HARLOW CIVIC SOCIETY
MINUTES
20TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MOOT HOUSE
JANUARY 15TH 2019

1. Present: Stan Newens (Chair); John Curry (Vice-Chair); Tony Evans (Treasurer); Isobel Urquhart (Secretary); Moira Jones; Barbara Burge; Mag Barrett; Jo Verrels; Jenny Lushington; Paul McLintic; Sheila Langman; Edna Stevens (councillor); Mike Jury; Tom Newens; Sandra Newens; Michael Brown; Jean Wright (councillor); Peter Mountsteven BTP, MRTPI Ret'd; Jeanne Mann; Stan Clark; Ray Curtis; Claire Hamilton (Director, Harlow and Gilston Park Garden Town Project) (23)
2. Apologies for absence: Gary and Nancy Slark; Eugenie Harvey (councillor); Frank Jackson; Mike Danvers (councillor); Nick Langman; Colin Porcher; Mary Wiltshire; Sharon Davies; Jenny Smith; Mimi Hester

3. Introduction and opening remarks from the Chair.
   Stan Newens welcomed members to the AGM, introduced our speaker, Claire Hamilton, Director of the Harlow and Gilston Park Garden Town project, and outlined the course of proceedings including the formal business of appointing members to the committee.

4. Minutes of the 19th AGM of Harlow Civic Society, Jan 16 2018
   A correction has been made to the minutes: Mary Wiltshire's name had been incorrectly spelled. No matters were arising and the minutes were agreed.

5. Brief report of HCS Officers

5.1 The Secretary's Report (attached)
Topics covered:

a. Meetings with council officers, and with the Managing Director and Leader of the Council and with Claire Hamilton.

b. Regular scrutiny of planning applications, making comments and objections when appropriate.

c. Harlow Architectural Design Awards

d. Commissiong a plaque to celebrate the work of Douglas Hayter

e. Arranging events and talks, and producing a Members' Newsletter

Responses to Secretary's Report from members:

- Keeping in touch with people not on email. Tony Evans will ask members by conventional mail to let him know if they are happy to be contacted by email, (because this saves on costs) and will make a note of those who will need to be contacted by regular post.

- Paul McLintic notified the meeting that HADA Panel has been invited to participate in Harlow Showcase, organised by Robert Finlay, to celebrate all that Harlow has achieved.

- Enquiries were made about the security of Harlow Museum artefacts currently held at the Gibberd Gallery.

5.2 The Treasurer's Report (attached)
The Treasurer presented the balance sheet for 2018. These show that the Society is in good financial health. Tony Evans thanked the auditors Frank Jackson and Colleen Morrison for their careful scrutiny of the accounts.

6. The Election of officers and committee members.
   The following members were re-elected:

Stan Newens	Chair
John Curry	Vice Chair
Tony Evans	Treasurer
Isobel Urquhart	Secretary
Moira Jones	Minutes Secretary
Barbara Burge	Press Secretary
Peter Mountsteven	CPRE Representative

   The following members were also elected:
   Robin McCartney
   Frank Jackson (auditor)
   Sharon Davies
   Jenny Smith
   Derek Humphrey was elected as our 2nd auditor, replacing Colleen Morrison who has stood down.

7. Talk by Claire Hamilton, Director, Harlow and Gilston Park Garden Town project.
   Claire presented a very full explanation of the principles guiding the garden town project and the character of the vision for the town and the surrounding developments that are being considered. She explained her role in servicing the Garden Town Board, made up of representatives from the 5 partners, all of whom report back to their own executives.

   Key points
   Harlow, together with its 4 partners, East Herts, Epping, Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils, was awarded garden town status in 2017, unlocking a very large amount of funding which the partners will, in collaboration, use in what Claire described as a major recasting of the whole area. She gave members an impression of the scale of the project: 16,000 new houses will be built up to 2033, with an additional 7000 in Gilston.
   Claire confirmed that the Gibberd Principles were at the forefront of the partners' vision and intentions, and that there were important structures in place to scrutinize how these are manifest in the plans. In particular, she explained that there will be a Quality Review Panel which will be made up of eminent architects and planners, including Guy Nicholson, who will review the projects' plans at key points. Importantly, although the Panel is independent and has no formal powers within the project's decision making, its recommendations will be a 'material consideration' at planning committees.
   The central importance of Harlow to the success of the whole project was emphasized, and Claire emphasized that this was understood by all partners. Although Epping Forest District Council are the fund holders for the project, the Board agreed that it was important to co-locate in Harlow and so will meet regularly in Harlow as well as in Epping.
   Considerable attention was given to ambitious plans to change people's ways of moving around the town and getting into Harlow by public transport. Essex County Council are looking at ways to reconfigure the bus network across the county, including improvements to bus routes into Harlow. A target of 50 percent of journeys within the town to be non-car (37 per cent at present) has been proposed, with plans to provide a sustainable transport system where residents would be within 10 minutes of a bus stop and a regular and frequent service. Various ideas are being looked at e.g. separated transport lanes, electric vehicles, even 'kinetic tarmac' or 'driverless pods'. Claire considered that the project offered an opportunity for modern transport planners to test new technologies and was looking forward to attracting as many ideas as possible for the Board to

consider. Innovative suggestions were also being encouraged about how to make areas - e.g. 'pocket parks' and areas round bus stops and hatches - attractive places to wait and meet.
The plan for economic growth involves considerations of what kinds of jobs there will be in the future, how many jobs and people will these involve; and where people will work in the future (bearing in mind the idea that people who are able to work close to home and not commute would ease congestion). How will young people be upskilled for the kinds of work that the town will be attracting in the future?
Claire also outlined ideas for the future health needs of the town and referred to central government's NHS plans to encourage localized health centres catering for a wider range of health needs, as well as ongoing plans for a new hospital which will become firmer once the infrastructure of transport links are finalised.
In terms of members' concerns not only about the amount of housing but also its affordability, and about the amount of rentable, social housing that will be included, Claire referred to a principle of mixed/balanced housing where the revenue from house sales will go towards the costs of building social housing.

Members' responses:

- Questions were asked about the future planning for the railway station. Claire explained that there was a separate project for developing the Railway Station and the bus station in the town centre. John Curry pointed out that there were limits to what could be done because of the surrounding buildings .
- Claire was able to reassure members that all developers and planners were aware of the vision for the Garden Town and had access to the Design Guide.
- Concerns were expressed about security of archaeological works where these extended across borders between different partners or new crossings were being suggested. Claire confirmed that there will be no changes to existing district borders.
- Claire responded to concerns that Harlow might become known as Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. At present the latter is merely a working brand name for developers to easily identify the parameters of the project.
- An important question was asked about the water supply infrastructure for the garden town and especially plans for an increase in sewage. Claire believed that plans will be included in the infrastructure delivery plan.

7. Concluding remarks.

Stan Newens thanked our speaker and drew the meeting to a close.