycle route completed, which Romsey Youth Voices campaigned on. Nevertheless, there is still work to be done on the quality of the high-viz barriers.

*Nightingale Lodge*

The new over 55's flats (Nightingale Lodge) on Great Well Drive are now completed and enquiries are being accepted to move in. The flats have been completed to a high standard and will provide a comfortable living which fit well with the local area. In addition, the site was left derelict for quite some period of time and therefore it is good to see this area being utilised.

Councillor Grants:

- Forest & Cove
- KutchenHaus
- Romsey Food Bank
- Romsey Community Pantry
- Romsey Young Carers

**Report from Cllr. Dorothy Baverstock and Cllr. Janet Burnage and Cllr. N.eill Gwynne, TVBC Councillors, Cupernham Ward**

Cllrs Baverstock, Burnage and Gwynne have continued to work closely on projects not only in their ward but on activities which support improvements to the town that benefit both residents and visitors. Examples of this include:

Unity – during the pandemic and in the dark days of lockdown Unity set up a companionship database – Cllrs Baverstock, Burnage and Gwynne all volunteered to help with contacting the more vulnerable members of our community to telephone them, to make sure that they were managing during the lockdown period, able to get their prescriptions, shopping and any other assistance that they required. It was also an opportunity to have a chat with these residents to reassure them that they were not alone and that Unity were there to help them or just to have a chat, which many people just wanted to do. Not only did it help support those who needed the services of Unity but it also helped the callers to chat to others outside their family circle.

. creation of Wilder Romsey, leading to:

- . handing out of free tree saplings, bird boxes and wildflower seed packs
- . creation of wildflower areas on Woodley Estate
- . further work on Woodley Estate in Autumn 2022, to include planting of orchard trees, bulbs and other wildflower areas
- . clearance of the banks of the Romsey canal, facilitating work from the Environment Agency re improving the water flow and canal habitat for wildlife

Cllr Burnage sought agreement from her fellow councillors and was happy to arrange a grant of £750 to Cupernham Infants School and Cupernham Junior School to help them purchase specific items to help improve the quality of the education for the children, making the learning environment more approachable.

Cllr Burnage is also involved in the Romsey Future initiative and was the Workstream Lead for Cycling and Walking – she and her fellow workstream members are very aware of the lack of dropped kerbs on the footpaths the link Viney Avenue to the Cupernham



pre-school and play area. So an application was put in for CIL funding to be able fund the dropped kerbs. This went to TVBC Council for approval, and was approved on 6 April.

Much of the above work was done in whole or in part via the Romsey Future initiative. And the creation of Wilder Romsey was also, in part, made easier by the fact that Cllr Gwynne has been appointed as TVBC's Climate Emergency Champion member – the role being to act as a point of reference on climate change to other members.

## 9. Reports from the Floor

### Report from Cllr. Ian Richards - Romsey Town Marshals Report

This period including Lock Down for Covid has involved the cancellation of most public event involving people gathering together. Hence our services have not been required until this year .

With conditions temporarily improving on 21<sup>st</sup> July Rotary arranged Hymns in the Market Place in the evening which was the first event for a year but would not have been practical without the Marshals assistance

The first major event for us to assist in management was the Switch on of the Town Christmas lights and Carnival. This proved a real challenge as the public, starved of events, attended in their thousands . The Marshals and Carnival committee rose to the challenge and the event was a success despite certain hiccups.

Late Night shopping and the rescue of Father Christmas ran well but the Carols in the Market Place was cancelled due to the numbers who would have attended deemed to be unsafe on health reasons

Given adequate notice the marshals as a team rarely fail to rally to help and represent the Town Council in a professional manner with courtesy to those inconvenienced.

I would like to express my sincere thanks for this year's work to Tony Abbot who never fails to help when he can and the task is more difficult when he is not there with his van. May I through this report thank Heather who acted as co-ordinator in the Town Hall for requests for marshals on top of the other tasks she covers in obtaining road closure orders for some of the events. Her departure will be sorely missed . Not just by the Marshals but also the community groups she assisted in planning events.

This group is self funding, through donations for their services from organisations requesting the marshals services made into a ring-fenced account which is where the costs of equipment and training comes from.

