

**Minutes HRA Committee Meeting**  
**Held on 19 July 2021**  
**Via Zoom 19:00h**



**Present** : Prof. Roger Brown (Acting Chair), Martin Benning, Ken Burtenshaw, Nadine Johnson, Adrian Vinson, Kate Fay (University), Pete Thomas (OTRA), Karen Edwards (PRG), 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 and keeping the HRA show on the road.
- 2. Declarations of Interest:** None
- 3. Apologies** : Nicolla Martin, Steve Connolly, Pete Errington, Cllr Savage, Cllr Mitchell, Cllr Cooper
- 4. Minutes** : The Minutes from the 14 June 2021 meeting had been previously distributed to all Committee Members. No comments had been received.
- 5. Matters Arising** :
  - a. Roger and Jerry had held a meeting with the new Council Leader Cllr Dan Fitzhenry and the Cabinet member for the Environment, Cllr S. Galton, on 25 June. This was a positive meeting. The work and scope of HRA had been explained and various issues were raised. Cllr Fitzhenry confirmed that the new council was reviewing plans for the city with a pragmatic approach to traffic flows where some schemes implemented under the previous council were not working (e.g. pedestrianised areas and some cycleways). The need to improve the relationship between Licensing and Planning and the state of the Common were discussed. Cllr Fitzhenry accepted that any changes to current plans should be put out for proper consultation and also asked if HRA had considered forming a Local Plan. HRA would consider this in the future. A follow up meeting with Cllr Paul Barton, Head of Planning was to be arranged next. Adrian confirmed that Cllrs Savage and Mitchell were no longer members of the Council Planning Committee.
  - b. High hedges: Cllr Savage had called for an Anti-Social Behaviour order to be served by SCC as the deadline for landlord action had not been met. SCC officers were in favour of more time to be allowed, however, the Landlord had responded by organising tree surgeons to attend to the work on 9 / 10 / 11 Aug (Abbots Langley Letting Agent). The HRA members in Grosvenor Road had thanked Cllr Savage for his determined intervention.
  - c. E-scooters – Barbara reported that the docking rack on The Avenue outside Westwood Court apartments had been moved to a compromise position the other side of the bus stop outside the church.
  - d. Karen reported on the walkabout meeting with Jon Willetts (SCC Historic Environment Officer). The walk had lasted 2 hours and Jon had been interested in the buildings and also the historical aspects of the PRG Conservation Area. Jon had suggested that PRG join Civic Voice and Karen was to investigate this and suggested that OTRA might like to do the same. OTRA and PRG are to liaise over this.
- 6. Information from Councillors** : Due to a Council Meeting all councillors had sent apologies. There was specific nothing to report at this time.

## **7. University Liaison : (KF)**

The university was updating Covid guidance in readiness for students returning in September. The message was 'cautious and gradual' easing of restrictions. Masks were to be mandatory and social distancing advised. The weekly saliva testing programme was to be expanded. Building 45 was soon to be demolished. Two in-person open days are to be held.

Nadine commented that the Outer Avenue Residents Association received the University Community Bulletin. Kay is to organise that HRA and OTRA also receive these in future.

## **8. Reports :**

- a. **Finance (MB)** : Martin reported that there had been very little change on the bank account balance. Barbara had been approved as the second officer for online banking and should receive a communication from Nat West soon regarding the security dongle . Nadine asked how on-line banking for membership subscriptions might work. Martin said nothing was formally arranged as yet but that he was working hard to sort this out; he was looking for a simple system and that he would need to discuss this and link with Nicolla. Any changes would need to be reviewed by the committee and then be passed at the AGM. Various organisations operating on-line payment systems were suggested as contact. Martin would pursue these links.
  - b. **Membership (BC for NM)** : Database = 472; Paid up members = 362; Rolling = 216. The June and July renewal letters are being delivered.
- 9. Planning Report (AS)** : There was no Planning Report available for the meeting due to Angela's previous commitments.
- a. Roger had been in contact with Cllr Mitchell regarding various posters which had been affixed in the windows of Gorillas (Circus adverts etc). Cllr Mitchell had agreed to pursue this. Karen advised that the Gorillas' Planning Application had been made (21/00730FUL). PRG still had concerns about excess hours of trading; Jerry had reservations about bin storage.
  - b. Jerry reported that he had been in communication with both HMO Licensing and Planning regarding 28 Brookvale Road as the SCC departments were not acting. (Post meeting comment: SCC Service Officer, Private Housing, S. Hayes-Arter, confirmed that an enforcement officer was now dealing with the property, but is currently on holiday. He visited on 13th July but was not able to gain access. This will be followed up with a formal enforcement visit on his return (next week) to establish occupancy. If SCC can gather the necessary evidence then this would potentially be a 'failure to licence' offence and could result in prosecution).
  - c. Pete T reported that OTRA had concerns over a Planning Application (21/00958FUL). Cllr Savage had objected to the application for a garage conversion to living accommodation in Westborne Cres., but OTRA regarded this as a special case and were going to support the application. Pete gave a full presentation of OTRA support. Roger suggested he should contact Cllr Savage with OTRA to discuss and explain this special case since normally HRA would object to such conversions. This was agreed. (Post-meeting comment: following further consultation Cllr Savage had withdrawn his objection to the Planning application).

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

Nadine reported that there had been 10 criminal and anti-social behaviour incidents reported within the group since the last meeting. This had included a house break-in. Speeding on residential roads (Highfield Lane, Brookvale Road and some other Highfield roads) had also been a topic of concern. Cllr Mitchell had offered to facilitate a Community Speed Watch but, on enquiring, found that SSC had

suspended the scheme. October Books is reporting difficulties with anti-social behaviour in their alley-way.

Pete T commented that he had conducted a recent OTRA poll about speeding and 97% were in favour of 20mph speed limits within the Triangle. This opinion had been discussed with Cllr Moulton and was to be discussed at the SCC full council meeting (tonight).

**11. Social Media (NJ)**

Website : nothing new to report.

Facebook: now has 682 followers which is an increase of 20 since the June meeting. A Facebook message had been received about the large potholes in Brookvale Road (near the Waitrose entrance) to which NJ had responded with the SSC reporting link. She also reported this to Cllr Savage who was aware and had been pursuing. The importance of reporting such problems was stressed. The Committee received these reports with thanks.

**10. City of Culture (KB)**

CoC Newsletters had been few and far between. Ken would make further investigations into the progress of the bid in time for the next committee meeting.

Roger thanked Ken for his input.

**11. A.O.B.**

- a. Roger reminded everyone that the next meeting was scheduled for 13 September. In accordance with past practice, a meeting would be held in August if there was good reason. A date for the Committee Meeting to plan the AGM, a date for the AGM and a date for the publication of the Newsletter would be circulated as soon as possible.

The meeting ended at 20:15h.

The date of the next meeting is **Monday 13 September**



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