

## Minutes HRA Committee Meeting

Held on 8 March 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.

Guests: Andrew Ovenden, Emma Baker (SCC Comms).

- 1. Welcome** : Roger opened the meeting, welcomed everyone to Zoom and asked all present to introduce themselves.
- 2. Declarations of Interest:** none.
- 3. Apologies** : Nicolla Martin, Steve Connolly, Cllr Lisa Mitchell.
- 4. Minutes** : The Minutes from the 8 February 2021 meeting had been previously distributed to all Committee Members. No comments had been received.
- 5. Matters Arising** : The question raised by Pete Errington (8 Feb Mtg) will be covered in item 11.
- 6. Presentation** Andrew Ovenden and Emma Baker: *Transforming Cities, Portswood and Swaythling Update*

A PowerPoint presentation was made outlining the results of a recent public survey and the current thinking of this transforming project.

The presentation is attached.

Questions, Comments and Answers followed and these points were raised:

Q. Whether 5% was a good rate of questionnaire engagement?

A. Yes for a cold / blank survey

Q. Could OTRA, PRG and Uplands be added to the consultation list?

A. Yes (BC to send link emails)

Q. Speeding traffic on local Roads (e.g. Westwood Road, Orchards Way, Brookvale Road) was a problem when there were road closures and new cycle lanes constructed during the first lockdown. If any part of Portswood Road / The Broadway were to be closed to cars in the Transforming Cities scheme, what measures would be put in place to prevent local residential roads from becoming 'rat runs' and seeing increased and displaced car traffic as a result?

A. Noted. Further traffic surveys were planned for the future.

C. The same question applies to parking in local residential roads if parking were to be removed from The Broadway (which in itself might be an improvement).

A. Possibility of improving current car park entrances. Green city planting, benches, public art, de-cluttering of street furniture.

Q. If any part of the Portswood scheme included a reduction of the speed limit to 20mph, might this also be applied to local residential roads?

A. Noted

C. Widening pavements along The Broadway might make it more attractive. There was a counter argument that this had been tried before. On-street Parking was important to some drivers (maybe blue-badge holders only? BC)

A. Noted

C. The idea of a one-day-a-month market was suggested (a Farmers' market?) when through traffic would be restricted (a Sunday?).

A. Noted

C. Planting trees along the street was suggested as opposed to planting boxes which require ongoing maintenance. (Post meeting comment BC: The National Trust have an idea of a scheme to plant ornamental cherry trees, like the Sakura in Japan, in town centres.)

A. Planting boxes had been thought about.

Roger thanked Andrew and Emma and added that HRA looked forward to further discussions as the council firmed up their thinking and ideas in the coming months. Andrew and Emma then left the meeting.

The topic of Transforming Cities was to be added to future HRA Agendas.

To learn more about the Portswood Transforming Cities and to see the PowerPoint presentation slides, visit:

<https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/transport-projects/portswood-swaythling-corridor/>

<http://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SCC-Transforming-Cities-HRA-presentation-slides1.pdf>.

There is to be further public consultation soon which will include gathering opinions on Portswood including traffic routes and transport. To make comments about the proposals, please email [roadworks@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:roadworks@southampton.gov.uk)

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

- 7. Information from Councillors :** Councillor Savage reported that he and Cllr Cooper had had a productive meeting with Inspector Sharath Ranjan. Recently, there had been a disturbing couple of incidents where windows had been shot out and premises had been burgled (Bevois Valley area).

Cllr Savage reported how Cllr Cooper had praised the Highfield Crime Reporting WhatsApp Group (Nadine Johnson and Lucy Nagra). He also stressed how each crime must be reported (101) or via the website: <https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/report-a-crime-incident/>

Local Councillors had also been working on the St Denys Local Travel Zone.

**Item 11.** was taken at this point

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

Large blocks across Highfield were now represented and there was potential for good information flow. The website published a crime incident log and 11 incidents had been posted since the Feb HRA Meeting.

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

Nadine and Lucy had discussed the response to Pete Errington's question at the Feb meeting and recommended that escalation to senior police officer level should be done sparingly and only if important themes and issues emerged, such as with CCTV when officers were sometimes declining to view this when attending a reported crime. Policing was evidence based and it was important to report every crime so that these could be logged and monitored by the police and this would assist their approach.