As a Town Council inspired organisation they continue to be a credit to our town in their volunteering. We still welcome extra members to broaden our capabilities.

### Report from Cllr. Ian Richards - Youth in Romsey – (Trustee)

Youth in Romsey started over 20 yrs ago and was set up to provide support for the young people of Romsey and Southern Test Valley. We offer a wide range of services at our Centre, including counselling, one to one and school support, careers and job advice, targeted youth groups, homework club and sexual health clinics.

When the extraordinary times of Covid and lockdown started, we took a decision to stay open, albeit initially working from home and coming to terms with the world of Zoom, but we felt it was vitally important to continue to offer our core service of counselling support for young people. We were **the only support service in Hampshire that never closed during the time of lockdown** and the pandemic. This turned out to be a great move as



the numbers of young people looking for support soared and, the complexity of issues they had to deal with increased as well. We feel that we contributed significantly to the wellbeing of many young people including literally lifesaving incidents during that time, and we are continuing to deal with the effects of the pandemic, lockdown and disrupted schooling even now.

We opened up in the summer 2020 to provide transition support for groups of students who were due to start secondary school in the Autumn we gradually returned our services to the more traditional face to face style.

We have a fantastic staff team at the Centre who are highly skilled and very experienced. The staff are aided by a team of tremendous volunteers, and we are so very grateful to them for giving up their valuable time to help us. Without them we would not be able to run such a successful venture.

To demonstrate the high regard that Youth in Romsey is held by professionals in the health service. The CCG have asked us to pick up the waiting list of 6 to 11yr olds 34 clients in the wider Hampshire area (Lympington to Andover) requiring counselling. This we are currently doing.

A snapshot statistics of our Romsey work for February 2022 shows we had 142 sessions with 75 clients . We had 16 parent contacts seeking our help. The top issues were Anxiety and stress, Self-esteem , and body image.

**We are entirely funded by grants and donations and we currently receive no funding from Romsey Town Council.**

### **Report from Roland Matthews- Romsey Twinning**

Since having to cancel a planned twinning visit to Treviglio in April 2020 Romsey Twinning has had no in-person exchanges with our twin towns. We have however used this time productively to focus on housekeeping issues, in particular on the management of our records. After we were asked to remove our archives from the Town Hall the question of storing and conserving them became an urgent one. Having investigated various options the committee decided that the sensible and most responsible course of action was to place our records on deposit at the Hampshire Record Office. As HRO has strict criteria governing the items it will accept this has meant having to sort through all our records in order to select those documents that have archival value and are suitable for deposit. With 60 years of records to go through that has meant a lot of work! I am pleased to report, though, that we have nearly finished the task and expect to be making a deposit with HRO in the next few months.

We are retaining a handful of key twinning documents, such as charters and official photographs, and hope that it will be possible to have these on display in due course on a wall in the Town Hall. A related issue we have had to tackle is what to do about the numerous artefacts and memorabilia Twinning has acquired over the years – mainly, gifts from groups visiting from the twin towns. Again, we have explored a range of options for storing and displaying these, but to no avail. Reluctantly we are left with no choice but to dispose of these in various ways, including offering them back to the local donor organisation where an item was gifted to Twinning (e.g. Broadlands, The Romsey School).

Another important housekeeping issue we have been addressing is that of our internet and social media profile. Although Romsey Twinning has a Facebook page it does not currently have its own website, having in the past had a page on the now defunct



Romseynet. We are addressing this deficit as a matter of urgency and hope to have created a website by the end of the year.

There are signs of cautious optimism that Twinning is starting to re-emerge from its Covid hibernation. We recently held a Quiz Night, our first social and fundraising event in over two years, and we are planning a visit to Treviglio in early October. These are difficult times for the twinning movement, and it remains to be seen how well it will recover and adjust to the new landscape. Among the new challenges facing Romsey Twinning are the consequences of the Covid pandemic, the impact of post-Brexit red tape, and the absolute imperative of environmentally responsible travel. We have also taken the view that the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine outweighs any considerations around twinning visits at this time; twinners must free to open their home to a refugee if they wish and not feel constrained by their ability to act as a twinning host in the future.

