

# Great Langborough Residents' Association

Defending our environment  [www.glra.org.uk](http://www.glra.org.uk)

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Salvation Army Hall, Sturges Road

8th June 2016 at 7:30 p.m.

### Attendees

#### Committee Members:

Pat Smith *Chair*, Philip Lawman *Treasurer*, David Nash *Secretary*, Robin Cops, Anita McPhilimey, Phillip Robinson

#### Committee Apologies:

Andrew Pearce *Web Master*, Lucy Herd

#### Residents (those who signed the attendance list):

Lucy Allen  
Melanie Allen  
Jeremy Allison  
Andrew Le Breuille  
Daphne Burlton  
Mel Burlton  
Frank Clisby  
Mildred Clisby  
Geoff Cook  
Rosemary Cook  
Andy Croy  
Philip Frost  
Gwyneth Garrod

Stanley Harris  
Thelma Hawke  
Paul Ibson  
Tony Jarvis  
Angrid Johnston  
Greg Johnston  
Mary McCarthy  
Pat MacIntyre  
Elizabeth Manley  
John Milner  
Jayne Mosses  
Catherine Napier

Chris O'Donnell  
Elizabeth Ramsay  
Valerie Robinson  
Ken Smith  
Malcolm Smith  
Pam Smith  
Rob Sparkes  
Barbara Thompson  
Barrie Thompson  
Sydney Treadgold  
Geoff Wilde  
Helen Wilde

### Non-Residents

Peter Humphrys  
Nadine Masseron

### Apologies:

Terry O'Donnell, Councillors Julian McGhee-Sumner, Chris Singleton & Oliver Whittle

### Guest Speaker:

Councillor Malcolm Richards

### Introduction:

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed residents and guest speaker Cllr. Malcolm Richards. She explained that a standard Association AGM format would precede Cllr. Richards' presentation and Q&A on Traffic and Transport.

## Annual General Meeting Business

### Opening

The Chair summarised the Association's Activities for the past year.

She also directed the meeting to the GLRA web site [www.glra.org.uk](http://www.glra.org.uk) for the 2015 Chair's Newsletter, the 2015 AGM Minutes, the 2015 Treasurer's Report and various reports on the Town Centre and South Wokingham SDL Forums from the past year.

### Chair's Report – Pat Smith

This year has been a busy one for the committee. We have been involved in discussions around the various aspects of the Town Centre Regeneration and of the South Wokingham Development Location. Both of these are subjects will be discussed this evening by David Nash and our guest speaker Wokingham Borough Councillor Malcolm Richards, who was recently appointed Executive Member for Highways and Transport.

As regards the **Town Centre Regeneration**: -

Plans for the Carnival Pool and Elms Field gained planning consent in March 2015 and on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2016 respectively.

I am sure residents will all have noticed stirrings around the town. A new car park is being built at the station. Meanwhile, the old Wellington House car park has been reopened and the tennis courts are being used as temporary car parking.

I understand that the Elms Road multi-storey car park will be refurbished; also, that work started this week on the car park on the Carnival Pool site with closure of the existing car park.

Recent reports confirm that the current operators of the leisure centre on the Carnival Pool site, American Amusements Limited (AAL), have committed to provide similar facilities on the ground floor of the car park building.

The time scales for the works around the town are: -

**Market Place refurbishment** starting Spring 2017 and completion by end 2018.

**Peach Place Phase 2 development** is planned to start at the January 2017 with a view to completion by the end of 2018.

**Carnival Pool development** - new car park has just started – completion Spring 2017; further Leisure Extensions to be delivered 2019-2020.

**Elms Field** is in line to start work in May 2017 to be completed by end 2019.

See the map at the Regeneration web site: <http://www.regenerationcompany.co.uk/town-map>

### **Sounds like it could be a bit chaotic around town in 2017!**

The committee's other activities are listed here: -

- We have attended a number of stakeholder meetings ahead of formal consultations
- David Nash and I also attended a workshop looking at the design details for Peach place.
- David Nash and Phil Lawman attended a similar one for the Market Place.
- We have responded to consultations and planning applications
- David Nash and Robin Cops have called meetings with councillors and WBC officers to better understand the financial background and assumptions of financing the Town Centre Regeneration plans.
- We continue to liaise with councillors, officers and other Wokingham organisations.

Residents should be aware that the Borough Council is just starting the next round of the Local Plan Update for the strategic development period 2013-2036. Currently, evidence is being gathered and the revised plan is due to be completed by March 2018.

You may also have seen in the papers that the Borough Council has finally committed to decriminalise parking. That will come into effect in 2 years' time. The implication is that responsibility for parking enforcement will become the responsibility of the council via wardens and not the police.

## Minutes of 2015 AGM

The attendees were referred to copies of the 2015 AGM minutes that had been distributed. There were no actions from that AGM. Anita McPhilimey proposed that the minutes be accepted; seconded by Philip Robinson: accepted unanimously.

