



Minutes of HRA Committee Meeting
Tuesday 19 March 2024 Highfield Church Halls 19:00h

Annex 1 HRA Crime WhatsApp group for Highfield - Agenda item 9

Annex 2 Notes from the Police And Community Together Meeting (**PACT**) - Agenda item 9

Present Committee: Roger Brown (Chair), Jerry Gillen, Nadine Johnson, Stephen Connolly, Christine Rawnsley, Nicolla Martin, Barbara Claridge

Others: Cllr Savage, Cllr Barbour, Cllr Finn, Kate Fay (University), Pete Errington (Collins Est),

1. **Welcome and opening remarks:** Roger gave a brief introduction and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He said that Nadine had been invited to an online Love Where You Live planning event but that he had instead written to Malkeat Singh stating that HRA would be interested in taking part but that there was a need for HRA to be involved at the planning stage and before decisions were made.
2. **Apologies:** Ken Burtenshaw, Martin Benning, Karen Edwards, Cllr Fielker, Cllr Bunday, Malcolm White (OTRA), Sue Swallow (OARA)
3. **Declaration of interests:** none
4. **Approval of minutes from the Committee Meeting 13 February 2024**
The minutes were approved
5. **Matters arising not covered elsewhere:**
 - a. SCC Scrutiny inquiry Private Rented Sector (CR). The inquiry began in November 2023. Christine explained that there had been 4 meetings of this inquiry committee to date and that as she joined so far on in the process, she had been unable to attend any so far. However she explained that she had accessed the content on the SCC Website.
<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteId=817>

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s65399/Appendix%201%20-%20Private%20rentals%20sector%20Scrutiny%20Inquiry%20Panel%20survey%20report.pdf.pdf>

Christine informed the committee on some of the more significant details that had been discussed to date, including the statistic that nationally the rental sector is 19% whereas in

Southampton it is 29%; that both universities plan to increase the number of students but do not have any plans for any increase in purpose-built accommodation.

The final report and recommendations were expected to be discussed at their next meeting (18 April 2024, 5.30pm). Following the Local Elections in May, the recommendations will be discussed at Cabinet.

Roger commented that The Private Rented Sector in Southampton would surely be included in the updated Local Plan and that HRA had already pointed out the housing issues regarding rising student numbers at the Universities of Southampton. HRA would need to have a view on the recommendations of the Final Report and that it would be an Agenda item once published (likely to be May or June Committee Meeting). Roger felt that OARA should be encouraged to also take a view and that he would mention this at the OARA Annual General Meeting which he would attend the following week.

Roger thanked Christine for her report.

- b. Roger gave a brief update on his correspondence with Richard Tyldsley of Unilink Bus. Although the HonSec had sent Roger's email expressing HRA concern at the scrapping of the U1A service to Central Station, Richard had not replied. Cllr Savage also commented that Richard Tyldsley did not appear to be in favour of communicating or engaging with the local community.
- c. Waste Collections. Cllr Savage responded at Agenda Item 8

6. University Liaison

Kate explained that the University was awaiting a decision on the Planning Application for the new building (the triangle?). The Science and Engineering Fair had been very successful. A University Professor was developing a Long-Covid online tool which would offer a symptom checker, advice on seeking support, and encouraged people to talk about their symptoms with professionals, friends and family.

Professor Nisreen Alwan's online Long Covid Tool - www.long-covid-care.org.uk

There was also a study researching the possibility of growing chickpeas, lentils and other legumes in the UK- <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/news/2024/02/can-chickpeas-and-lentils-grow-in-the-uk.page> Climate change was already impacting food staples like wheat and maize in the UK and other countries. Legumes like chickpeas, lentils, and the lablab bean (currently grown in sub-Saharan Africa and India) could help to diversify the UK food supply, making it less susceptible to extreme weather events, such as floods or droughts. The researchers had invited up to 100 schools to take part in this 'citizen science' project. Packs including seeds, measuring tape and pH testing kits would be sent to participating schools. Students would be asked to report back on growth, flowering and seed production, and the results would be updated live on an online map. Researchers would then be able to see how the plants were faring around different parts of the country. Roger thanked Kate for these updates.

