Romsey Town Council

Chief Officer: Helen Klaassen, PSLCC
Town Hall
1, Market Place
Romsey
SO51 8YZ

MINUTES of the MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL held on 15th September 2026 at Romsey Town Hall.

In the Chair; Cllr. **Janet Burnage**

Attendance:
Present:

Cllr. C. Birkett
Cllr. J. Burnage
Cllr. J. Critchley
Cllr. M. Cooper
Cllr. R. Kohli
Cllr. S. Gidley
Cllr. J. Parker
Cllr. J. Ray
Cllr. S. Wilkinson
Cllr. J. Urquhart

Absent:
Cllr. C. Burgess (Apologies)
Cllr. A. Goddard (Apologies)
Cllr. N. Gwynne (Apologies)
Cllr. R. Theron (Apologies)
Cllr. I. Culley (Apologies)

Also in Attendance:
Helen Klaassen – Chief Officer (CO)

Members of the Public;
3
Press

In the absence of Cllr Burgess, Cllr Burnage took the chair.

TC226 APOLOGIES
Apologies were received from Cllr. Theron, Cllr. Culley and Cllr. Burgess, Cllr Gwynne and Cllr Goddard.

TC227 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
None.

TC228 MINUTES

a. To receive and approve as a true and accurate record the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 14th July 2026.

Cllr. Ray **PROPOSED** and Cllr. Kohli **SECONDED** to approve the minutes of the full council meeting held on the 14th of July as a true and accurate record.
Cllr. Parker noted that there were a few items that needed amending, namely that there was no neighbourhood in front of planning committee and that under the item regarding develop developers contributions A line should be added that noted 'To be paid no later than 75% occupation of the site'.

b. Matters arising from those minutes.

None.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councillors heard from a member of the public who had attended to speak to them about a petition they had started for better pedestrian access under the railway bridge by the Sun Inn on Winchester Rd. Currently the pavements were very thin making it difficult for people to pass each other and difficult for those with children who safely use the pavement.

Members agreed that it had been an issue for a long time and after some discussion noted that they would be happy to look into it, asking the Chief Officer to contact Hampshire County Council to see if anything could be done to improve the issue. Railings were raised as a potential remedy for the issue and it was noted that at one point the idea of a tunnel had been mooted, Traffic lights had been considered but rejected for the impact on congestion. It was also noted that there was the possibility of developer contributions or section 106 being used if there was any left to allocate to it. The CO was asked to copy Test Valley Borough Council into the correspondence too. **Action: CO.**

TC229 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

To receive verbal reports from Borough and County Councillors regarding matters of interest to Romsey Town Council, followed by:

Cllr. Cooper; Updated members regarding the National Scheme of Delegation (NSD) which was a new director from government. It concerns a change in the way that planning applications will be considered; there will be two categories schedule 1 and schedule 2.

Schedule 1 will be dealt with by officers and will not be able to come to Planning Committee of any kind so there will be no democratic surveillance of those other than parish and town councils doing it at their own meetings. Schedule 2 is where there are major applications which are controversial or outside of the prevailing local plan and they can be called a committee but only if the Chairman of the committee and the Chief Planning Officer agree, which can be quite difficult to achieve sometimes. Cllr. Cooper noted that it was a concern that the democratic process would be lessened and meant that the scrutiny process carried out by town and parishes would be that much more important.

Cllr. Parker noted that one of the specific things that was restricted to schedule 1 are reserve matters applications for developments of under 500 houses so if a development had come in as an outline application there would not be any public scrutiny of the reserve matters that fill in all the details of that development unless there were more than 500 houses on that site Cllr. Parker noted that he believed it a retrograde step because most outline applications are vague.

Cllr Gidley; Noted that she had recently sent round her written report and reminded councillors that she would be meeting the portfolio holder for Universal Services (public transport and roads etc) and they would be coming to Romsey for a tour, so if there were any questions or matters that should be brought to their attention please let Cllr. Gidley know.

a) Questions for County, Borough and Town Councillors

None.

b) Any other matters Councillors might like to raise.

None.

TC230 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

To receive and note the minutes of:

a) Planning Committee meetings held on 16th July, 6th August, 27th August (draft)

Cllr. Parker **PROPOSED** Cllr. Cooper **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted.

b) Buildings and Community Committee meeting held on 4th August (draft)

Cllr. Birkett **PROPOSED** Cllr. Wilkinson **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted

c) Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 25th August (draft).

Cllr. Wilkinson **PROPOSED** Cllr. Urquhart **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted

d) The Allotment Committees:
   i. **Southampton Road**
   ii. **Kings Chase**

Cllr. Ray **PROPOSED** and Cllr. Parker **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted.

TC231 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr. Critchley gave an update; at the moment the Draft Neighbourhood Plan was on a 6 week Regulation 14 consultation. 3 consultations had been held at Woodley village hall, the Town Hall and Abbotswood community centre and it was also in the Town Hall for the whole week in the Paimpol room. The steering group would be reviewing the comments from the consultation later in October and from there it would go to Test Valley Borough Council for Regulation 16 consultation and Cllr. Critchley expressed a I hope that it wouldn't change too much following consultation.
Printed copies were available at a cost of £3 each.

