

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT LoSRA 2019 AGM

As most residents will be aware, LoSRA publishes 3 newsletters each year, in the early Spring, the Autumn and shortly before the AGM in June, which we distribute by hand to over 4,000 households in the Lower Sunbury community. About 600 residents subscribe to our weekly e-News bulletin - if you haven't yet signed up for this, just go to the website – losra.org - it takes less than 1 minute. We also post items from time to time on the Sunbury Facebook page, and more recently, we have had a regular feature in Sunbury Matters. We have our usual stand at the Sunbury Regatta in August, and last December, we took a stand at the Lower Sunbury Business Community Christmas fair. We try to keep people up to date with what we have been doing on your behalf, to meet our primary objective of “optimising and enhancing the quality of life for Lower Sunbury residents by all appropriate means”. A reminder of LoSRA's Aims is available on the website, together with a summary of some of LoSRA's campaigns and achievements since it's foundation in 1972. If you haven't seen the AGM newsletter you can view it, or contact us for further information, through the website. We rely on a network of volunteers to help distribute the newsletter and could always do with a few more. It doesn't take more than 1 hour or so, just 3 times a year, so if you are willing to help, we'd really appreciate it. Please give your contact details to Colleen before you leave this evening.

LoSRA is composed of a management Committee, being a small core of Officers, and up to 9 other members, some of whom I shall be proposing for your approval to re-elect, and one new one to elect, shortly. We are all volunteers and give generously of such time and talents as we have on your behalf. Our principal motivation is a desire to help protect, maintain and preserve for future generations the environment in which we all so much enjoy living. Our constitution requires that we shall have no political or religious affiliations, and we strictly abide by that. We do work in partnership with Spelthorne Council or other political representatives wherever appropriate but for no other reason than to meet our stated Aims. We currently have 4 positions vacant, so if anyone is interested in finding out more about what being a Committee member involves, please have a chat with me afterwards or come along to our next meeting.

LoSRA's committee meetings are open to observers, and we continue our practice of inviting a representative from our Sunbury Ward Councillors to our monthly meetings. We believe this has broadened & improved

communication between ourselves and our elected representatives. During the year, we also welcomed Daniel Mouawad, Spelthorne's Chief Executive, who gave us a valuable insight into the issues and challenges facing our Borough.

Looking back over the last year, some of the items on our monthly meeting agenda are similar to the previous year. Amongst these I will comment on the Spelthorne Local Plan, the Charlton Lane 'Eco Park' incinerator, and the Health Centre, and mention some which are upcoming.

For those unfamiliar with the background to the Local Plan review, in 2015, Spelthorne's Strategic Housing Market Assessment report (SHMA) projected future housing demand figures varying between 543 and 725 per annum. Since then the Government effectively imposed a target of 590, towards the lower end of the projected demand, but still 3½ times the figure in the existing 10 year old plan.

Following this in 2016 the Council issued a Call for Sites, which is, in effect, an invitation for land owners to submit land for potential development. Not surprisingly, the Jockey Club submitted Kempton Park, but a formal application for development has yet to be made as they say they are awaiting the outcome of the Local Plan process.

In 2017, the Council published its Green Belt Assessment, prepared by the independent consultants Arup. This looked at whether existing Green Belt land is meeting its defined purpose and if not, whether it can justifiably be released for development. Clearly, as a first step, it was critical for our residents that Kempton Park retain its Green Belt status and we were both relieved and encouraged to see that it has been rated Strongly performing. However, this is not a guarantee that it will not be built on, but it should make it more difficult for a developer to justify and gain the requisite planning permission for any proposed development. It is important that members are not lulled into a false sense of security about Kempton – the battle has still to be won. Arup are working on a Stage 2 report which is due to be published in October.

Early last year Spelthorne published its Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) which looked at what land might become available for development in the future. We published a list of the Lower Sunbury sites identified in last year's AGM newsletter, which can be viewed on the website.

This was followed by a consultation on the Issues & Options, which suggested a number of possible ways forward for Spelthorne to meet their housing and development objectives. As you may remember we looked at these in detail at our AGM last year during an excellent presentation by Spelthorne's Strategic Planning Manager. In October, following the consultation, Spelthorne published their summary response document which identified a preference from residents for a Brownfield focus as their first option, with a Staines focus as their second. The next stage is the publication of Spelthorne's preferred options, which is due in October this year for consultation over 8, possibly 10, weeks.

Very recently, Spelthorne consulted on the reclassification to Local Green Space of what is currently termed Protected Urban Open Space— this was identified by 56% of respondents to the Issues & Options paper as desirable, as it could give better protection for selected sites.

As you can imagine, we have been kept pretty busy absorbing all the information these various reports contained.