7. Portswood Broadway ATZ Workshop

The HonSec had prepared a Summary Report from each of the eight Group Plenary's Responses that had been shared at the conclusion to the ATZ Workshop. This had been sent to Committee Members in advance of the Committee Meeting. It was explained that the HonSec would prepare a full report in due course. There was some discussion and the committee approved the report to be sent to Ward Councillors and Project Officers. The HonSec would also send the information to all Workshop attendees and it would be published on the HRA Website.

Roger thanked Barbara for an excellent event and presented her with a bottle of wine and box of chocolates in thanks.

Roger informed the committee that he had recently met with Martina Olley and Carloyn Ireland (the Transport and Planning Service SCC) who were involved in the next steps of the Portswood Project. He had been asked to Chair a Steering Group which would be set up by SCC to consider engagement with the broad local community over next steps, including the ATZ co-design. As Chair, he would be neutral. Barbara had been nominated to represent HRA. Four meetings had been scheduled between May and December with the Bus-gate trial in January 2025. A Fact Sheet had been published which included a likely timeline for the scheme to be up and running in a trial phase: <https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/portswood>

8. Information from Councillors:

Councillor Savage reported that the final report of the Climate Change Assembly had recommended increased use of buses, walking and cycling as a means of transport throughout the city. Roger mentioned that the issue of any success criteria for the Bus-gate scheme remained outstanding.

Cllr Savage explained that the dispute with waste operatives was ongoing. A small number of employees were jeopardising the new way of working which had been fully agreed with the Unions. The Council had engaged a Resolution Team. Further negotiations were ongoing but the Council had to see the process through to the new ways of working.

The Council Tax would rise by 4.9%

Councillor Finn reported that additional funding had been secured to increase engagement with rough sleepers, the Homeless and to improve Drug and Alcohol Services.

Councillor Barbour reported that the Iceland block in Portswood High Street had been sold. The site owner had sent a team to clear the Blockbusters site and concrete blocks had been placed to prevent it being used as a car park.

The future plans for 13 Grosvenor Road remained unclear.

The Love Where You Live community team members were beginning to engage with community groups about their next event.

9. HRA Crime WhatsApp group for Highfield

There had been 12 incidents reported in the WhatsApp Group between 13 February and 19 March 2024. This was a decrease of 8 in comparison to the previous report of 13 February. Full details can be found in Appendix 1

Nadine Johnson Digital Comms

10. Planning

- a. 112 Upper Shaftesbury Avenue – still no reply about possible breach of the Planning Approval from Project Officer, Craig Morrison. Cllr Savage asked the HonSec to send him some details.
- b. Planning refusal (OTRA) - 4A Westbourne Crescent, SO171EE (information) - Erection of a single-storey side garage extension, conversion of existing garage with new bay window, and roof alterations including 1 front dormer window to facilitate loft conversion. OTRA were very pleased at this outcome.
- c. 19 Blenheim Avenue (refer to OTRA) – replacement windows like for like – no objection likely
- d. 69 Tennyson Road Southampton SO17 2HG - Erection of a single-storey rear extension following demolition of existing extension. Currently 5 bedrooms but not on the HMO Register. HonSec to write to HMO Dept to ask if the property is an HMO.
- e. 243 Portswood Road Southampton (Rios Piri Piri) 24/00288/FUL Application for variation of condition 4 (hours of use) of planning permission ref 21/01285/FUL to change opening hours from 07:30 to 23:30 Monday - Saturday and 07:30 to 23:00 Sundays to 11:00 to 02:30 Monday - Saturday and 11:00 to 01:00 Sundays. HRA to object.
- f. 99 Livingstone Road SO14 24/00173/FUL Roof alterations including partial hip to gable and dormer window to facilitate loft conversion and change of use to a 7-bed house in multiple occupation (HMO, Sui Generis). HRA to object.

11. Reports

- a. **Finance** – This last month out income has been £537 and outgoings £169. HRA Current Account balance is £11,564 with £10,000 in the savings account.
Martin Benning, Treasurer

b. Membership

Nicolla Martin, Membership Secretary

Rolling paid up members 2024 = 69: all paid-up members = 349

b. Digital Communications (NJ)

Facebook/Website

There are now 1072 followers on the HRA Facebook page, an increase of 8 since HRA Committee Meeting of 13 February 2024.

