

Minutes HRA Committee Meeting
Held on 13 January 2020
At Highfield House Hotel 7.30pm



Committee members present: Jerry Gillen, Nicolla Martin, Nadine Johnson, Steve Connolly, Adrian Vinson, Barbara Claridge

Attending: Shirley Effamy, Andi Sutcliffe, Nick Bacon, Kate Fay (UoS), Matthew Claisse, Tom O'Connor, Cllr Gordon Cooper, Cllr John Savage, Sue Ingham

1. **Welcome, declaration of interests:** Jerry opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He announced the death of a long-serving HRA committee member, Ann Wardle, who had died recently. There were no declarations of interest. Cllr Savage informed the meeting that since her death, her husband had now passed away. The funerals are due to be held on 25 January.
2. **Apologies:** Prof Roger Brown, Martin Benning, Jon Walsh, Angela and Leigh Seymour, Ken Burtenshaw, Steven Johnston
3. **Minutes and Amendments** of the previous meeting held on 9 December 2019
The minutes had been circulated previously and there were no amendments

4. Matters Arising:

- a. Report any reply from October Books (*HonSec*)

The HonSec read out the reply from October Books and thought it was a reasoned reply giving the reasons why the bookshop chooses to sell white poppies rather than red ones. They would continue with this practice in the future. General discussion took place with opinions voiced and divided. Nicolla Martin proposed that their letter explained their view and should draw a line under the issue. Further discussion took place. The conclusion was that a majority thought HRA should accept October Books' explanation and leave the matter concluded.

- b. Delivery parking on pavements in Portswood update if any (*Cllr Cooper*)

Cllr Cooper reported that he had not made any further progress beyond that which was reported at the previous meeting. The HonSec read out an e-mail from the correspondent thanking Cllr Cooper and HRA for being pro-active in the matter as he had experienced very little obstruction by lorries on the pavement in recent weeks. Cllr Cooper accepted the thanks gratefully.

5. University Liaison:

Kate Fay reported: New Head of School at Winchester School of Arts, Professor Larry Lynch - previously at Dartington College of Art
New Interim Chief Operating Officer, Richard Middleton. 12 years' experience in Higher Education, with UoS for 9 months

End of year waste

-Conversations begun before Christmas (met with Council representatives)

-Previously the University paid for extra collections at the end of term, the issues with this is that items that could be recycled end up in land fill

-Trying to secure large recycling units from the council (for furniture and other items) to be placed in student areas to encourage recycling. We have tried this for the last 2/3 years; however we have come across procurement difficulties at the council. Started early this year so we are hopeful for a positive outcome

Students in the community leaflet- Jon mentioned last time, just as an update we have had a kind offer of input from HRA member (Sue Ingham) who I will arrange to meet. We hope to have this ready for new academic year

6. **Update on Highfield Road Parking** (*Cllr Savage*) See supporting paper

Cllr Cooper reported that parking off-road, on-verge, for these particular houses in Highfield Road had been established in 1996. Householders had paid for the tree root protective matting. Maybe the parking tickets had been threatened by an over-zealous parking attendant. In liaison with SCC it has been agreed that parking permits will be required and that this is a reasonable compromise. The Parking Officer is sending a letter to the residents to confirm this.

Jerry was going to attempt to track down Peter Chivers (past HRA) who might know the history.

7. **HRA Membership** eligibility and HRA Constitution (*NJ*) Constitution attached

The current HRA Constitution (2003) states that members have to live in Highfield and support the aims and objectives of HRA to become members. Nadine said Facebook was building up a number of followers who may not be members but might like to be. Should we open up the membership? There was general discussion outline the advantages and disadvantages of more open membership. Could non-Highfield residents be only interested in joining for the discount benefits? The Membership Secretary informed the meeting that several non-Highfield residents could already be fully paid-up members. In light of this it was agreed that the exec sub-cttee could look at the Constitution ready for presentation and approval at a SGM to be called at the AGM.

8. **Reports**

- a. **Finance** – The Hon Treasurer was not present
- b. **Membership** – Nicolla reported that as of December 2019 the database had 498 members; paid-up members totalled 444; January 2020 saw the start of the new year rolling membership and figures for this would be available at the next meeting. Jerry congratulated Nicolla on the increase in membership.
- c. **Planning Issues** – A question was raised about the erection of fences between 28 / 30 Brookvale Road. The view was that boundaries between properties do not fall under the same rules as those on a front boundary in a conservation area. Jerry discussed the application at 5, Blenheim Ave as inappropriate. Many individual objections had been raised. The front boundary wall at 12 Russell Place was still under consideration and a ruling was long overdue. Tom O’Conner informed the meeting that an amended planning application following consultations between the landowner and SCC Planning was pending.

9. Website / Facebook

Nadine reported that there were now 618 in total on the Facebook page (354 followers; 264 likes). She reminded members to send her any useful information about events in the area. PRG were going to contribute (*Action: Tom O'Connor*)

10. A.O.B.

- a. Southampton Common Forum update (*HonSec*).
The liaison meetings between SCC / SCF had been disbanded due to a senior SCC officer (Mitch Sanders?) leaving and Dave T. having to step up and cover some of this work as well as his own responsibilities. There was no capacity in the system at all and the council is in a very sad position. However, the SCF Volunteer Group had been given supervised access to do some clearing work in a Volunteer Garden in the wildlife garden behind The Hawthorns which had been out of bounds to any clearing or conservation maintenance for many years (16 years?). This was a huge step forward
- b. Funeral arrangements for Anne Wardle and her husband were announced as 25 January at Romsey Crematorium. Cllr Cooper agreed to represent HRA on behalf of HRA and Jerry Gillen who will be away.
- c. The. Question of a speaker for the AGM was discussed. Nadine offered to enquire about a local history guide who could be asked to focus on the Highfield area
- d. Cllr Savage and informed the meeting that the City Council were waiting for advice as to further Transforming the City funds (March). Cllr Cooper outlined that there were three levels of funding: Gold, Silver and Bronze. It was not yet known which Southampton would qualify for. If approved, serious consultation would need to be organised. It was likely that Portswood area would benefit. Any improvement work is time limited (3 years) for the grants to be spent
- e. HRA members were reminded to have ideas for the Summer Event. Please send ideas / comments to the HonSec. It was not yet known if Steven Johnston was willing to organise the event again.
- f. Jerry announced that NORA were meeting MHCLG on Planning, Appeals and STLs in addition to related issues
- g. Sue Ingham raised a question regarding the next stage of SCC Cycle improvement scheme (incl. Lovers' Walk) – watch this space for news by end of February
- h. Nadine informed the meeting that the HRA discount at Coffee #1 had been unexpectedly withdrawn (from all branches nationally). She was writing to them.
- i. The MENCAP Café Down the Lane (next to October Books) was offering 20% discount to HRA in February and March in an effort to raise their profile.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

The date of the next meeting is Monday 10 February at 7.30pm, Highfield Hotel.