Roger had suggested that Inspector Ranjan could be the guest speaker at the next AGM, although no date for this had been set, and also that an annual meeting between HRA and the police might be a more productive and manageable route for such busy Police Officers.

Nadine said there were still some gaps in the Highfield Community group representation and she encouraged committee members to recruit others to the WhatsApp Group by word of mouth and recommendation.

Pete Errington thanked and praised Nadine for these efforts and understood how official reporting would making the difference.

Roger thanked Nadine.

**8. University Liaison :** Kate Fay gave this report:

**Student return**

Following the Government announcement that students with practical elements of their course can return to university from 8<sup>th</sup> March, the University has been contacting all eligible students. These students have been advised they can return and those students who will continue to study remotely have been advised of that.

Over 2000 students are eligible to return to campuses most of them Southampton based, they will join existing Southampton based students from clinical and education courses. The University is well prepared for their return following the re-opening of campuses in September, regular saliva testing schemes will continue as well as increased cleaning schedules, physical distancing, mask wearing in University buildings and providing access to many online services.

Some campus facilities and buildings that have been closed during the lockdown will open to provide adequate space for the increase in student numbers. The Hartley Library will also be increasing its opening hours.

**Saliva testing**

The University continues to take part in the successful [Hampshire and Isle of Wight Saliva Testing Programme](#). Numbers of cases remain low (for example just 1 positive case identified last week)

and this will be a key tool in keeping our campuses safe.

Offers of support will continue e.g. self-isolate packages including additional support from Student Services Department, assistance to obtain required medications and various vouchers for online entertainment to make isolation more bearable.

### **Online Learning Grant**

Following Michelle Donnelan, MP's, announcement, the Government have made funding available for universities to provide additional support for their students. Following discussions with the Student's Union, the University decided to re-open access to Online Learning Grants for students.

The grants are open to all UK, EU and International Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research students, these grants are a non-repayable award of up to £200 towards the cost of materials required for online learning such as hardware or internet connections.

### **Southampton Science and Engineering Festival**

On 8 March the University launched the annual [SOTSEF](#) which coincides with British Science week. This year's event is entirely online with a [launch video](#) from amongst others our President and Vice Chancellor, Mark E. Smith.

There are various online activities including a [Covid-19 special](#) which brings together the University's science knowledge and projects behind the fight against the disease.

The University has also produced thousands of activity packs aimed at 7-14 year olds (key stages 2 – 3), which have been advertised through partners and online and distributed to anyone who requested them, to enable those without a computer or internet access to enjoy some of the festival's activities remotely.

Roger thanked Kate for her input.

## **9. Reports**

### **a) Finance (MB) :**

Martin reported that finances were in a stable position with not many outgoing demands. Progress was continuing with the bank to recognise Martin's position as Hon Treasurer,

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

The membership numbers have been reduced to 472. This includes Paid-up members of 353 and Rolling members of 32.

Nicolla reported that due to no paper publication or distribution of a paper Newsletter, which does bring in new members, and the Covid-19 situation where members have not been able to benefit from the discounts, it has also been difficult to retain households. The March and April renewal subscriptions letters are being typed.

Nicolla Martin (Membership Secretary)

Roger suggested next Newsletter should proceed the AGM and Social in July or September.

**10. Planning Report (AS):** A Planning Report for March had been circulated before the meeting. It can be viewed here: <http://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/march-2021-planning-report/>

- **Updates on casework:**
  - i. 30 Brookvale Road – outbuilding replacement. JG had liaised with PRG over this matter and then HRA objection had been posted on SCC Planning portal.
  - ii. Conservation areas (RB) – Roger stated that he was continuing to negotiate a meeting with the SCC Conservation Officer, John Willetts

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

## **12. Social Media**

Website : Website: Nadine reported that she had been working on re-vamping the front page (About Us etc), updating and moving photographs and archiving older material. Various live links had been added to the front page in the right-hand column.

Facebook: now has 631 followers which is an increase of 14 since the February Meeting.

Pete Thomas commented that when looking at the Website on a mobile device, these live links were some way down the page (found by scrolling) and came after the adverts. Nadine would look at this.

The Committee received this report with thanks.