LoSRA strongly welcomed the public statement in 2016 from Council Leader Ian Harvey, repeated when the proposed sale of Kempton Park by the Jockey Club was announced, that Spelthorne Council will apply Local Plan policies to protect Green Belt. As we have continually said, we will do whatever we can to support them in their intentions to resist the erosion of Green Belt. Since 2017 we have used the services of a top planning QC when appropriate to advise us on the best way to use the Local Plan process to protect and defend Green Belt, not just Kempton, but other potential sites in Lower Sunbury. As the process proceeds, culminating in the real nitty gritty of examinations in public before a Planning Inspector, the cost of professional advice will rack up considerably. Through prudent management of our costs, LoSRA has accumulated reserves over the years against such an eventuality, but, as I said last year, the time is approaching when we will have to ask for additional funding. Working in partnership with the Keep Kempton Green team, we have done and will do as much background work and preparation ourselves as we can to minimise costs. It is now more than likely that an appeal for funds will come next year, as that is when the consultation on the publication of the Local Plan is due.

The construction of the Charlton Lane community recycling centre, or 'Eco Park' waste gasifier as they prefer to call it, is, finally, pretty well advanced and is in the testing & commissioning stage. As Paul has

outlined our departed Committee member, Peter Francis, was closely involved with this issue from the beginning and we all owe him a significant debt of gratitude. Only when the plant is finally in operation will we know for certain whether it will work as intended. Going forward, we will continue to be represented on the Community Liaison Group.

As some of you will know, Spelthorne is a designated Air Quality Management Area and Sunbury Cross is acknowledged to be an air pollution 'Hot Spot'. The new air pollution monitor installed largely due to our efforts at Sunbury Cross in 2017 has continued to provide regular, more comprehensive measurements than the nitrous oxide measuring air diffusion tubes which were previously the sole means of measurement, and thankfully Spelthorne Council agreed to continue funding for 2019 into 2020. Residents can view the results of the Sunbury Cross & the other monitoring stations on the Heathrow website www.heathrowairwatch.org.uk Our committee member, George Rushbrook, who is stepping down this year, has doggedly pursued this issue and we thank him for his time & efforts over the years. Spelthorne Council will shortly be publishing on their website their Annual Status Report which should include the 2017 whole borough air quality modelling report and data. They have appointed a consultant to take their Action Plan forward and, as a key resident group, LoSRA, will be a stakeholder in the Action Planning process in the Autumn.

My mention of the Heathrow website prompts me to say that we are aware of residents' possible concerns regarding the potential impact of a 3rd runway at Heathrow. Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL) have just begun their statutory consultation on airport expansion and this runs until 13th September. This will be the last opportunity to have your say before HAL submits its application for Development Consent next year. The Council have organised a briefing meeting for residents' associations on 2nd July, which we shall be attending. This will provide us with information and objective commentary on the impacts of expansion which we will feed back to you in due course. HAL will, of course, be holding its own consultations throughout the Summer.

The Health Centre continues to make good progress in improving & expanding all aspects of their service. The introduction of a new booking system in 2017 effectively eliminated the early morning appointment queue, and further refinements to improve flexibility are planned, with the intention of making sure patients see the clinician most appropriate for their problem. Many patients do not need to see a GP and can be

treated quickly and effectively by a paramedic, nurse practitioner, or other suitably skilled member of staff. They are currently trialling a new service 'Engage Consult' which should speed up this process. The re-modelling of the reception has been completed and the whole centre given a facelift. Patients visiting now see a modern, bright, friendly Health Centre, so different from the past. LoSRA was instrumental in setting up and developing the Patient Participation Group, of which every patient is an automatic member, and Neil Huntingford, one of our Committee members, continues to chair it & drive forward beneficial changes. A Core group of 8 or so patients work closely with the Health Centre in the role of 'critical friend' to represent patients' opinions. Periodic updates are published in LoSRA's Newsletters and e-bulletins and the PPG has its own website which regularly gets 3,000 hits each month, representing around 15% of the patient population. Additionally, the Practice now publishes its own newsletter and has a regular slot in Sunbury Matters. The annual Patient Survey consistently shows that the general satisfaction level with the clinical service is over 90%. The most recent survey, which received over 800 responses - the highest ever - is still being analysed in detail and should be available in September. Incidentally, the PPG is very keen to recruit users of the Health Centre not currently represented on the Core group and are looking particularly for patients from an ethnic minority background and also the younger age group e.g. under 30. The Core group meets around 6 times a year for less than a couple of hours, so it's not an onerous commitment. If you, or anyone you know could be interested, please encourage them to get in touch either through the PPG website, or with the Health Centre.

As well as the main items I have covered, individual committee members have been involved with a wide variety of issues where LoSRA's expertise has been helpful to residents and others in Lower Sunbury. Some examples of these are - objecting to proposed developments where they would be overbearing or out of character with the surrounding street-scene, providing advice to individual residents and groups on various planning issues, discussions with developers regarding prospective brownfield sites, liaison with Hazelwood London Irish on residents' concerns, representation on the River Users Group, and many more. I would encourage members to come to us when issues arise where they think we may be able to help. This might involve LoSRA taking it up on your behalf, or simply signposting you to where you can get the help and answers you need.

In closing, I want to express my sincere thanks to the other Committee members for their continuing help and support, and Mark McCartney, a Chartered Engineer who latterly deputised for Peter Francis, who is also standing down. Thanks also to James Ford Bannister, and Stephen Millinger for the sound, lighting & technical assistance. Finally, I want to thank you, our members, and also our Corporate Sponsors from the Lower Sunbury Business Community, for your ongoing financial support.

I'd now like to invite Iain Findlay to present the Treasurer's report.