

## PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

A meeting of the Town Development Committee was held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 3.00 pm.

**PRESENT:** Cllr J Palmer (Chairman), Cllr J Deane, Cllr P Humphries, Cllr R Oppenheimer (Hampshire County Council), Cllr J Butler (East Hampshire District Council), Mr T Struthers, Mr R Mocatta (South Downs National Park Authority) Mr D Humphries, and Ms L Bevan

Also in attendance: Mr N Hitch (Town Clerk), Mr S Field (Committees Manager), and Town Mayor Cllr J Matthews. There were 2 members of the public and no one from the press.

### **T 0672**      CHAIRMANS REMARKS

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed his sadness at the passing away of Richard Besant. Richard had contributed so much to the Neighbourhood Plan, as well as chairing the Neighbourhood Plan meetings. Richard was a great public servant and will be missed on the Town Development Committee meetings. The chairman wished to express his condolences to Richard's family.

### **T 0673**      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs L Farrow and Mr V Clarke

### **T 0674**      GRANTING OF DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)

There were no requests for dispensation.

### **T 0675**      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### **T 0676**      APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Town Development Committee minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018, previously circulated, were approved.

**RESOLVED**                      **that the minutes of the Town Development Committee, held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018, be approved.**

### **T 0677**      PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

**PROGRESS ON THE i-TREE PROJECT**

Professor Andy Moffatt recapped on the history of how the i-Tree project was instigated, primarily by the situation of the trees in the Town Square. The i-Tree Survey was published in October 2017 and it was now time to consider a Tree Strategy for Petersfield and the surrounding area. This would require clear guidance on how to maintain and increase the tree cover in the area. It was envisaged that the Tree Strategy should be something that all major stakeholders could sign up to, with the Town Development Committee being the overarching coordinator. *(full report attached at appendix A)*

Members asked about costs, and it was explained that whilst actual costs were not known, the man-power required would be voluntary, so total costs would not be huge.

It was noted that Petersfield Society were working with East Hampshire District Council and Petersfield Town Council on a Tree Strategy for the Town Spine. It was also noted that there were individuals within East Hampshire District Council who could assist with this project.

It was suggested that Mr T Slaney of South Downs National Park should be contacted to see how they would be able to assist and advise with both town and outer edge of town planting. The plan would need to be introduced after the Town Plan was adopted.

Also noted was the planting of 110 trees for the World War I fallen who are listed on the Petersfield War Memorial. Petersfield Society and Petersfield Town Council are searching for areas and space where trees can be planted.

Consideration should be given on how to engage voluntary groups, and the whole community.

The Tree Strategy would need to be adopted and could become an addendum to the Petersfield Neighbourhood Plan in 5 years time.

TPOs would need to be considered in the whole context of the Tree Strategy, re-evaluating requirements for each tree that currently has a TPO, and whether it should retain the TPO.

Professor Moffatt was asked to produce a risk assessment for the next Town Development Meeting

**RESOLVED** that Professor Moffatt starts working on the Tree Strategy by producing a risk assessment





## Petersfield Town Development Committee – Agenda item 7

## Presentation by Andy Moffat

1. Thank you for the opportunity to attend the meeting and put forward the proposal for a Tree Strategy in person.
2. Perhaps the start of this journey was the misunderstanding about the silver maples in Petersfield Square. We now know that a large groundswell of opinion over the loss of these trees helped EHDC to reconsider their decision to remove them. They are to be congratulated in finding a nice solution to the problem they were faced with.
3. At the root (excuse the pun) of this story lay a lack of understanding about the value Petersfield people place on trees and the many benefits that they receive from them. It was a fortunate consequence of this episode that EHDC, SDNPA and Petersfield Town Council all agreed to support the i-Tree project. This was a community-led project to quantify the trees in the town, and use government-approved methods of putting monetary value to them and the benefits they give. As I'm sure you know, the report of this project was published by the Petersfield Society in October last year, again supported by the authorities I have just listed.
4. The report drew the results of the survey together and made a strong suggestion that an important next step after the process of understand our tree resource better was to draw up a 'Tree Strategy' for the town so that we can better manage this vital resource. Tree Strategies are becoming common in many towns, cities and local authority areas across the country. They are written as public facing documents which reflect the components of a modern tree policy. They give clear guidance about how relevant authorities – and the community itself – can maintain and enhance trees in their locality. This is especially in the face of pressures from inevitable development, climate change and pests and diseases. Tree Strategies are promoted by the Woodland Trust as an appropriate way to help local authorities meet their obligations under the National Planning Policy Framework. The recent publication of the Government 25 year Environment Plan is very relevant here too, with its focus on the importance of urban trees, and how to increase their number. The Woodland Trust suggest that a robust tree policy and strategy should be taken into local authority core strategies and supplementary planning documents.
5. Following the successful execution of the tree survey project, the Petersfield Society is willing to co-ordinate the production of a Tree Strategy for the town, in close co-operation with all local authorities. We believe that active participation of the community would also help to deliver a Strategy that identifies a shared responsibility for the town's trees. So we are submitting our request to The Town Development Committee as the body best representing interests relevant to tree issues in the town.
6. The paper offers a draft list of contents for a strategy to give some substance to what it might contain. Of course, this is indicative only and will no doubt evolve if the project is given the go ahead. The paper seeks the agreement of the Town Development Committee to the principle of the Strategy and a logical next step would be to present a Project Plan and Risk Assessment at the next appropriate time.
7. I'm happy to try to answer any questions if you wish.