



**Present: Cttee** – Prof. Roger Brown (Chair), Martin Benning, Ken Burtenshaw, Nicolla Martin, Stephen Connolly, Jerry Gillen, Dave White, Steven Ossant.

**Others:** Councillor Savage, Councillor Cooper, Karen Edwards, Jon Walsh (Uni), Sue Swallow (OARA), Barbara Matcham (OARA)

**1. Welcome:** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting especially those from other residents' associations. A particular welcome was extended to Councillor Satvir Kaur, Leader of Southampton Council

**2. Apologies:** Nadine Johnson, Pete Thomas, Barbara Claridge

**3. Declaration of interest:** None

**4. Approval of minutes:** Nadine requested that an error in Item 8a. Planning Update 34 Crofton Close be corrected. "Pertinent photos, **showing previous parking difficulties**, that were sent to the Case Officer in advance, were not acknowledged and were later found to have been overlooked. The Panel did not appear to have received them." The text in red has been deleted and the Minutes of the Meeting have been posted on the HRA website. The Minutes were then approved

**5. Matters arising not covered elsewhere:** none

**6. Presentation by Satvir Kaur:**

Councillor Kaur said that, partly reflecting what had come up from the doorstep before and during the Council elections, the new administration's policy agenda was organised around five themes: family, safety, travel, affordability and pride.

**Family:** the aim was a child-friendly city by 2025. There would be more play areas. The St Mary's Leisure Centre would reopen. Whilst the police were responsible for dealing with crime, the Council would help improve the relevant infrastructure. They were also pressing for the city to receive its fair share of the additional police resources announced by the Police and Crime Commissioner. High-quality homes were an important part of this family-oriented agenda as was the possibility of stricter regulation of the private rented sector (the Council was currently conducting a conditions survey).

**Safety:** safety, especially of women and key workers, was a priority for the Council. They will be looking at accessing money from the Safer Neighbourhood fund to help create better infrastructure in communities.

**Travel:** safe and accessible public transport was key, especially buses. The Council was committed to the 2035 target of zero emissions. To help with this and other initiatives, a Citizens Assembly would be established. There would be more investment in parks and the Common. Housing would become more energy efficient and there would be improved recycling, especially of food waste.

**Affordability:** the Council recognised the scale and seriousness of the cost of living crisis which was exacerbated by energy costs. It was pressing major employers to adopt a real Living Wage. Buses would be made cheaper and a family bus pass would be introduced. The Council was dedicated to having more affordable family housing in the city.

**Pride:** the Council was disappointed that the very good City of Culture bid had not been successful. However it had confirmed that Southampton was a city with enormous potential, as well as much current good practice, for example, working with deprived communities. Actions here would include the regeneration of shopping streets (with Bitterne Precinct and Lordshill as early priorities), Neighbourhood Hubs and locality-based workshops. In each case the action plan would reflect what people locally saw as the key issues in their particular area.

In discussion, Councillor Kaur said that the Council was considering carefully what would need to be done to ensure that the 2035 emissions target was met. She was in direct contact with ABP about the Port's contribution to this (cruise liners, freight vessels, lorries). She was fully aware of the need to reduce motor vehicle pollution, hence (in part) the push on public transport. She was very open to the idea, in developing a Citizens Assembly of involving and building on local residents' associations like HRA and OARA. The Council was also open about ways of enhancing the regulation of private sector landlords, with a Landlord's Charter one of the options for consideration. Finally, she agreed that more could be done to improve awareness of the strengths which the City of Culture bid had highlighted as well as the areas where more work was needed. She agreed that momentum had been built up in the City of Culture bid and she would be working hard to maintain this momentum.

The Chair thanked Councillor Kaur for her time in attending the meeting and for her remarks. Councillor Kaur thanked HRA for inviting her to address the committee meeting.

**7. Information from Councillors:** much of the information from the councillors had been covered in Cllr Kaur's presentation. Cllr Savage added that the date for the re-surfacing of Brookvale Road had not yet been established. Cllr Kaur said that she would follow this up. The bin situation outside the new bakery on Highfield Lane had been sorted. Cllr Savage also mentioned the back lane behind October Books in Portswood. It was still a mess and it was the responsibility of the businesses that back on to this lane that were responsible for paying for its maintenance. He said he would contact them about the situation.

### **8. University Liaison: New Information**

- South Stoneham Tower had finally been demolished. The future of the site including the listed manor house was uncertain.
- The university had just purchased the Sir James Matthews building in the city centre. It would be used for teaching as well as office space.
- The university had continued to fund students' rubbish removal at the end of term. They paid SCC twice as much as last year for the same service. The university continued to work with students trying to persuade them to deal with their waste themselves. He said that he had a number of large bins that could be filled with recyclable material. It was suggested that it could be mentioned on HRA digital platforms.

