

# SUMMERSDALE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of

Annual General Meeting held on 15 February 2018

At St Michael's Hall

[www.summersdaleresidents.co.uk](http://www.summersdaleresidents.co.uk)

*Residents Working Together*

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence**

RH welcomed all members attending, a total of 76 this year, and also welcomed Mayor Peter Evans and Lady Mayoress Margaret Evans, and congratulated them on their appointment and thanked them for the years of service they have given to the community. The Chairman also welcomed WSCC cabinet member for finance Mr Jeremy Hunt who will give an update on WSCC matters and District and City Councillor Tony Dignum who will update the meeting on the Local Plan revision. Welcome was also extended to District Councillor Simon Lloyd-Williams and City Councillor Len Macey. The Chairman also welcomed all members to the 2018 SRA AGM.

RH also welcomed the guest speaker for the evening, Judi Darley from the Harbour Conservancy Council. The size of the audience surely reflected the interest in the subject.

Apologies were received from committee member Mike Steel and from SRA members:

Mrs Betty Purdy  
Derek and Ann James  
Mr Ian Smith  
Matt and Victoria Irwin  
Mr John Newman  
Mr Allan Menzies  
Mr Vincent Porter  
Greg and Alison Dorey  
Robert and Carolyn Ash

2. **Minutes of the AGM held on 16 February 2017.** Agreed and signed by RH.

3. **Chairman's Report**

RH reported that this was his 5<sup>th</sup> year in the role of Chairman, and the wonderful attendance at the meeting and the 450 households on the membership list indicated that the SRA was in a very healthy state. Looking back over the last year, much of the work of the SRA was concerned with planning matters, and we have been invited by the three elected bodies to participate in the planning process, an important function of the SRA. There are two major items on the horizon that have the potential to change the character of Summersdale, namely the A27 and the District Council's Local Plan. Firstly, the A27 would only be of concern to Summersdale if the route was changed from a southern route to a northern one, and this was not considered to be on the agenda. The mandate given to SRA last year following the questionnaire gave a clear indication that a northern route would be fought against. RH reported that he had attended meetings of the BABA27 group set up to consider the situation with the help of our MP Gillian Keegan. Systra Ltd has been appointed to look again at the A27 issues in an effort to come up with an innovative solution. A meeting was held with them on 7 February and a report is expected by Easter. The second subject of concern is the CDC Local Plan Revision 2019-2034. The inspector at the original meeting found the plan sound at that time with agreed lower housing numbers because of the situation with the A27 and waste water treatment provision, but the inspector also stated that the plan should be revised within 5 years. The government is pressing for higher housing numbers and CDC must provide its share. We need an up to date plan or we may be subject to speculative applications for new developments which could lead to unplanned housing being imposed. CDC has produced a site allocation development plan document for consultation, and the sites chosen are not near the Summersdale area. However, government will be looking for any opportunity to get CDC to take more housing.

SRA continues to support new tree planning in Summersdale, has contributed to seating and benches and seating at the amphitheatre on Centurion Way and were able to get a new bench at the bus stop in Lavant Road. We continue to monitor the progress of a number of planning agreements in the area. We still have Goodwood Motor Circuit as a noisy neighbour but over the years we have developed a better understanding of their problems with our Liaison Representative who attends consultative meetings at the track. RH paid tribute to the work of the SRA Committee members and to WSCC Member for Chichester North Mr Jeremy Hunt and CDC and City Councillor Tony Dignum for their help in keeping us abreast of events affecting our area.

4. **Treasurers Report and Adoption of Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017**

Treasurer Mr Peter Bickley presented the Report and Accounts, copies of which had been distributed to all present and highlighted various items of expenditure and income. Adoption of the Report and Accounts was proposed by Michael Berry and seconded by Jeremy Hunt.

5. **Election of Officers**

Officers in post were: Chairman; vacant; Vice Chairman; Mrs Sue Spooner: Treasurer and Minutes Secretary 2; Mr Peter Bickley: Minutes Secretary; Mrs Janet Leonard: Membership Secretary; Mrs Vanessa Stern: Planning Secretary; Trevor Owen: Assistant Planning Secretary; Mr Roger Hobbs to stand for this post: Webmaster; Mr Mike Steel: Newsletter Editor; Mrs Mary Quiney: Goodwood Liaison; Mr Dennis Martin: Newsletter Distribution; Mr Michael Berry: All were proposed by Mrs Margaret Evans and seconded by Mr Christopher Beazley, and all duly elected en bloc.

Mrs Sue Spooner made a vote of thanks to Mr Roger Hobbs for his service as chairman. Having worked for WSCC, his knowledge and experience have been particularly valuable in the position of chairman. He will be much missed in that role but will continue to serve on the committee.

6. **Election of Independent Examiner.**

The current examiner Mr Carlos Santander is standing down. RH invited anyone interested in this role to contact PB.