Cllr. Cooper took the opportunity to note that having read through it, the piece of prose on page 8 describing Romsey was the best he'd ever read in his life and he congratulated Cllr. Critchley on writing it.

Cllr. Burnage publicly thanked Cllr. Critchley for all the work that he'd done on the plan, she noted that he had taken the initiative and run with it, and that the result was a very professional plan.

TC232 FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

i. To receive and approve the payments lists for July and August 2026

Cllr. Parker **PROPOSED and** Cllr. Wilkinson **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the payments lists be approved.

ii. To receive and approve the bank reconciliation for July and August 2026

Cllr. Parker **PROPOSED** and Cllr. Wilkinson **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the bank reconciliations for July and August be approved.
Cllr. Parker gave his thanks to the CO for the new style of bank reconciliations which accurately reflected all the accounts the council held.

iii. Council Meetings and Committees;

a. To revise the dates of Mayor Making and the ATCM to 18th and 25th May 2027

Cllr. Burnage **PROPOSED** Cllr. Urquhart **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** to revise the dates of Mayor Making and the ATCM.

b. Following a request from Cllr Gidley, to remove her from the Planning Committee for this year

Noted.

iv. Matters from the F&R Committee:

a. HR/H&S Support – to approve the recommendation of the F&R Committee under item FR074 of the minutes of 25.08.26 and to allocate an amount from the general reserve for same.

The CO apprised councillors of the questions that had been raised from the F&R Committee, and subsequent answers regarding the approval of the appointment of an HR / HS advisory company. The CO noted that she would be able to get user data from the dashboard which would enable her to understand the usage of the system.
Thus Cllr. Parker **PROPOSED** and Cllr. Ray **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the council approve the contract with Peninsula. Furthermore, Cllr. Ray **PROPOSED** and Cllr. Wilkinson **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the fee for the remainder of this financial year be taken from reserves and the CO would add it to the budget for 2027/28. The CO confirmed that this would be an amount of approximately £4000.

b. To approve the F&R Committee's recommendation under item FR075 of the minutes of 25.08.26

Following discussion Cllr. Wilkinson **PROPOSED** and Cllr. Parker **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the recommendation of the F&R committee regarding the continuation of the contract for decorating the town

hall be extended to the decoration of the Court Room under section 5.12 of the Council's Financial Regulations.

v. Matters from the B&C Committee:

a. To consider the grant application from the RBL as per item BC151 ii. a. of the minutes of 04.08.26.

The matter was discussed, it was noted that some councillors felt that it was not appropriate to award a substantial grant for refreshments and what had been previously awarded.
Thus, Cllr. Burnage **PROPOSED** Cllr. Cooper **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that a grant of £600 be awarded.
Voting; 8 for, 2 abstentions.

vi. Romsey Festival Update

Cllr. Burnage gave an update that in October all festival participants would be invited to a meeting to discuss plans for the festival going forward. The idea being that it is taken under the umbrella of the town council and would be led and managed as part of the Civic Events and Engagement (CEE Officer) role, but would still be committee led. The festival would encompass all appropriate events within Romsey parish. Cllr. Burnage noted that she felt that this had been the direction of travel for the festival for a number of years now. Councillors expressed that they would not want to see any of the events merged that they remain their own separate events.
The CO drew attention to the suggested design of the logo. Councillors liked the brighter designs but expressed a desire for the existing Romsey Festival logo to continue to be incorporated.

Cllr. Parker highlighted that it would be ideal to have something that also summarised the Christmas events in Romsey as there were so many of them. He noted that previously a poster or newsletter had been used but that it would be a nice dry run for the Romsey festival to start with. The CO confirmed that she would raise this with the CEE Officer and work towards it.

TC233 20MPH LIMIT

Councillors noted that the information received from Hampshire County Council was complex and would need to be worked through, it also did not give any indication of costs for the two schemes and therefore it was hard to determine which would be better.
Cllr. Critchley **PROPOSED** and Cllr. Cooper **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Critchley should lead a working group to look at the proposals following further information obtained by the CO. Councillors also requested that someone from HCC come and talk to them about it.

TC234 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The CO spoke about the reception at the Town Hall and laid out a proposal to limit the free drinks to one on arrival, and opening the bar to allow the purchase of further drinks. The profits from the bar would go to the Mayor's Charity. Councillors were happy with this proposal and thus Cllr. Burnage **PROPOSED** Cllr Birkett **SECONDED,** and it was **RESOLVED** that this format should be applied to the reception.

TC235 ROMSEY FUTURE

i. RF Update

It was noted that although there had not been a meeting there had been no update about the tendering process for the South of Town Centre and panel meetings to interview the tenderers should have taken place in September. Though it was noted that since local government reorganisation had been put on hold there was not the pressure on Test Valley Borough Coincil anymore.

ii. LGR Update.