**9. Local Plan:** The Chair introduced his paper on HMOs and STLs in the context of the new local plan. He did not want a detailed discussion but a steer from the meeting as to whether or not it is in the right direction. It was thought to be a good first draft. Two comments from the floor were taken on board by Roger who will make suitable revisions to the document to reflect these.

**10. Planning:**

- a. 1, Blenheim Gardens – The owner has raised a Planning Appeal. HRA will make a submission.
- b. 24 Abbotts Way – RB and JG had visited and met with the owners to discuss their plans. In their view, there were no planning grounds for objection. PRG were also due to hold a follow up meeting.
- c. Russell Place wall – the wall was now down. There had been good response from local residents who have had their faith somewhat restored in the system.
- d. Gorillas has closed and their planning application for change of use has been withdrawn. Their outlets are now only in London and Manchester. The site is now empty, although looking better than pre-Gorillas. The building is now available for rent (c400m<sup>2</sup> at £65,000 per yr)
- e. Hawthorn Road – Outline Planning Permission (Planning outline 22/00858/OUT) has been sought to build a detached house on a small piece of land. RB and JG have made a site visit and at first look could not see any obvious planning reasons why this would not be approved. However, local residents, who are HRAMembers are concerned. HRA will wait for the actual Planning Application before deciding on the approach.
- f. 11 Russell Place – rear roof extension granted permission. Further plans were turned down at SCC.

**11. Reports: a. Finance (MB)**

It has been a very quiet month so far with respect to the finances.

From 7 June to now there have been no outgoings and £115 subscriptions/donations banked. Income this year has been £3783 and outgoings £1260. The balance is £10,517 with £10,000 in the savings account.

RB raised the issue of funding for North Southampton Community Forum which has no income stream of its own but represents all local Residents' Associations. Following a discussion, it was agreed that HRA should donate £50 to NSCF. The Outer Avenue Residents' Association has also donated funds. Funding will be used to rent space for meetings.

**b. Membership (NM)**

Paid up members: 361

Rolling: 221 (Jan – Jun)

In June 29 renewal letters were sent out.

21 residents have renewed. 8 paid by Cheque. 3 by cash. 10 using BACS.

8 have not renewed yet.

## 11. Digital

**Facebook:** We now have 825 followers, an increase of 14 since the last HRA Committee Meeting on 14 June 2022.

**Website:** Thank you to Ken for sending some very good photos. We also need local news and more local photos please!

### **HRA Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group for Highfield:**

There have been 6 main incident reports:

- a. A video was posted recently in 'St Denys Rocks' of the driver of a Kendricks Fencing Ltd truck stealing 4 alloy wheels with tyres from the side passage of a house in Priory Road. The victim reported it to the Police. Kendricks Fencing Ltd were also reported to the Police by the owner of a house in Oakmount Triangle on 1 June for accessing the back of their house without permission and then using abusive and threatening language when found out. Through the WhatsApp Group, we were able to link the two incidents, with the victims of crime in Oakmount Triangle and St Denys due to contact Cllr Savage who was liaising with the local Police Inspector. This is a prime example of what the WhatsApp Group was set up to achieve.
- b. Uplands Way Estate: a couple of weeks' ago, a bike was stolen from a garage just after midnight and the same man was seen on CCTV trying car doors at other properties. A couple of weeks later, someone was caught on CCTV trying car doors again at night and a golf bag and custom set of clubs were also stolen from a resident's van parked on the estate.
- c. Report from Welbeck Avenue that someone had put a cigarette out on their cat. The representative asked for more information, but none was submitted.
- d. A car break-in on Holyrood Avenue - nothing taken.
- e. A query was raised re very loud noise around 10 pm on night of 8 July. The Group were informed that it was likely a sound check for the 'Let's Rock Southampton' Festival taking place the following day; curfew 10.30 pm.
- f. There was a fire at 7Bone Burger Restaurant on Portswood Road on the evening of 8 July, causing considerable damage to the restaurant and the Grade 2 listed 'Swiss Cottage' behind it. Fire crews are investigating the cause, which at the time of writing is unknown, but Police have confirmed that it is not being treated as suspicious.

## 13. AOB: None

The meeting ended at 8.20pm

**Date of next meeting is Tuesday 13 September**

The AGM will be on Tuesday 8 November. This will include a social event of refreshments after the meeting as per normal. The Secretary will organise this but will need volunteers from the committee to service the kitchen.