

Minutes HRA Committee Meeting
Held on 14 December 2021
Highfield Church Lounge 19:00



Present: Cttee - Prof. Roger Brown (Chair), Ken Burtenshaw, Barbara Claridge, Stephen Connolly, Jerry Gillen, Nadine Johnson,

Others – Councillor Cooper, Jon Walsh (University), Karen Edwards (PRG), Nick Bacon, David Wardell (PC), Katherine Barbour, Ron Meldrum, Raz Shar, Susan Swallow (OARA)

1. **Welcome:** Roger opened the meeting and welcomed David Wardell who represented Portswood Central Residents' Association and a little later into the meeting, Susan Swallow who represented Outer Avenue Residents' Association. He apologised to Councillor Cooper for naming him, Councillor Copper, in the Minutes of the last meeting.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None
3. **Apologies:** Martin Benning, Pete Errington, Cllr Mitchell, Steven Ossont, Cllr Savage, Pete Thomas,
4. **Minutes:** The Minutes from the 2 November 2021 meeting had been previously distributed to all Committee Members. No comments had been received.
5. **Matters Arising** – Karen Edwards raised the issue that 17c Brookvale Road appeared to be occupied (i.e. Let) but that Planning Approval was not yet decided. She asked whether all building Regulations would have been signed off. (*Action: BC to correspond with SCC Planning*)
6. **Agenda Item 12** was taken at this point: **20mph limit discussion and proposals for Highfield.** The Secretary had been asked by the Chair to draft a paper for Highfield. The paper had been circulated before the meeting. The Secretary explained that before the HRA scheme was drawn up, she had corresponded with the SCC officer overseeing the scheme with several questions. These and the officer's response are detailed at the end of the minutes.

Approximately £500,000 had been allocated by the Council for the implementation of the 20pmh expansion, although more funds might be available in the future. SCC confirmed that there was evidence that a speed of 20mph in a residential area was more appropriate and led to safer streets. Also that a bid for 20mph limits was more likely to succeed if additional and costly calming measures were not required. The HRA proposal did not require additional traffic calming installations, only 20mph signs at intervals, reminding drivers to modify their speed.

Following the November HRA Committee Meeting, when Cllr Cooper had introduced the scheme, details had been posted on HRA social media by Nadine. Comments had been received from members, nominating roads and supporting them with local observations.

The limited funding available meant it was not likely that the whole of Highfield would be accepted and therefore a strategic approach was favoured. When the map of Highfield was considered, it was apparent that the roads nominated in the paper were busy cut-through roads between and across Highfield's main trunk roads which formed the Highfield boundary: The Avenue (A33), Burgess Road (A35) and Portswood High Street. If traffic could be slowed on these cut through roads, then speeds would be reduced near the University and those quiet residential areas where there were cul-de-sacs and no through roads. 8 roads were finally nominated, and all of these had received support from HRA members. Welbeck Road and Church Lane had received the highest number of nominations. These had been collated by two HRA members.

When submitted, the HRA proposal would be supported by an annotated street map, data, including the number of vehicles per day on major roads, details of existing calming methods and examples of testimonies received.

Barbara added, that since the publication of the HRA document, 4 other localised schemes were known to have been proposed.

The Chair proposed that the HRA scheme should be considered first without the addition of other schemes. Cllr Cooper commented that it was a strong and well-argued proposal which would have Ward Councillor support. The Committee Members present gave their unanimous approval to this proposal.

Karen Edwards (PRG) then spoke up for the inclusion of Abbotts Way and Russell Place. Katherine Barbour then spoke up for Grosvenor Road, Grosvenor Close and Donnington Close where she had been collecting support. An HRA member had contacted the Secretary about strong community support for Upper Shaftesbury Avenue to be included. Pete Thomas had also contacted the Secretary about collected community support for the Oakmount Triangle. It was suggested that the local schemes should submit individual proposals relating to the roads they had nominated.

Councillor Cooper added that he was also supporting the nomination of Highfield Crescent, where councillors had been working with residents recently over a number of issues, and he had also heard about a proposal for Oakmount Triangle.

Following this full discussion about the Southampton City Council expansion of 20pmh roads within the city, the committee agreed to endorse any complementary 20 mph community-supported proposals within Highfield, that were submitted by a member of HRA. This was approved by committee members.

Secretary's note: The proposals for 1. *Abbotts Way and Russell Place*, 2. *Grosvenor Road, Grosvenor Close and Donnington Close*, 3. *Upper Shaftesbury Avenue* and 4. *Oakmount Triangle* are therefore supported by HRA if submissions are made. The Secretary will liaise with those leading these projects.

