

Minutes HRA Committee Meeting
Held on 11 March 2019
At Highfield House Hotel 7.30pm



Committee members present

Jerry Gillen (Chair), Nicolla Martin, Ken Burtenshaw, Stephen Connolly, Adrian Vinson, Dave White, Bryan Wakely, James Burgess, Adrian Ford, Nadine Johnson, Barbara Claridge (12)

Attending

Cllr Lisa Mitchell, Dick Buckle, Martin Benning (will join the committee as Treasurer from next meeting), Cllr Matthew Claisse, Tom O'Connor, Nick Bacon, Jon Walsh, Don John, Balbinder Bari, Sue Ingham, Barbara Matcham, (11)

1. Welcome, declaration of interests

Jerry welcomed three new attendees: Martin Benning, who had agreed to join the committee from the AGM as Assistant Treasurer; Don John, a local resident who was to speak to the meeting and Balbinder Bari who Jerry had approached to become the stand-in minute taker when Barbara was not able to attend committee meetings.

2. Apologies.

Simon Hill, Cllr John Savage, Steven Johnston, Angela Seymour (all accepted).

3. Minutes and Amendments of the previous meeting held on 10 December 2018

The minutes had been circulated previously and amendments made. Minutes were then agreed.

4. Matters Arising

- a. Jerry to advise student to contact student services direct if problem still existed – completed; the student had now met Sarah Watts.
- b. Cllr Savage to raise with SCC; Cllr Mitchell to write to schools both regarding pollution outside of schools – engines running. This topic was on-going. Cllr Lisa Mitchell reported that she had asked that the issue of 'idling' engines outside of schools be included in the Council's Active Transport Plan (Portswood and Highfield were relevant to HRA).
- c. Sarah to report Graffiti to Uni Office – completed and the graffiti has been removed.
- d. Tom O'Connor to report back after his meeting – completed but reported under Agenda item 8c.
- e. Jerry to inform SCC about Angela taking over Planning Role from Jill Baston and send Angela HRA Planning Guidelines - completed
- f. Cllrs Savage, Mitchell and Claisse to raise issue of planning enforcement regarding the 'fence' with SCC – progress reported under Agenda item 8c.
- g. Barbara to liaise with Ken regarding his article idea for the next Newsletter – completed.
- h. Nicolla to liaise with Jill Baston regarding committee serving schedule - completed and list has been updated in preparation for the AGM: Steven Johnston and Mark Batchelor are due for re-election. Ken Burtenshaw, Barbara Claridge, James Burgess, David White, Martin Benning and Angela Seymour are due for ratification as committee members. Jill Baston, Chris Klewe and Adrian Ford have left the committee. Jerry expressed grateful thanks to the leavers for their committee work. Balbinder Bari was approved as stand-in minute taker.

5. Representation: Mr Don John - Parking in Ripstone Gardens

Don introduced himself as a resident of Ripstone Gardens for 30 years. The street has developed over the

years to include significant student housing. Whilst the students themselves were generally well-mannered and friendly, car parking was now a problem. More so because the 2-hour parking limit was long enough for non-resident students to park and attend one lecture and then leave, only for this parking space to be occupied by another student parking for the 2-hour limit. The result was often that permanent residents, who had paid the Council £30 for a parking permit, were often not able to park near their homes.

Don had approached the Council with the request to reduce the parking time limit in Ripstone to 1-hour as this might deter student parking. Council had advised that, in order to take this further, it was required that the request come from a community association or residents' association (hence Don's attendance at HRA). Don asked for support in this matter.

General discussion took place around the table and it was agreed that indeed this was a problem that was shared across Highfield, especially in the streets around the university. Some streets had had their parking limit reduced to 1-hour and this had eased but not removed the resident parking problem. Adrian Vinson commented that it might strengthen Don's case if he conducted a survey of other residents for support first. Jon Walsh (for the University) explained that students were not allowed to bring cars onto the university site but that once they lived in independent housing they too were residents who might have cars. Nick Bacon asked if HRA could support a request to the Council for a general 1-hour parking reduction across a wider Highfield area. A comment was made that even though there were parking limits there was very little enforcement.

Don concluded that he was following Council advice in asking the Highfield Residents' Association to put the request to the council for Ripstone Gardens parking limit reduction. Jerry thanked Don for his input and stated that the association should be supporting its members when there was good cause. It was agreed that the Committee would support Don's request and would prepare a letter asking the council to reduce the parking limit in Ripstone Gardens to 1-hour.

6. University Liaison – Jon Walsh reported on behalf of the university.

- a. The University interim Vice Chancellor took up office today.
- b. A planning application had been made regarding the demolition of an old Health Sciences building. Tree work that had been expected near the Chemistry Block had been resolved without any tree work. Sue Ingham asked again about the lit handrail replacement on the steps. Jon reported that this was still out for reasonable quotes. The university was thanked for removing the graffiti so promptly.

7. Reports

a. **Finance**

Adrian reported that liaison between the incoming and outgoing treasurers was well in hand to ensure a smooth transition regarding signatures and forms. Adrian was to present the accounts at the AGM before Martin took over.

