

# SUMMERSDALE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

'Residents Working Together'

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A VIRTUAL MEETING TO BE HELD

AT 7.00pm THURSDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2021

### 1. Welcome from the Chairman Mr Gavin Barrett

A warm welcome to you all for what we believe is the 30<sup>th</sup> AGM of SRA. We are grateful to all who have joined the meeting and, in particular, the Mayor of Chichester Councillor Richard Plowman, Mr Jeremy Hunt for WSCC, Mr Tony Dignum for CDC and Mr Craig Gershter for CCC.

### 2. Conduct of the Meeting

The meeting will follow the agenda published in the SRA Winter newsletter. After the formal proceedings are completed, I shall invite our elected representatives in turn to make any remarks as they wish. We shall not take any questions to them this year, but they are of course available for contact via their Authorities' websites and email, and hopefully will join us for our next committee meeting on 11 March 2021 to answer any points raised.

### 3. Apologies for Absence

Mrs Janet Leonard reported that these had been received from Mr Roger Hobbs, Mr & Mrs Dorey and Mr Chris Cheney.

### 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2021 at St Paul's Church

The chairman asked for a proposer and seconder for the acceptance of these minutes as a true and record of the meeting. Proposed by Mrs Sue Spooner, seconded by Mr John Halliday.

You will recall that Mr Richard Bramall our chairman at that time was unable to be present. We mourn his passing and are grateful beyond measure for the distinguished service he rendered to SRA and the wider community in Chichester.

### 5. Chairman's Report

As a voluntary body focusing on bringing benefit to the Summersdale community and its environment, we are hugely reliant on the group of committed volunteers who constitute your committee and a number of others who help in various ways, often without public recognition. That we are grateful for the care, diligence and diplomacy shown goes without saying. I thank everyone who has contributed to our well-being in 2020 most heartily, especially given the peculiar circumstances of the pandemic, under which we have had to operate.

I draw your attention to our website where the breadth and depth of our activities is vividly depicted. Rather than cover every detail of what has been done on behalf of Summersdale since the last AGM, let me focus on a few salient issues:

- A. Planning matters.** Development proposals both small and large are scrutinised carefully both for their intrinsic value and whether precedents might be created. Summersdale is a mature environment which merits rigorous conservation, even when the pressure of Government housing targets favours more rather than less development.

Work has been going on to provide expert input to the planning process that illustrates the architectural and environmental aspects of Summersdale that deserve careful conservation. We are grateful for the work done in partnership with Chichester City Council and CDC on this.

That does not mean that all development can be prevented. We seek to ensure that plans are appropriate. It is a considerable credit to the community as a whole that so many make the effort to input to the planning process by submitting objections. The weight of numbers really matters. A number of poorly conceived schemes have been blocked in this way.

The shadow of a potential large-scale development at Raughmere Meadow, by Berkeley Homes, loomed over Summersdale and Lavant in 2020, exciting much understandable concern. Our neighbours in Lavant, especially the Parish Council, have been purposefully active in preparing the ground for a vigorous defence against this proposal. SRA is supporting that with time, expertise and, most likely, funding for professional assistance. That is what our reserves are for.

Similarly, the threat of a so-called "mitigated northern route A27 by-pass" for Chichester did not disappear in 2020, but the decision by Highways England not to include such a scheme in its near and mid-term plans has brought some respite. It would be unwise to consider such a threat as removed, but for now it has moved into the "unlikely" category, whilst major works to the extant A27 and its myriad roundabouts are more than likely, given the need to accommodate the traffic load from the several substantial new developments in and around Chichester.

We monitor other major schemes for their potential impact on Summersdale. One such is the Whitehouse Farm development which will impact much of the West of Chichester.

I record here appreciation of the herculean efforts of John Halliday, who holds the SRA planning portfolio. His painstaking approach ensures that no stone is left unturned in assessing the risks and benefits of development proposals in Summersdale. He has lately been joined in this role by Roy Littleford, whom we welcomed to SRA in the latter part of 2020.

- B. Summersdale as a caring community during the pandemic.** Time does not allow mention of the many acts of selfless kindness done in 2020 to bring care, comfort and relief to those most badly affected by the pandemic. That the City and many voluntary bodies in it have made huge efforts to sustain the community during this unprecedented crisis merits deep appreciation.
- C. The quality of the environment in Summersdale** is something that SRA takes great pains over. Helping to see that footpaths are open and maintained, making, for example, a grant for new equipment for the care of Centurion Way, or working with WSCC & CDC to ensure that new paths committed to under planning agreements with developers are installed and opened to plan, are typical. We cannot, of course, do everything to prevent damage to the environment – that is not our remit – but we do try to persuade those who regard the landscape as theirs for the taking to exercise care and consideration. Environments are fragile and selfish behaviour can do irreparable harm to them. Tree planting is receiving more SRA attention and funding, with more to come in 2021.
- D.** Finally, may I thank all those, especially on the committee, who keep their eyes and ears open to issues that merit attention and possible action. Staying alert to threats to the Summersdale way-of-life is a community-wide obligation. Channelling those concerns through SRA is usually the right thing to do, but we should also recognise and celebrate that our elected representatives at County, District and City levels take enormous personal interest in our concerns and, in my judgement, go well beyond the call of duty to see that right is done. On your behalf I thank them.
- E.** Enough of me. I invite our Honorary Treasurer Mr Peter Bickley to lead us through the high point of the meeting – the annual accounts.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report and Adoption of the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020**

Treasurer Mr Peter Bickley talked the committee members and SRA members attending through the main points of the accounts, with particular mention of the cost of the 2020 AGM, which was held in St Pauls Church and therefore cost more than in previous years. Printing costs were down. A large sum had been transferred to an account to be called Special Reserve fund, formerly known as The Fighting Fund, which could be used towards costs of challenging unsuitable planning applications. The Chairman called for a proposer to approve the accounts. Proposed by Mrs Vanessa Stern and seconded by Mr Brian Quilter. The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring Independent Examiner Mr Len Macey.

#### **7. Election of Officers and other Committee Members**

Now we come to the election of the committee for the period from the AGM of 2021 to that which we hope will be held in February 2022. The current incumbents are:

Chairman: Gavin Barrett; Acting Vice Chairman and Membership Secretary: Vanessa Stern; Treasurer and Second Minutes Secretary: Peter Bickley; Minutes Secretary: Janet Leonard; Newsletter Editor: Mary Quiney; Webmaster: Michael Steel; Goodwood Liaison: Peter Lines & Brian Quilter; Planning Secretary: John Halliday; Assistant Planning Secretary: Roy Littleford; CD Trust: Jean Goddard; White House Farm liaison: Pauline Sutton; Environmental & Trees: Raymond Carter

The chairman called for a proposer and seconder for the re-election of the committee *en bloc*. Proposed by Mr Keith Bartlett and seconded by Mr Jeremy Hunt. Passed unanimously by all members attending.

#### **8. Election of the new Independent Examiner**

Mr Peter Bickley introduced Mr Clive Gaut who is happy to take on the role of Examiner for SRA. This was proposed by Mr Peter Bickley and seconded by Mrs Mary Quiney.

- 9.** There being no other formal resolutions to bring before the meeting, the chairman declared the **Annual General meeting closed at 8.15pm**. He said that we very much hope that some form of social gathering with suitable libations and sweetmeats as well as a guest speaker or two can be held later this year. In the meantime, we must fall back on our own resources and entertainment. He thanked all for attending and wished them good night.