7. Information from Councillors: Councillor Cooper reported on the following:

- a. Aircraft routes. There had been concern over recent flight paths from Southampton Airport. The advice for anyone concerned was to track dates and times as there was a need to have records. Any information could then be sent to Councillor Savage.
- b. A reminder that the Boundary Commission was looking at Southampton with a view to equalising populations across wards. There was a possibility there will need to be a new ward in the city due to increasing population. There is to be a special meeting in mid-January aiming for councillors to achieve a cross-party agreement on this issue. There will be no cross-river wards or splitting of existing communities. Individual comments could be made via the website <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/30953>

Roger thanked Councillor Cooper for his helpful report

- 8. University Liaison:** Jon Walsh gave a short presentation on the University Jubilee Sports Centre building expansion which was well received. This is available: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/university-of-southampton-jubilee-sports-centre-extension/> It was hoped that formal Planning Application would be made before the end of December and the support of HRA was requested.

Ron Meldrum commented that such expansion would bring more cars into the area. Jon assured the meeting that the centre was well served by buses and that the plans included increased storage for bikes and E-scooters. Capacity for bike racks was to be increased outside of the swimming pool following comments submitted by the HRA Secretary. Sue Swallow (OARA) asked if there were to be electric charging points. Jon replied that this was covered in the University Travel Strategy.

Jon informed the meeting that all students were required to take a Covid test before they went home for Christmas.

Roger thanked Jon Walsh for his presentation.

9. Planning update

- a. Jerry recounted how loft conversion building work had begun at 34 Crofton Close, apparently without a Planning Application having been submitted. Jerry had contacted Planning Enforcement, who reported they had no capacity to act, so then contacted Councillor Moulton. Councillor Moulton emailed in reply to confirm he had contacted the interim Head of Planning, Paul Barton, to see if a Stop Order could be placed until the matter could be looked into. Jerry was thanked for his action in this matter.
- b. The Chair reported that it was now likely that the Local Plan would not be available until the summer of 2022.

10. Reports

- a. **Finance** – Barbara reported for Martin: The Current Account Balance was £8,124.48. The Reserve Account had been topped up by £3934.00 to £10,00.91. The Annual Third-Party Insurance had been paid to Zurich, £142.71.
- b. **Membership** – Nicolla reported 381 Paid-up members and 365 Rolling. There had been a big boost to membership in November thanks to the Newsletter and the BACS system which was proving popular. 30 New members and some lapsed members had re-joined. Nicolla expressed thanks to everyone who had helped to make this happen.

For Payment of membership by BACS go to: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/join-renew/>

11. **Crime information sharing WhatsApp group for Highfield (NJ):** There had been 15 incident report logs since the last Committee Meeting. They included: 3 burglaries (Highfield Crescent & Shaftsbury Avenue); 4 attempted burglaries (Lower Brookvale Rd & Blenheim Gardens); front gates stolen in Richmond Gardens; many anti-social behaviour incidents in Upper Shaftesbury Avenue; a violent incident on The Common where 4 youths in hoods, attempted to steal (but not succeeding) a phone from a dog walker; theft of 2 headlights from an Audi Q3 and theft of two entire grille plates (including a replacement one from a previous theft) from an Audi Estate, both on Orchards Way.

Our Co-ordinator highlighted the importance of being vigilant about Christmas presents not being visible, as these can attract burglars. Additionally, she cautioned about being careful when putting Christmas present boxes in bins, as burglars have also been known to look in bins.

Facebook: Nadine reported that Facebook now had 743 followers; an increase of 18 since the last Committee Meeting on 2 November 2021.

Website: The side-panel topics on the About Us page had been changed at Barbara's suggestion and currently included sections with content on:

University Jubilee Sports Centre
Southampton National Park City Project
20 mph speed limit submission
Electoral and Ward Review

Nadine further commented that, 'Hot Topics', also on the side panel, and the News/Events page of the website are both updated regularly. The latter also included copies of most Facebook posts for those who do not follow HRA Facebook.

New HRA Member discount: a 10% discount with Ken the Window Cleaner had been secured by Karen Edwards and followed up by Nadine; details can be found on the HRA Website.