7. **Guest Speaker – Judi Darley (Communities officer, Chichester Harbour Conservancy)**

RH welcomed Ms Darley to speak on the Chichester Harbour Conservancy's role in the area. The conservancy was set up by Act of Parliament in 1971 as an independent body with a duty to conserve, maintain and improve the harbour, and look after the AONB. A most interesting and far-reaching talk was given, highlighting the work of the conservancy and the many ways Chichester Harbour is used by sailors, walkers, bird-watchers and holiday-makers alike. A wonderful display of photographs of the harbour and those who use it accompanied the talk. Ms Darley answered questions on the conservancy's approach to the coastal erosion at East Head and to the problem of plastic and other debris on the beaches and in the sea around the harbour.

8. **Other Resolutions**

**CDC and City Councillor Tony Dignum** spoke on two issues affecting the area.

**Local Plan.** On the question of house building, he said that government dictated the number of houses required in an area. The 435 homes originally designated for the Chichester area in 2015 was now deemed to be insufficient, and an additional 40% are now required, bringing the total up to 609 for 2020 if government proposals are agreed. Compared to other areas, Chichester has fared well; Arun has to accommodate 1,000, Horsham 850. As our area lies between the AONB of the harbour conservancy area and the national park, development can only go east and west. The two brownfield sites available have been built out, and the only part left is the Shopwyke tarmac works area. The only houses that can be counted towards the number required by government are those completed in any one year. Estimates of completions in sites at Oving and Southbourne have been shown to be over-optimistic. Student accommodation cannot be counted in the total, although this relieves pressure on the use of properties as Houses in Multiple Occupation which is unpopular with other residents. Another problem with meeting the targets for the number of houses required is the way ransom strips hold up developers' ability to complete sites. The bottom section of the Whitehouse Farm development consisting of 850 homes cannot progress because of the ransom strip owned by Network Rail. Ransom strip owners can claim 40% of the value of the homes built on the site in return for releasing the land. In the case of Whitehouse Farm, the construction traffic would have to use St Pauls Road to access the site. No new sites were envisaged for the Summersdale area. The Barracks site was complete, and Graylingwell is about half way towards the 800 total as sales are slower than anticipated.

**Chichester Vision.** The Growth Deal with WSCC covers 4 major projects; 1. Southern Gateway, incorporating the Post Office sorting office, the canal basin, bus station and garage and the police station site. The master plan is approved, £5m has been given by government and consultants are looking for alternative sites for the facilities currently using the area. 2. Northern Gateway, a WSCC project covering the fire station roundabout area. 3. Gigabit project, networking council offices. 4. Transport study led by WSCC. Vision items also include improvements to shop fronts, benches, cycle racks, car charging points and improvements to finger posts. Regarding the use of carparks for development, only Basin Road is currently proposed. Little London is not on the programme and may never be used.

**WSCC Member for Chichester North and cabinet member for finance Mr Jeremy Hunt** praised the work done by the harbour conservancy and said that the harbour had two parts to its being – conservancy and income. He said that he had just presented a budget at the council meeting. West Sussex has a budget of £1bn, a large part of which goes to schools grants, adult and children care. Lesser amounts go to highways and libraries. The government allow councils to increase council tax by 2% to fund adult social care and a further 2-3% for general tax. Council tax will rise in the Chichester area by 4.95% in this financial year. This rise is deemed necessary as the council is running short of money. We are faring better than some areas in the country, eg Northampton, which has had to restrict spending to essential services. Surrey and East Sussex are also experiencing difficulty. JH praised the work of his predecessors in protecting services. Projects like 1<sup>st</sup> 100 days which give protection to children and LoveWestSussex for reporting potholes, fly tipping, damage etc were also shown to benefit the community.

**Mayor Peter Evans** said that campaign is in place to stop Centurion Way's southern end being diverted. However, he felt that the diversion was not significant and we needed to protect school children using the playing fields. Chichester City Council consults on planning matters, especially inappropriate developments such as back garden applications. However, he said that objections must be on legitimate planning grounds. He praised the work done in Brandy Hole copse and thanked the friends of the copse for their efforts. He said that since becoming mayor, he and the lady mayoress had attended 262 events and had met many people, including the Queen. The Freedom of the City to be bestowed on Tim Peake would also be a great event, but the highlight of the year for him was that he had that day become a grandfather. Congratulations were given by a round of applause.

9. **Open Forum.**

Mr Christopher Beazley first thanked Judi Darley for her excellent talk on the Harbour Conservancy. He then asked whether councillors or planning officers made decisions on planning matters. Mr Tony Dignum replied for CDC to say that main decisions were made by committee, but the lesser ones were given to officers to determine under delegated authority. If residents are concerned about an application they can ask a member to use the 'red card' whereby the application is determined at committee. Mrs Sue Dixon asked whether a speed check device could be installed in Lavant Road again. Traffic using the new petrol station was causing problems. RH said a meeting had been held with officers from WSCC to request the speed limit sign to be moved, and the national speed limit section to be reduced to 40mph. If traffic naturally slows down because of the garage users entering and exiting the road, then the average speed may meet the criteria for a new speed limit. JH said that discussion was still ongoing on this matter. He also said that the best way to get a speed check device installed was to form a speed watch group to encourage the policed to act.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20pm, when all present were served with sparkling wine and canapes.