

KRA AGM Minutes 2017

Des Camblin introduced John Lang, Keith Denyer and newly appointed Secretary David Floyd.

The Minutes of the 2016 AGM were approved without comment.

Des Camblin regretted that no representative of the Surrey Police were present. Changes in policy had meant that the police were apparently no longer willing to attend community meetings. He confirmed that the KRA would continue to monitor the police website and endeavour to alert residents by email of any known criminal activity in the area.

He reported that Legal and General had apparently now bought the freehold of their site which they had previously leased. Their plans for the site were unknown so the KRA and no doubt the Council would be monitoring the position.

He explained that Solum Regeneration, the developers of the Station site, had originally proposed a scheme which did not meet the planning brief for the site and which the KRA therefore opposed. Happily after a number of meetings with the KRA, an entirely new scheme had been agreed which all parties felt able to support and planning permission for the new scheme had now been obtained. In fact Simon Hicks, Development Manager from Solum was present to present the scheme.

Parking in the village had become noticeably more difficult. Some of this was due to all day parking by staff from the various shops and businesses, but some retailers blamed commuters parking close to the station. He suggested that whatever the cause, a parking regime was needed to control this but this would only work if the regulations were consistently enforced.

He announced a volunteer clean up in the village and in Outwood Lane whilst it was closed for road works. He asked anyone interested in being involved to leave their contact information.

He reminded the meeting that Tim Hamilton, Communications Director for St Helier Hospital had been due to speak the previous year but had been unable to attend. He had however returned this year along with his Chief Executive, Daniel Elkeles.

First Simon Hicks of Solum presented the Kingswood Station scheme. He explained that Solum was a partnership between Kier Properties and Network Rail whose purpose was to look at surplus land adjacent to stations to build homes and improve infrastructure, bringing brownfield sites into residential use. They had undertaken five such schemes to date. He referred to the completed scheme in Epsom comprising 100 new homes, a hotel, retail floor space and an enlarged car park.

The Kingswood site currently is in use as a builder's yard and a car sales outlet. The scheme they had now devised reflected the terms of Local Plan as well as the Planning Brief for the site. It had been the subject to a public consultation as well as regular discussions with the KRA, consultation with the Conservation Officer and with the Highways team. It comprised 18 houses with the Station building being retained with an improved access to segregate pedestrians and vehicles. The new station car park would have 61 spaces which was an increase of 12. The scheme would mean no more building supply vehicles and much less noise than at present. The redesigned car park and access would also provide much better and safer access. A pedestrian crossing over Furze Hill would be provided and another across the site entrance. Demolition was due to begin in the third quarter of this year with

completion of the station car park early next year. A resident asked about water flowing from construction to the North of the site. Site drainage was being assessed at present, but the whole car park would have a porous surface to assist with this and the collapsed drain under the site would be renewed. He confirmed that the new drainage scheme was intended to address flooding at the bottom of Furze Hill. Concern was expressed about the existing water supply pressure and he advised that this was being looked into and if necessary, additional pumping would be provided. He explained that there were only 18 houses planned for the site and so it had not been practical to include social housing; however the developer had committed a substantial sum for improvements to the station complex and a contribution to the Council for affordable housing.

Daniel Elkeles then spoke. He said that the NHS Trust had acquired various services from other areas. As a result, they offered the fifth largest renal service in the country and the largest joint replacement facility in Western Europe at Epsom. St Helier had been assessed as the sixth best hospital in the country with a performance standard of 95.2% for the year. They were in the lowest quartile for deaths in hospital. They have also come in on budget this year albeit with no surplus.

Emergency care has been redesigned to improve the service and they had sought to merge the services provided by Councils, GPs and hospitals enabling many more patients to recover at home. Patients from care homes in Sutton now arrived at hospital with their medication and care plan to further streamline their care and this approach was to be expanded.

In April 2015 a new policy was set to keep both hospitals open until 2020. Over this period more of the emergency work would be undertaken at St Helier and more of the planned care at Epsom. They had set five objectives – to be safe, to provide a positive patient experience, to be responsive, to maintain financial stability and work with partnerships. The St Helier building was the biggest challenge as the backlog maintenance bill was the worst for any hospital on the South East of London. They had opened a new simulation centre for training doctors, a new fertility service at St Helier, a new paediatric facility, a new CT scanner and an improved outpatients' telephone service. The St Helier building was very old and parts of Epsom hospital dating from the sixties had been poorly built. A Strategic Outline Case setting out the plan for the next decade was being prepared and discussions on this would begin after the Council elections.

Cllr Gosling was concerned that if a new hospital were built, he believed that the per capita allowance in Surrey was lower than London. Daniel Elkeles replied that there was only one tariff which was set nationally. This allowed the Trust to pay London weighting to their staff. Guy Kingsbury suggested that there was no "joined up" medicine as no one talked to anyone else. Daniel Elkeles agreed that this had been a problem largely due to incompatible IT systems. The Trust IT system was obsolete and would require £30 million to replace. Instead the Trust had decided to rely on the IT systems used by GPs which were both standard in all practices and up to date. Patient care plan data would then be accessed by all those who needed to see it, but this project would take several years to complete. Mike Gibson asked about car parking arrangements as parking at Epsom was often very difficult and was advised that in the last few months increased visitor spaces had been provided at both sites by reducing staff spaces and greater use of staff shuttle buses. He also confirmed that all the revenue from car parking went to the hospital rather than to a parking company. Cllr Ashford asked about patients with dementia who may be living at home. Daniel Elkeles replied that much work had been done on this. A recent CBC inspection had noted that not

enough staff members were dementia trained. A large number had since been through a dementia training course to address this and there was a ward for advanced dementia patients.