Cllr. Gidley reported that she'd had a discussion with Andy Ferrier recently and he had reported that the government ministers had said that they wanted a rapid review during party conference season and to hopefully expect something shortly after that. Stressing that it was the decision made in March that is on hold and LGR is expected to go ahead. Cllr. Gidley noted that there was some work behind the scenes to try and push unitary elections next year but it was unlikely.

The CO relayed that she had a discussion with Cllr Gwynne regarding the Strategic Plan and that she would continue with its production, based on LGR going ahead, but that the time constraints had been lifted. The CO hoped to have a draft for the November meeting.

TC236 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ATTENDING MEETINGS OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Reports from members who have, since the last FC meeting, attended meetings of external organisations.

Cllr Parker: Had attended;

- *Romsey Future Health Working group* in July that largely discussed what could be done from a preventative health point of view. The reports for that were still awaited.
- *Launch of the Test, Learn and Grow* initiative in July where discussions were had about schemes that had been set up in the Test Valley area to demonstrate how the community councillor and community approach works with a view to encouraging its spread to the rest of the councils in mid Hampshire.
- *Romsey Future Health working group Information and Communications subgroup* which covered the difficult issue of engaging with people to ensure messages got through. There would be some research done about this, covering communication across all demographics and platforms, which hopefully would be of use to the Town Council as well.
- *Romsey Future Programme Board meeting*, topics there included the South of Town Centre plans.
- *Police meeting regarding Sadlers Mill. This covered the antisocial behaviour at Sadlers Mill in the summer it was also attended by councillor Gidley Cllr. Critchley and Cllr. Burgess and the general consensus seemed to be they know what the problems are but there are no new ways of dealing with them.*
- *Woodley Village Hall Committee:* Various projects were discussed such as stage curtains and councillor Parker would provide the B&E manager with a report covering it all.
- *Woodley Grange;* Attended the launch of the refurbishment, following 30 years under the same owner.

- *Cllr Gidley;* Regarding the police meeting there needs to be better and more reporting the police did agree to getting paper copies of the reporting forms as members of the public were finding it difficult and onerous putting information into the police system saying it took about half an hour to fill it in. Cllr. Gidley also noted that the topic needed to be tackled at the beginning of the summer before the antisocial behaviour started, noting that this year it seemed to be worse because of the continued hot weather and that encouraged not just youngsters but whole families to congregate up there.

Cllr Burgess: Had attended:

- *Speaking Spaces (SS) & Romsey Opportunity Group (ROG):* In the aftermath of One Romsey, he attended a meeting with both organisations in July. Both are great advocates of Makaton and SS are shortly drafting a plan to resurrect Makaton (introduced by them in 2014) back in the Community. Once re-established, SS plan to introduce it to the wider Test Valley area. Date of next meeting tbc, but hopefully October.
- *Youth in Romsey: P*resently undertaking an outreach program with small groups of young people to ascertain their thoughts and aspirations of Romsey. Realistic aspirations from the first outreach have been fed in to the RNP process. Though unrealistic, there is general desire for a "lido to satisfy a love of water". Sadlers Mill residents are all too aware!
- *Baby Necessities:* Meeting with them next month to discuss their proposal for a Romsey Charity Hub. An inaugural meeting involving Romsey Young Carers and YiR (and possibly TVBC) was recently held. After their impending move, Baby Necessities intend to develop a Business Plan. It will be interesting to see how their vision compares with Unity's role. YiR are keen to see a similar Hub involving local charities working with young people.
- *Chamber of Commerce:* They are very appreciative of our continued support. Last weekend's Food Fair was very successful. It is a favourite with many stallholders due to its popularity. One wishes to have a presence at next year's One Romsey.
- *Palladium:* They help the long-term unemployed back into work under a DWP program. Cllr Burgess joined them earlier this week, in their Southampton office to celebrate the achievements of 30 clients,

one of whom came from Romsey. Of the 30 on the program 17 are now employed, including our resident. One of his tasks was to lead a team to run the Brix-Ibit (Lego) event in the Crosfield Hall during July.

TC237 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

TC238 MAYORAL MATTERS

a. To consider a proposal for the Mayor to become a Patron of The Romsey Singers

The matter was discussed and it was agreed that it would not be appropriate for the Mayor to become a patron of just one charity. Romsey Singers were of course always welcome to invite the mayor to attend their concerts.

b. Mayoral Announcements

The skydive had been moved to March 2027 to give more time for fundraising.

TC239 STAFFING MATTERS – CLOSED SESSION

Councillor Birkett **PROPOSED** and Cllr Kohli **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the meeting be closed to the public and press pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

Staffing Report

Item 1. Noted.

Item 2. Cllr Parker **PROPOSED** Cllr Birkett **SECONDED** and it was **RESOLVED** that matter would not furthered at present. The CO was asked to relay this information as appropriate.

The meeting concluded at 9.18pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____