



MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Monday 14 January 2013

Present: Roger Brown (Chair), Jerry Gillen (Vice-Chair), Jill Baston (Minutes Secretary), Roret Blue, Simon Hill, Headley Rossell, Steve Connolly, Sue Hartley, Alison Farmer, Nadine Johnson, Nicolla Martin.

Attending: Carsten Gundlach, Nick Bacon.

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Julia Brooking, Jacky Barnes, Chloe Green, Cllr Linda Norris, Peter Knight, Cllr Adrian Vinson, Keith Reed, Cllr Matthew Claisse.

2. Minutes of last meeting (taken as read)

Two typos to be corrected.

3. Matters arising

- Roger had agreed to write to Cllr Thorpe but later decided that it was better to meet rather than exchange emails and/or letters. A meeting has been arranged for 12 February 2013. Jerry will also attend.
- The website was now updating. It was already up to date on formal matters.
- Only 9 people had signed up so far for the proposed Committee Social on 24 January. It was decided to cancel the event.
- Jacky Barnes was unable to be present to report back on dates for a summer social. For agenda next meeting.
- Jerry had not been able to attend the meeting at the Council on proposed budget cuts.

4. Sub-committee reports:

a) Finances

Still healthy although a little depleted because of legal fees. Jerry confirmed that a cheque had been received at Chambers from Prof Dyke for work on 53

Shaftesbury Avenue. Formal thanks will be sent to the residents on behalf of HRA.

b)

- Roret has received information on planning from Keith. Nothing new of interest has appeared on SCC websites. Continuing issues are still ongoing.
- Jerry reported that 5 Crofton has been advertised as an 8 bedroom HMO, though there is no planning permission for this number. He has written re enforcement to Chris Lyons but has not received a response. To be taken up at the forthcoming meeting with Cllr Thorpe.
- 1 Blenheim Gardens in appeal process.
- Sue noted that the 5 Crofton Close issue is now in its 8th year. Roger intends to present the timeline to Cllr Thorpe.
- Roret has been told by SCC that the owner of 10 Grosvenor Mews is resident there. This is apparently incorrect. Jerry will raise the issue with SCC or Cllr Thorpe.
- Alison reported two lettings boards on local properties. She has emailed but not received a reply.
- There is still no enforcement on 51 Heatherdeane Road.

5. AGM

- The meeting will begin at 7.30pm with an introductory talk (10 minutes) by the Mayor, Cllr Burke, who will then preside. Formal business will follow, including a talk from Sarah Clover, till 9pm.
- Members can then take part in a get-together with drinks.
- Headley initiated a discussion about affordability, especially in view of the expense involved in bringing Sarah Clover along.
- It was noted that the AGM is now our flagship event. Sarah Clover will attract an audience of around 100. Other Residents' Associations and SCC officers could be invited. It is a one-off expenditure. There is value in the informal mingling afterwards, with drinks provided.
- Cancellation of the summer event could help to rebalance the books.
- The committee decided that the AGM will go ahead as originally planned.

- Contact with the press will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Initial notification of the AGM will go out in the next newsletter. Jerry will notify other RAs.

6. Grant Application (Awards for All)

It was suggested we could put forward a request of £5,000 towards the Little Common project, and £5,000 towards HRA costs.

Simon noted that the walkways from Lovers' Walk up to Burgess Road are dark and not well maintained. This was broadly agreed by the committee.

A local firm had agreed to put subsoil on the banks. More hoggin was needed on the Carriage Drive. Simon will pursue the grant application.

Headley gave notification of a letter from the funders of Awards For All – they will now consider funding for repeat activities i.e. funded last time. Headley will pursue.

7. HMO survey

- Simon noted that it would be good to have a map of all local HMOs, with curtilages and 40m distances clearly indicated, to help with Planning application information.
- Simon presented maps of part of the HRA area, identifying HMOs, student flats, family homes; 27% of current HMOs are within the area mapped.
- It would be helpful to map locations and details of HMOs in other areas; perhaps committee members or street reps could help with gathering the data.
- The maps could go on the website, updated as necessary.
- The project could be announced at the AGM together with a presentation.
- Simon will take this forward and report to the next meeting.
- Roret will take on the Seven Roads area. Perhaps OTRA can help.
- Carsten volunteered to check the Battle Roads.
- The Electoral Roll (December 2012), full version available at the Library, will help to identify student houses.

- Simon will identify the housing blocks in the areas, committee members will try to find helpers. Nicolla will pass on the street rep list.

8. AOB

Nicolla reported on membership. The database numbered 633. Last year (2012) closed at 450 paid up members. This marked a serious downward trend in membership. The rolling list for January 2013 was 7 paid up. Apologies were given to Nicolla for the omission of this item from the agenda.

The next meeting will include a discussion on membership.

Roger gave the welcome news that Caroline will continue as Communications Secretary and will continue with the Newsletter for the time being.

Several members felt it would be helpful to receive the Minutes earlier so as to be reminded of any commitments given at meetings. It was agreed that an Action Sheet will be issued shortly after the meetings.

Alison has updated the Facebook page. Fifty 'likes' had been received. She intends to develop the page with more information of interest to Highfield residents.

Simon raised the issue of speeding on Highfield Lane. To be discussed at next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.