12. Feedback. Roger asked the meeting for feedback on two recent events:

- a. HRA AGM. Roger expressed thanks for his election as Chair of HRA. The meeting felt the AGM had been very successful and well attended (approx. 60) despite anxiety over Covid. The Guest Speaker had been very well received and the refreshments had given those who stayed a chance to catch up. Thanks were expressed to Barbara for organising the refreshments and for the 'refreshment /clearing up team' of Stephen, Ken, Dave and Martin.
- b. North Southampton Community Forum AGM. Barbara had represented HRA, although several other Committee members had been present. This meeting had also been well attended (approx. 40), especially as those present were by invitation only and represented other Residents' Associations. Caroline Nokes MP had been a draw to numbers. However, during the meeting she was unable to respond to questions from anyone outside of her constituency.

13. A.O.B.

- a. A possible date for a Summer Social was proposed to be held at Portswood Pavilion if available – Sunday 17 July. It was hoped that those committee members who had helped previously would be willing to coordinate this in due course (Jerry and Steven Ossont in the first instance?)
- b. City of Culture news: <https://southampton2025.co.uk/2021/12/08/shelina-permalloo-announced-as-chair-for-southampton-uk-city-of-culture-2025-bid/>

The meeting ended at 20:18.

The next Committee Meeting is due to be held on Tuesday 11 January. The arrangements for this meeting are to be reviewed by the Chair and Secretary. Committee Members will be updated by Wednesday 5 January.

Southampton City Council Response re-the 20mph scheme

Hi Barbara,

Thanks for getting in touch – it's really encouraging to see such strong interest in the 20mph community requests. I've addressed your questions as follows...

How I can find out where there are 20mph limits already near our area?

We have produced a map of streets with existing 20mph, on our website ([click here](#)) – The map isn't the clearest I'm afraid, but the St Denys area north of St Denys Road are the only streets within the Portswood ward that have 20mph in place.

Whether a '20 is plenty' zone is the same as a 20mph limit?

20 is plenty signs are often added around schools to reinforce an existing 20mph limit or to encourage drivers to slow down. There is no such thing as a '20 is plenty zone' as such, but they may be found within what is known as a '20mph Zone'. There is a difference between a 20mph zone and simply a 20mph limit...

20mph zones use traffic calming measures to reduce the adverse impact of motor vehicles on built up areas. The principle is that the traffic calming slows vehicles down to speeds below the limit, and in this way the zone becomes 'self-enforcing'. Speed humps, chicanes, road narrowing, planting and other measures can be introduced to both physically and visually reinforce the nature of the road.

20mph limits (signs only) are areas where the speed limit has been reduced to 20mph but there are no physical measures to reduce vehicle speeds within the area. Drivers are alerted to the speed limit with 20mph speed limit repeater signs.

Whether a road that already has traffic calming measures e.g. pinch points or crossings is worth including?

Yes, absolutely. If the road already includes traffic calming features then that helps support the case for an appropriate 20mph limit. We will look to prioritise requests based on how feasible a 20mph limit is to implement and enforce, so streets with existing traffic calming measures will be considered favourably.

Where can I access/read the SCC prioritisation process which will begin after 4 January closing date?

We've outlined a process on our website ([click here](#)). If we were to receive a large number of requests, then prioritisation will be based on evidence of community support and the feasibility of introducing 20mph on the streets requested. The guidance from the Department for Transport for 20mph limits (signs only) to be feasible is that average speeds should be around or below 24mph.

If there are 34miles of 20mph limits currently across the city, how many more miles are envisaged?

There is no limit to how many miles of 20mph limits are envisaged for the city. The council has allocated £500k this financial year for the 20mph community request process, so the initial extent of coverage will depend on that. However, more funding could be allocated in

the future. There is growing evidence along with national design guidance for walking and cycling that states 20mph is a more appropriate, safer speed limit for residential streets. Wales and Scotland for example are planning to introduce nationwide 20mph limits.

What is the implementation cost to each extra mile added?

We will have a clearer picture on cost in the new year, based on previous schemes in the city and from elsewhere.

What is the timescale for this scheme?

Timescale also outlined in the process diagram on our website ([click here](#))

Form Questions

Please see attached a list of the questions on the online form.

Collecting Signatures

This is not a requirement, but only a suggestion for residents who do not have access to a residents association as a way for them to demonstrate community support. Gathering signatures could also be done electronically online, but again, this is not a requirement. If a resident association is leading a request, along with supporting statements from ward councillors, then this is deemed evidence of strong community support.

I hope this helps clarify the process ahead of your meeting? Please feel free to give me a call on the number below (during normal working hours 9 till 5) if it would help for me to talk through in more detail.

Kind Regards,
Laurie

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