## **13. City of Culture (CoC) (KB)**

Ken reported that he had passed several links to BC for circulating: a recent CoC newsletter and the bid launch film which had been made by Solent Students. There is also an interesting YouTube film about the D-Day Wall. Links below:

Launch film (Solent University) : <https://www.southampton2025.co.uk/>

D-Day Stories (example of Culture in Southampton) : <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=wLcrNrKkyEE>

Latest CoC News : <https://www.southampton2025.co.uk/news>

CoC questionnaire : <https://southamptoncitycouncil.researchfeedback.net/s.asp?k=160491164921>

Roger thanked Ken for his input.

**14. Southampton Common Forum Update.** Barbara reported that SCF had been awarded a SCC Community Chest Grant of £2352 which would be kept until volunteering works could re-start. The funds were for the following:

- plants and shrubs £900
- seeded wildlife meadow turf £122
- seed packets and bedding plants £50
- willow whips for willow arch £65
- hard landscaping materials 95
- railway sleepers £112
- recycled paving slabs £60
- pots, hanging baskets, window boxes £100

recycled plastic posts £71  
heavy duty trellis £129  
steel road pins £28  
hand tools £99  
toolstore and base £308  
High cut hand mower £210

A request had also been made to any HRA members for broken paving they wanted to be rid of, spare seeds of wildlife friendly plants, or any wildlife-friendly shrubs no longer required or if they might be willing to sow and raise seedlings, please bear SCF in mind. All of these items might be useful for The Hawthorns Garden Project. Contact Dave Johnston via [HRAHonSec@gmail.com](mailto:HRAHonSec@gmail.com) or <https://www.facebook.com/SouthamptonCommonForum/>

### 15. A.O.B.

BC reported that she had been invited to a SCC on-line briefing on 12 March regarding a City trial of rental e-scooters scheme which will be starting on 18 March.

SCC will be seeking stakeholder feedback to help shape future decision making about this new mode of transport. Given this includes shared cycle paths, including paths through Southampton Common additional information can be read by following the link below. Your feedback will be important to the future of this trial.

For information, please see

<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/travel-transport/sustainable-transport/escooters.aspx>

Information and links are to be added to HRA social media platforms. HRA members' feedback and opinion will be very important.

The meeting ended at 20:40h

**The date of the next meeting is Monday 12 April at 19:00h via Zoom.**

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### **Post meeting information on the trial e-scooter hire scheme following the SCC Briefing on 12 March**

As we understand it:

- Safety features include: bells, lights, reflectors, unique identification plates, kick stands, an on-line training school and the wearing of helmets is strongly advised
- Rental e-scooters can ride on the same road spaces as bikes, including roads, cycle lanes and cycleways, across the Common and Lovers Walk. They will

automatically stop if taken onto paths that are not designated cycle paths or "off road"

- Rental e-scooters are forbidden from using pavements or motorways and are not recommended for roads where the speed limit is > 30 mph

- You must not use a mobile phone whilst using an e-scooter - although the scooters are unlocked with a mobile phone app which provides a real time map of your location and the different scheme zones (no go areas, slow speed areas, scooter parking zones etc. and scooters have a phone holder on the handlebars)

- You must not use an e-scooter drunk or intoxicated as you can be prosecuted

- E-scooters are tracked by GPS

- There will be mandatory parking areas (10 scooters can be parked in the same space as one car)

- Geofenced areas will be created using advanced technology which will include slow riding limiters (for example there will be an automatically applied 5mph limit within the Common), no riding zones and mandatory parking areas. They are not allowed in other city parks.

- A similar Voi e-scooter rental scheme will begin in Portsmouth on 16 March

### **Privately owned e-scooters**

- Privately-owned and unregulated e-scooters are not part of the trial

- It is illegal to ride privately-owned scooters on roads, pavements or cycleways including the Common, or in any public space. Members of the public who observe such riding are advised to contact the police using the non-emergency number 101 or [Report Online](#)

Both council and the operators welcome feedback from the public and stakeholders throughout the trial.

SCC News Article <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/news/article.aspx?id=tcm:63-440675>

For information, please see

<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/travel-transport/sustainable-transport/escooters.aspx>

Related information from Southampton Common Forum see  
<https://www.facebook.com/SouthamptonCommonForum/>

*Barbara Claridge HRAHonSec*