

Minutes HRA Committee Meeting

Held on 12 April 2021

Via Zoom 19:00h



Present : Prof. Roger Brown (Chair), Martin Benning, Ken Burtenshaw, Jerry Gillen, Nadine Johnson, Dave White, Cllr John Savage, Kate Fay (University), Pete Thomas (OTRA), Karen Edwards (PRG), Pete Errington (Uplands Estate), Barbara Claridge.

- 1. Welcome :** Roger opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to Zoom especially partnership organisations. Thanks were expressed to officers for their continued hard work especially Nadine and Barbara
- 2. Declarations of Interest:** none
- 3. Apologies :** Nicolla Martin, Steve Connolly
- 4. Minutes :** The Minutes from the 8 March 2021 meeting had been previously distributed to all Committee Members. No comments had been received.
- 5. Matters Arising :** Roger confirmed that the Zoom meeting with Jon Willetts, the Conservation Officer, had been arranged for 21 April. Roger would produce an outline agenda. Likely attendees would include: Roger, Jerry, Barbara, Karen (PRG) and Pete T (OTRA).
- 6. Information from Councillors :** Councillor Savage gave a brief outline to the Transforming Cities (Portswood) current status reflecting the presentation given to HRA Committee by Andrew Ovenden (SCC) in March. Work was likely to be delayed slightly due to the local elections in May and would probably begin shortly after that. To learn more about the Portswood Transforming Cities visit: <https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/transport-projects/portswood-swaythling-corridor/>

There is still time to comment on the proposals here: roadworks@southampton.gov.uk

To sign up for updates go to: [Updates](#)

Karen reiterated concerns about traffic using residential streets as rat runs (e.g. Orchard Way, Westwood Road and Brookvale Road) if there was a reduced speed limit on Portswood Road but not also on local roads. The number of homeless / street-attached people in Portswood was raised but Cllr Savage said this issue was outside of the scope of the Transport Scheme. Pete T asked if there had been a Quality Impact Assessment carried out for the scheme. Cllr Savage will make enquiries. Dave W raised the issue of whether the scheme would investigate using current building space for setting up mobility hubs. Cllr Savage said the mobility hub was most likely to be placed in a revamped Westridge Road car park.

Roger commented that HRA had already sent in some comments and that we would like to comment further once final proposals were shared by SCC.

- 7. Further issues, reported by HRA members, were discussed with Cllr Savage. Fly-tipping (Highfield Lane by High Crown Street) and excessive rubbish in back gardens. Cllr Savage confirmed that there were ways to report both of these to the council and the council tracks all data that is sent in. If members were not receiving replies or council action (if this was appropriate e.g. fly-tipping**

on private land was not a council responsibility) then Cllr Savage would like to receive notice (Action HonSec).

8. University Liaison : Kate Fay gave this report:

The university has not received further guidance from the government when students on programmes that did not have a practical element were able to return to study in-person and on-campus. Until this is received, online teaching would continue along with regular testing of the students and staff with practical course elements.

The University is continuing to support remote and blended learning for students during the pandemic with all 'large' lectures still occurring online. 4,000 titles from the Hartley Library collections have been issued by post to support those studying away from the city.

The VC has written to all local MPs to ask for their assistance in pressing the government to provide further clarity over the timing of students return to campus (an announcement was anticipated on 5 April). **Post-meeting comment: the government has now announced that students may return to universities on 17 May.*

Uni-link bus services have returned to full operational frequency. Physical distancing restrictions remain in place on buses, reducing the capacity to a maximum of 30 people (compared to 90 under normal operation).

Following the success of the activity packs distributed to schools last year, the University's Widening Participation & Social Mobility Team has created the next round of packs for 2021. The first of these have been distributed. This 'Nutriskills' pack explores food and nutrition to improve Health and Wellbeing education amongst children. The aim is to produce and distribute over 15000 packs in 2021.

Roger thanked Kate for her input.

9. Reports

a) **Finance (MB) :**

Martin reported that the Nat West Bank had now accepted him as a signatory on the HRA account. The next stage was to update the contact details. Income stood at around £1000 and expenses at approximately £300. Malcolm White was in the process of auditing the 2020 accounts. It was agreed that Martin should purchase a bottle of wine for Malcolm as thanks.

b) **Membership (BC for NM) :**

The membership numbers are 472. This includes paid-up members of 337 and rolling members of 70. A member had been in contact with the Secretary enquiring about on-line membership payments. Martin reported that this is not possible at present as HRA has no online banking facility.

10. Planning Report (AS) : No report had been received in time for the meeting

Updates on casework:

- i. 30 Brookvale Road – this application was now being discussed at Panel. Jerry will represent HRA and liaise with Jane Jameison (PRG).
- ii. Gorilla Licensing Application for the Blockbusters building. PRG are objecting. HRA Planning Group will put together a statement and the Secretary will post this to SCC and it will then be available on the HRA website

- iii. An application for window replacement on a house in Blenheim Avenue was discussed. Pete T confirmed that the plans had been consulted within OTRA and that dormer windows were acceptable in that conservation area (Velux were not).
- iv. Jerry reported that Cenos was reopening after having been relicensed to the manageress under strict conditions.
- v. Roger will prepare an HRA response to the House of Commons Select Committee on Permitted Development Rights reflecting current HRA policy.

11. Crime information sharing WhatsApp group for Highfield (NJ) :

Nadine reported that all crime incidents were logged on the HRA website:

<http://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/crime-incidents/>

This also now includes helpful information. For example, anonymous reports from victims of crime can now be submitted by local Councillors and there is a special police reporting webpage for 'intelligence' / suspicious activity. It was a fairly vocal group with good reporting and feedback. There had been 21 reported incidents since the March HRA meeting.

Karen raised concerns about non-hire electric scooters. This was then discussed, especially how to report them. Were the police ignoring the problem? (Action: the Secretary will contact Neil Tuck, SCC Comms Team, about this).

12. Social Media (NJ)

Website : nothing new to report

Facebook: now has 640 followers which is an increase of 9 since the March Meeting.

The Committee received these reports with thanks.

13. City of Culture (CoC) (KB)

Ken reported that there was little to report on CoC this month. However, there is going to be a prestigious exhibition in May in the City Art Gallery 'Creating a National Collection: The Partnership between Southampton City Art Gallery and the National Gallery' 28 May – 2 September 2021.

A book to accompany this new exhibition will be published.

<https://www.southamptoncityartgallery.com/whats-on/creating-a-national-collection-the-partnership-between-southampton-city-art-gallery-and-the-national-gallery/>

Roger thanked Ken for his input.

14. A.O.B.

- The possibility of a summer function possible combined with the AGM was still under review.
- Jerry has contacted the Highfield House Hotel to ask if it is reopening
- Barbara had been contacted by a member of the Village Sign Society requesting information about Highfield signs and their location. It was confirmed that there are three such signs (one obscured by trees and the others needing cleaning)

The meeting ended at 20:20h

The date of the next meeting is Monday 10 May at 19:00h via Zoom.

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Highfield signs (Google Street View)

