

Approved Minutes of HRA Committee Meeting
Held on 14th April 2014
Highfield House Hotel

- Present Jerry Gillen, Alison Shelley, Simon Hill, Stephen Connelly, Jill Baston, Chris Klewe
- Attending Councillor Adrian Vinson, Councillor Matthew Claisse, Jacky Barnes PRG, Roret Blue USA, Nick Bacon, Becky Bosson, Kate Francis, Mike Francis
- Apologies Roger Brown, Councillor Linda Norris, Julia Brooking, Simon Hill, Caroline Knight, Tom O'Connor PRG, Nicolla Martin, Nadine Johnson, Headley Rossell, John Bradshaw.

1. Welcome and apologies
The committee welcomed Kate and Mike Francis from Northcote Avenue.
2. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
3. Matters Arising
There were no matters arising.
4. Building Bridges Project
Jerry Gillen reported that he had met with Claire Gilbert to discuss possible events and they suggested a community curry night in September (at the University) for which there would be a ticket price of £5. The second main project was to be a 'Highfield in Bloom' completion aimed to encourage those students with a front garden to develop the area with new planting and perhaps help other residents with their own gardens. The project would start in September and be judged the following May. It was hoped that Hilliers might be persuaded to judge the event but this would depend on any fees being charged.
B&Q were quite likely to make plants available at a discount.
5. HMO Survey
The possibility of carrying out a survey of housing in the Ward to determine the exact number of student HMO's was discussed. The City Council have indicated that they would be prepared to give some assistance, presumably with access to some of their data bases. The Council used Ordnance Survey mapping software for which the HRA also had a licence suggested that the use of Google mapping might not be necessary.

Other points raised were:-

- (1) The outer residents association have completed a survey in the Alma

Road/Gordon Avenue area.

(2) The University is very likely to attempt to increase student numbers if at all possible.

(3) We would need to get each road in the ward surveyed by a local resident but care had to be taken over issues of privacy and data protection.

(4) The Electoral Roll and a breakdown of Community Charge payments for each address, (probably available from the Council), should help to identify student HMO's since they are exempt from payment.

(5) It appeared that it was not usually possible for HMO planning status to be reverted to normal family use and that landlords had the right to flip house use between HMO and family use as required.

Councillor Adrian Vinson reported that the Council does not know the number of HMO's in the city nor the likely future demand for them. The Scrutiny Panel report on this matter will probably say that there is no evidence to support a change in the present policy. There is therefore a strong need for the survey proposed. It would also help the HRA in planning matters if the reasons given for granting or refusing permission for planning changes were more comprehensive. The Scrutiny Panel report is likely to go to the Management Panel (essentially the Council Cabinet) in mid May, and the Council then have 6 Months to deal with it. A survey produced in the next 2 months or so would thus be very helpful.

Becky Bosson from Donnington Grove said that it was important to cover the lower Portswood area around Brickfield Lane.

Cllrs Adrian Vinson and Matthew Claisse both confirmed that they would approach the Council CFO with a view to listing houses that pay no Community Charge and the possibility of council staff assistance with the survey.

Simon Hill agreed to produce a detailed pro forma for the survey.

6. AGM

This was all sorted and it was noted that Alan Whitehead, our MP, would be attending.

7. Reports

Planning Jill Baston reported that very few applications had been made last month and that they were not contentious.

Other points raised were:-

The second part of the old Peacocks store was likely to become a café.

Solent University is planning a large increase in student numbers.

Simon Hill asked why Housing density limits on developments were not regularly applied by the planning authorities.

Finance No report due to absence of treasurer.

Membership Chris Klewe passed on data supplied by Nicolla Martin.
membership numbers in the usual format
Data base records 560
Paid up total 463
Rolling paidup 168

The recent newsletter had resulted in many donations.

8. AOB

BBC has put out feelers about filming a new housing programme in Southampton.

Simon Hill said that there would be a picnic event on the Little Common area on 1st June starting at 3.30 pm. Please bring your own supplies and furniture.

Alison Shelley inquired about lorry routes to local supermarkets because a large lorry was travelling along Welbeck Avenue in the very early morning. She agreed to monitor the situation.

Roret Blue and Alison Shelley agreed to assist at the door for the AGM.

9. Reserved business

There was no reserved business

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.