A resident asked what more members of the public could do. Tim Hamilton replied that whilst there had been rumours of hospital closures for years; the Trust was determined to keep both hospitals open and thriving. This involved finding the funding to deal with the building problems and centralising some services which had been spread to two locations in the past. For example it was very difficult to duplicate A&E services without heavy use of expensive agency staff. They needed the community to understand and support the centralisation of specialist services.

Des Camblin then dealt with questions raised by residents in advance of the meeting. The first asked for an update on Winscombe the former BUPA nursing home. Keith Denyer reported that an appeal had been lodged following a refusal by the Planning Committee. The KRA had objected due to massing and proximity to other property. It was also considered out of keeping with the locality and there were also traffic concerns. He urged people to object and support the KRA position. A resident who lived next to the site pointed out that although the increase in footprint was 30%, the previous building was single storey whereas the proposed building would be three storeys.

A resident had suggested that the KRA subscription at £20 for 4 years was too low and should be increased. Des Camblin said that the committee had discussed this point about 18 months earlier and debated an increase, but found that all other RAs locally charged less. The conclusion had been that for the time being it was always open to raise a fighting fund if a specific planning issue arose which might incur professional fees. In the current year there happened to be a peak in renewals which needed to be addressed by the road stewards. Guy Kingsbury raised the issue of life members and Des Camblin reported that a number had already agreed to convert to the normal four year subscription, although this was resident's choice.

Dave Saunders added that every life member had had a letter about this and about 50% had already agreed to change to the four year membership. He urged anyone who had not switched and wished to do so, to get in touch with him. He also urged members to provide him with an email address if they had not done so already so that they could receive all the information which the KRA sends out.

Ian Johnstone commented that although about half the households in Kingswood were KRA members, all residents benefitted from its efforts. He therefore asked what efforts were made to sign up the remaining households. Des Camblin confirmed that a recruitment drive was already underway, both to renew expiring memberships and to gain new members. He said that a door to door approach seemed the best way to do this. He confirmed that a leaflet was also produced for estate agents to be given to people moving to Kingswood.

A resident had suggested the installation of CCTV on all access roads to the village. Des Camblin said that this was outside the remit of the KRA and it also raised questions as to how this would be organised and paid for and whether there would be strong support for it. This had been discussed before but had been dropped.

Finally a resident had asked about potholes in Waterhouse Lane between Forrest Drive and the railway bridge and also suggested speed humps on this road. Cllr Gosling was aware of the disrepair but had been told that although poor, the surface was not considered bad enough to merit repair.

He added that speed humps were never permitted on this type of road. Cllr Gosling offered to write a draft letter of complaint to Surrey County Council and Des Camblin offered to put it on the KRA website. Cllr Gosling said that funding for some services remained difficult. Elderly health care and learning difficulty care had been cut, but work on the A27 to cure flooding problems had been approved. He reported that Walton on the Hill had a volunteer cleaning programme in place. Tadworth had tree planning carried out paid for by a Council grant. So far as Kingswood was concerned, a grant of £2,500 had been allocated towards the new AV system in the village hall by Surrey County Council. In addition he was seeking a grant to clear the ivy from the trees in Waterhouse Lane and a further sum to tidy up the grass bank opposite "12" restaurant. The Council would also provide a skip to get rid of rubbish when the village clean up took place. He hoped to find some further funds for tree planting if possible.

Cllr Parnall referred to the unexpected death of Cllr Joan Spiers and introduced Cllr Rod Ashford who had been elected in the ensuing by-election. He said that residents had been consulted on the terms of the Development Management Plan (DMP) and stressed that there would be a second stage to the consultation. He said that planning controls had previously imposed an upper limit on parking provision, whereas now the Council was seeking to reverse this and introduce a minimum parking standard for new development. Secondly the Council was seeking more control of the construction process by regulating the conduct of contractors on site to minimise local disruption. Thirdly enforcement measures were being strengthened to achieve better adherence to planning controls.

Cllr Rod Ashford said that he was heavily involved with neighbourhood watch in Lower Kingswood. He confirmed that there had been a reduction in the number of police officers, but that the police were becoming more effective in sharing and relaying information about any suspicious activity which did lead to arrests. Policing was therefore less visible than before but not less effective. Reporting any suspicious activity was therefore very important. He also highlighted the issue of dementia care and said that the Council was devoting resources to providing more support to carers of patients at the Banstead Centre.

A resident said that there had been a problem with deer in the area and Cllr Parnall undertook to bring this to the attention of the relevant Council officer. A resident asked if traffic lights in the village would improve matters. Des Camblin said that the station site developer claimed that fewer vehicle movements would be expected following development and Cllr Gosling added that since L&G had reduced their car movements from 3,000 to around 1,000, the situation was enormously improved. He suggested that this question would depend on the future use of that site, so it was best to wait and see what happened.

The Treasurers Report had been circulated. In the absence of the Treasurer, Des Camblin read out a short comment from her, but there were no questions and the accounts were duly approved.

The Auditor David Buckley was re-elected unopposed. Des Camblin reported two changes to those standing for re-election. Rohini Laila had agreed to take on the post of Deputy Chair. Michael Sutcliffe had decided not to stand again, but Caroline Neame had agreed to stand in his place. The officers and committee were duly re-elected.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.53pm