## Election of Committee and Officers

The Chair reported that Lucy Herd was not standing for re-election because of personal commitments. All other committee members and all existing officers had indicated their willingness to serve another year. It was proposed by Melanie Allen, seconded by Elizabeth Manley that the Committee and Officers should be re-elected *en bloc*. This was accepted unanimously.

Paul Ibson indicated a wish to discuss joining the Committee. There is provision in the GLRA Constitution to co-opt Committee Members. Discussions with Paul will be arranged after the meeting.

## Treasurer's Report - Philip Lawman

Philip gave the main features of his report to be available on [www.gbra.org.uk](http://www.gbra.org.uk) The GLRA funds were currently held as cash as the Association was in the process of changing bank accounts. The AGM alone cost £75 to arrange – hall hire and printing. Web domain name registration took the total to over £100. Therefore, the current balance of £290 represented under 3 years' average expenditure. Philip reminded the meeting that, in the absence of an annual membership levy, voluntary contributions were needed to support the ongoing activities of the Association.

*Note: There was an exit collection which raised £149.50. Many thanks to those who contributed. Other contributions would be gratefully received.*

## Any Other Business – Pat Smith

Jeremy Allison and Chris O'Donnell raised concerns about the recent increase in aircraft noise – mostly from commercial flights to and from Heathrow. Angrid Johnston referred attendees to John Redwood's recent report on a meeting that he had convened on this matter at <http://johnredwoodsdiary.com/2016/06/08/heathrow-noise-meeting/>

Andrew Le Breuille drew attention to the activities of the Wokingham Litter Heroes at <http://www.wokinghamlitterheroes.uk/>

## South Wokingham Strategic Development Location and Southern Distributor Road (SDR) – David Nash

By way of an introduction to the presentation by Cllr. Richards, David showed a slide of the area of the SDL with the currently planned adopted Route (B,B1,B2) for the Southern Distributor Road. (This route had drawn over 80% support of the resident input.)

He informed the meeting that this route was now subject to an engineering survey. This was ongoing but no firm date for confirmation of the route had been announced.

At the eastern end there was to be a bridge over the Waterloo railway to Montague Park. Negotiations between Network Rail, Wokingham BC and developers had been ongoing for a long time without the announcement of a firm agreement.

At the western end of the SDR was the junction with Finchampstead Road at the existing Tesco roundabout. He showed the major modification to the Guildford railway line bridge to widen and deepen it. This would necessitate moving Wokingham Motors to a new site and would involve a closure of Finchampstead Road. The estimated period of closure was not yet available.

David showed the forecast of over 850 additional houses per year over the next 20 years in Wokingham Borough. This would generate 1,300 additional cars per year if the current average of 1.6 per household was maintained.

He then introduced Cllr. Richards to present on the challenges that this represented and to answer residents' concerns.

## **Presentation and Discussion: Wokingham Highways & Transport - Malcolm Richards, Executive Councillor for Highways & Transport,**

Cllr. Richards presented in detail on his role and its scope. He laid particular emphasis on the investment by Wokingham Borough Council on advanced models for traffic simulation.

The Chair opened a question and answer session following Cllr. Richards' presentation. The main traffic and transport issues raised by the audience were: -

- Confirmation of the route for the Southern Distributor Road had been a major concern for too long, especially so since amendments had been made to the preferred Northern Distributor Road. Anita McPhilimey mentioned the onsite testing that she had observed for the SDR. It was a sign that work is in progress. However, there was no announcement of a planned end date. Members were anxious to know when the precise route would be confirmed.
- There was general concern about the continued build-up of traffic volumes through Wokingham town centre. There was a need for urgent completion of the S. Wokingham SDL spine road to relieve the peak hour congestion in the town centre. If funding could be a delaying factor, had Wokingham BC considered temporary borrowing to speed up construction? Some members had doubts about the capability of a distributor road to deal adequately with the volumes.
- Members wanted to understand the projections of the peak hour queue times on the roundabouts at Wellington Road/Carnival Pool, Denmark Street/Langborough Road, Tesco and Molly Millar's Lane/Finchampstead Road. Because complex construction projects would be taking place, our residents wanted to understand the effects at various key times: -
  1. What is the worst case as volumes continue to build BEFORE work starts in Finchampstead Road?
  2. The projected impact and duration of the Finchampstead Road railway bridge and road realignment project. What temporary relief measures had been considered to diminish the impact?
  3. The projected peak time queues at the above junctions when the construction of the SDR and Finchampstead Road re-engineering is complete. Would the improvements be significant?
- There was also an issue about parking on our residential roads by town centre workers and other travellers. Specifically, there was a need by some residents to understand the possibility of Resident Only parking permits in key areas: special interest from Fairview Road.

Cllr. Richards mentioned that his Deputy Cllr. David Sleight took a special interest in air and rail topics. He could assist in understanding the outlook on the increase in perceived aircraft noise in the town centre - especially from Heathrow flight path adjustments.

*Members of the GLRA Committee will actively follow up the issues raised by our members at the AGM and provide information via email and our web site as it becomes available.*

**The meeting closed at about 9:15 p.m.**