Jerry thanked Adrian for his contributions to HRA in the time he had served on the committee.

b. **Membership**

Nicolla reported the membership as follows:

Database = 470; Paid up = 418; YTD = 39 (reflecting members paying subs through the year)

c. **Planning Issues**

A Planning Report had been prepared by Angela Seymour and circulated in advance. Jerry thanked Angela, in her absence, for producing the report.

Dr Buckle addressed the meeting regarding his concerns over Planning Application 43495 – a **24-hour gym at Sainsbury's** (change of use from Community Space).

A general discussion took place which identified the location of the community space and general agreement that it had not ever served such a purpose and was not viable in its current condition for community use space.

Dr Buckle raised two significant objections to the planning application:

1. Over the 24-hour opening,
2. Car parking arrangements, and whether the Sainsbury's Car Park would have opening times in parallel to Gym opening times to avoid cars being parked on residential roads and subsequent noise and disturbance, especially through night hours.

The committee agreed to support this request by proposing to write to the council raising these concerns. Dr Buckle was thanked for attending and bringing this matter to the attention of the committee.

12, Russell Place. Tom O'Connor (see Matters Arising) reported that **our** hands were tied and it would not be possible for any 'side' to table any new objections or representations into the process as the application had been 'Householder Application' where special rules apply. The Appeal would now go ahead with all of the information which is already in the system and run its course.

The fence. The committee had been made aware that the fence, which was out of character with the area and higher than permitted (although no one at the meeting knew the regulations on this), Had been further extended in length since the last meeting.

Jerry had successfully made contact with the owner of the property, Peter Loizou, and discussed with him the concerns that had been raised. The house, which had been a former rest home, had been bought and was being converted back as a family home. The home owner assured Jerry of his willingness to co-operate and as an interim solution had offered to paint the fence green.

General discussion identified that, in previous years, another fence in the same road had to be removed for being out of character and too high. Some committee members felt that the situations should be equitable and consistent. The property was not in the conservation area but the fence was out of character. In order to progress to find a solution, Jerry suggested he should meet with the householder to discuss the problems.

8. **Newsletter:** March 2019 edition (Barbara for Steven)

In Steven's absence Barbara reported that the Newsletter had met deadlines and was at the printers and would soon be available for Nicolla to share out ready for the delivery volunteers.

9. **Facebook** (Barbara for Steven)

Barbara reported that HRA previous Facebook administrator, Alison, had handed over the account to Steven. Steven had then added Nadine as a co-administrator. It was anticipated that this arrangement

would be very proactive in joining together the various communication strands of HRA and provide options for the community in keeping up to date with current Highfield issues in a way that best suited them. Alison had been thanked for her committee support over many years.

10. Website

Nadine reported a significant improvement in that the page 'Days Gone By' (which had not really worked as contributions had been almost non-existent) had been replaced with an 'Our Documents' page. All Policies, Minutes, Agendas, Forms etc. were now located here and would be more easily accessible. Nadine reported that she had made some additions to the Facebook page already and that a general tidy-up would be completed in due course. Jerry thanked Nadine for these improvements.

11. A.O.B.

Jerry highlighted an increasing issue regarding short-term lets (like Airbnb) infiltrating the residential housing stock. This had been discussed at a recent meeting with the Short Term Lettings Association (STLA) in London with another NORA colleague from Bath. London has a 90 day limit which NORA would like to see introduced to other parts of the country plus a Registration and/or Licensing scheme. STLA would only agree to a 140 days per year limit. It was hoped that Southampton City Council would be aware of this issue and seek early solutions to prevent the heart of the city being 'hollowed out' like the centre of Bath.

Cllr Lisa Mitchell agreed to be HRA link on the Council over this issue.

Jon Walsh remembered that The university was to hold its Science and Engineering Festival this coming weekend. Information on the University website. He also highlighted there was to be a repeat end-of-year 'smaller waste programme' for student items.

Cllr Lisa Mitchell informed the meeting that she had been asked to take a backbench lead on the Local Plan Update and Jerry asked that the Article 4 Direction for HMOs should be amended to say, "Once the Ward Threshold had been reached (as with Portswood) then no more HMO applications should be considered". She would welcome any leads or ideas specific to HRA.

Bryan identified a potentially dangerous problem at St Winifred's School in the morning drop-off period, when pupils crossed the road as traffic was moving. It could be an accident waiting to happen. Martin agreed to raise this with the school.

Nadine was to make a request to all new committee members to provide her with a small photo (face) and profile that she could add to the website. Local people should see who their reps were.

Nicolla raised the issue of increasing graffiti marks around the town and whether anything could be done about it. Cllr Matthew Claisse thought there may be advice about graffiti under Town and Country Planning.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

There will be no committee meeting in April as the next meeting will be the **AGM on Thursday 11 April 2019, 7.30pm** at the Highfield House Hotel.

Next Committee Meeting 13 May 2019, 7.30pm at the Highfield Hotel