**Council thanked all those who submitted a report.**

#### **10. Parishioners' Questions**

A number of Parishioners attended the meeting. Cllr. Mark Cooper reported on the Market Place Enhancement, Speeding, Whitenap, Brewery Site Dereliction and The Borough Mayoralty which are all included in his Hampshire County Council Report detailed above. A major issue currently in Romsey is potholes. Cllr. M. Cooper reported the whole road at the Plaza Roundabout/Viney Avenue is scheduled to be re-surfaced in the second quarter of 2022. A parishioner aired concerns with regards to the lack of bins outside Dominoes Pizza in Dukes Mill which is leading to litter just been dumped on the pavement or thrown into the stream. Cllr. M. Cooper and Cllr. N. Daas to ask TVBC if they can include this area in their road cleaning. A parishioner commended the Café in the Park as a real gem and asset to the town. A parishioner asked for an update with regards to the re-development of Romsey Town Centre. Cllr. M. Cooper reported the proposed re-development is discussed at a group meeting called Romsey Future. This organisation is made up of the public and Councillors. He suggested anyone with an interest to check TVBC website for Romsey Future Meeting dates and to come along to the meetings.

**Cllr. K. Dunleavy thanked the Councillors and Town Hall staff for all their support throughout her Mayoral Year.**

**The meeting closed at 8.11p.m.**



**TOWN COUNCILLOR CONTACT INFORMATION**

**ABBEY WARD**

**Cllr. John Critchley**  
Mob: 07831870120  
Email: [cllrcritchley@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrcritchley@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr. I. Culley**  
Mob: 07835087955  
Email: [cllriculley@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllriculley@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr N. Daas**  
Mob: 07443482919  
Email: [cllrndaas@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrndaas@romseytc.org.uk)

Cllr. S. Lamb  
Mob: 07793115944  
Email: [cllrslamb@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrslamb@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr. S. Wilkinson**  
Mob: 07739802739  
Email:  
[cllrswilkinson@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrswilkinson@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr. C. Wise**  
Mob: 07769836830  
Email: [cllrcwise@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrcwise@romseytc.org.uk)

**CUPERNHAM WARD**

**Cllr Dorothy Baverstock**  
Tel: 01794 517552  
Email:  
[cllrdbaverstock@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrdbaverstock@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr Janet Burnage**  
Mob: 07764 584522  
Email: [cllrjburnage@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrjburnage@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr John Ray**  
Tel: 01794 522810  
Email: [cllrjray@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrjray@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr Neil Gwynne**  
Tel: 07884023646  
Email: [cllrngwynne@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrngwynne@romseytc.org.uk)

**TADBURN WARD**

**Cllr Mark Cooper**  
Tel: 01794 516028  
Mob: 07774 638310  
Email: [cllrmcooper@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrmcooper@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr Janet Cairney**  
Mob: 07840989722  
Email: [cllrjcairney@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrjcairney@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr Karen Dunleavey**  
Mob: 07977 163198  
Email: [cllrkunleavey@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrkunleavey@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr John Parker**  
Mob: 07825 514348  
Email: [cllrjparker@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrjparker@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr Matthew Southey**  
Mob: 07816901442  
Email: [cllrmsouthey@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrmsouthey@romseytc.org.uk)

**TOWN HALL STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION – Tel. 01794 512837**

**Judith Giles**  
Chief Officer  
[chiefofficer@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:chiefofficer@romseytc.org.uk)

**Debbie Forder**  
Events Manager  
[bookings@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:bookings@romseytc.org.uk)

**Nicqui Chatterley**  
Civic Administrator/Planning Clerk  
[info@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:info@romseytc.org.uk)

**Howard Brisland**  
Building Manager  
[howard.brisland@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:howard.brisland@romseytc.org.uk)

**Vacant Post**  
Business, Town & Tourism Officer  
[tcm@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:tcm@romseytc.org.uk)

**Faye Godwin**  
Administration Officer  
[faye.godwin@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:faye.godwin@romseytc.org.uk)

**David Chase**  
Maintenance Technician

**Wendy Broom**  
Housekeeper