



Highfield Residents' Association

Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting held on Monday 8th October 2012, at the Highfield House Hotel, 7.30pm

Present: Roger Brown (Chair), Peggy Augier, Roret Blue, Steve Connolly, Jerry Gillen, Simon Hill, Nadine Johnson, Keith Reed, Adrian Vinson, Bryan Wakely
Attending: Nick Bacon, Jacky Barnes (PRG), Cllr Matthew Claisse, Cllr Linda Norris, Tom O'Connor (PRG)

1. The new Chair, Roger Brown welcomed members to the meeting. In Jill Baston's absence Jacky Barnes agreed to take the minutes.

Apologies: Jill Baston, Sue Hartley, Caroline Knight, Nicolla Martin, Headley Rossell, Alison Shelly.

2. **The minutes of the meeting** on held on 10th Sept. were agreed. Under Item 6a (finance) it was agreed to delete the sentence referring to the amount of money in the bank account, on confidentiality grounds.

3. Matters arising:

- Roger Brown had received no reply yet to his letter to Councillor Thorpe following the previous meeting; if a reply is not received soon, Roger will chase.
- An HRA response has been sent to SCC regarding the proposed student accommodation on Portswood Broadway.
- A consultation response had been sent previously on private landlords.

4 Sub-committee reports:

Finance:

On behalf of Headley Rossell, Jerry Gillen reported that finances were still healthy!

Planning:

- Keith Reed circulated a Planning Update to 8.10.12.
- There was considerable discussion about 25 Roselands Gardens where work was currently being done to convert a garage to living accommodation, although planning permission had not been granted. Cllr Claisse had contacted the enforcement team, and the builders told to stop work until planning permission has been gained. HRA have sent in objections to the application. Noted that no application for conversion to an HMO has been submitted.
- Simon Hill suggested that the University should be contacted so that they can warn potential student tenants off.
- Keith Reed undertook to get further information about a possible HMO conversion at 14 Westwood Road.
- 10 Grosvenor Mews: Evidence of a breach of planning laws had been sent to Chris Lyons – to date no enforcement action has been taken. Proposed that we should send a formal complaint to SCC.
- Jerry Gillen has consulted with Sarah Clover about 51 Heatherdeane Rd – the owners have to prove 10 years continuous use for it to become an official HMO – they have never made a formal application, but Cllr Claisse believes there may be one in the pipeline.
- We are still waiting for the result on 53 Shaftesbury Ave.
- Sarah Clover (King's Chambers) suggests that we agree a policy/ community strategy with other Residents' Associations to address the issue of the Council's inactivity, and to be mutually supportive on planning matters. In general she thinks that it would be too expensive to try for judicial reviews – it might be more productive to monitor the results of any appeals, and act collectively as a body of 'common law' accumulates.
- Adrian Vinson reported that the Council are looking round the city for small sites for possible development for housing. An example was the garages in Richmond Gardens.

5. HRA Planning Guidelines. These had been previously circulated, having been amended, and were briefly discussed before being adopted. They will be put on the website with an accompanying map.

6. Communications.

- In view of the lengthy list of apologies it was agreed to hold this over to the next meeting.
- The issue of OTRA having its own page in the Newsletter would also be held over, but the feeling of the meeting was that it should just be treated like any local interest group.

A.O.B.

- There is a forthcoming lecture at the University – “Towards a just planning system” – 5.30pm, Thursday 18th October.
- HRA Annual General Meeting 2013 – the Hotel has been booked for Thursday, 18th April.
- Simon Hill would like to disseminate information about Common Sense more widely.
- Steve Connolly asked if a house that had reverted to private use having been an HMO could then return to being an HMO without approval. Jerry Gillen said that cannot happen unless the owner changes.
- Tom O’Connor (PRG), speaking with reference to the successful appeals on Nos. 3 and 32 Abbots Way has asked for a meeting with Kevin White to see how SCC view the conservation management plan.
- Cllr Norris observed that the new purpose built student housing that is going up will impact on private landlords.
- Keith Reed announced a change of date for the Children’s Party – now 8th December at Portwood School. He appealed for help.
- Roret Blue announced an initiative to improve the appearance of Blenheim Gardens – teas and coffees will be served this Sunday (14th Oct)
- Peggy Augier reported that the bins located outside the kebab shop on Highfield Lane are still overflowing. SCC will send someone to inspect them, but although close to the pavement the land they stand on is privately owned.
- Adrian Vinson reported that he has seen an application for a new small hall of residence on Horseshoe Bridge – no further details yet.
- Bryan Wakely inquired if we were having a committee social event around Christmas time – we usually go to Ceno’s or Mangos. Agreed to find a date at the next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Next Meeting: Monday 13th November 2012.