Thank you to Pete, Barbara and to one other HRA member for their recent photos.

Innervision Hair & Beauty, Portswood are continuing to advertise on the HRA website for another year for £250, from 3 March 2024 to 4 March 2025. Sadly, Roger Smallman and Co have not renewed their advertisement on the website/Facebook.

Spring 2024 Newsletter

Pearsons Estate Agents have taken out a third of a page advertisement for £190.

Discounts, local business update and other information

Mettricks reopened yesterday, 18 March, with a new in-house brewery and coffee roastery.

The University of Southampton: had opened a new legal clinic that provides free – or pro-bono – advice for resident. The clinic was led by trainee lawyers from the University who were taking on clients in need of legal aid without cost. The clinic would advise on some of the most pressing issues facing people and businesses in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight – from laws around housing, to social justice, animal rights and the environment. <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/.../02/legal-clinic.page...>

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12. A.O.B.

Newsletter update: 80th Anniversary D-Day on the Common; WI Article; Lead Ranger; Rat walls and garages; Discounts; Lead article PB. Hope the Newsletter will be ready by the end of April.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Annex 1 HRA Crime Information Sharing WhatsApp Group for Highfield

1. Reported incidents by representatives in the WhatsApp Group (total: 9 incidents):

- **1** burglary, Brookvale Road. The homeowner was alerted by the house's internal camera system, rushed home and chased the burglar out of the house. Police arrived within 6 minutes. The burglar has been picked up, is due in court and expected to plead guilty.
- **1** attempted burglary, Crofton Close. Lady alone with 3 children. Men fled when she called out after door glass broken. Police attended.

PCSO Hayley Morrison, Cllr Barbour and possibly Cllr Savage will be visiting Crofton Close on Thursday at 1.15pm to reassure residents and listen to their concerns.

- **2** smashed up cars: one in Cemetery Road, the other in Norcliffe Road.
- **1** van in Shaftesbury Avenue rifled through.
- **1** scrambler motor bike racing around The Little Common near Highfield Road at very high speed at 3.30am. This has restarted again.
- **1** fly tipper with a white van in Osborne Road who was filmed by a local resident, received a £400 penalty notice. The original video was sent to Cllr Savage. As a local Councillor, he was able to chase this up with the fly tip team so it could be used in evidence to prosecute.
- **1** man, wanted by the Police, was pursued by them from Portswood, through several back gardens in Richmond Gardens and Donnington Grove and was eventually tasered and arrested in a garden in Donnington Grove.
- **1 or more** suspicious incidents of men swapping same size, shape and colour packages from the boots of two cars (a VW and a Mercedes) in the Oakmount Triangle area over several weeks. They were monitored by a local resident who took photos. The local resident indicated that they had tried reporting it but the 'police weren't interested'. I notified PC Adam O'Neill and emailed the photos at his request. They patrolled the area but saw nothing suspicious. They will patrol again this week.

2. Reported incidents in the Daily Echo, Southampton Police on Facebook, etc (total: 3 incidents)

- **1 - Southampton Police on Facebook 9/3/24:** reported that the Portswood Neighbourhood Policing Team were actively addressing community concerns in Portswood High Street with the enforcement of traffic regulations and educating e-scooter riders on the safe and legal use of e-scooters, and seizing those that did not comply with legal standards.
- **1 - The Echo 7/3/24:** Emergency closure of Portswood Road. A man was arrested by armed police for carrying a knife.
- **1 - Southampton Police on Facebook 15/3/24:** Officers from Portswood Police Station arrested a man for having a large amount of Class B and Class A drugs in his possession. What started out as a traffic stop turned into a significant drug seizure. All incidents are logged here:

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

3. Police and Community Together (PACT) Meeting of 27/02/24

Notes of the above are presented separately in Annex 2

4. New 'Dedicated Neighbourhood Officer' (or 'Bobby') for Portswood, Swaythling and Bassett - PC Adam O'Neill

Adam is due to attend the HRA Committee Meeting of 9th April 2024, although I understand that the date of the meeting might be changed.

5. CCTV in Portswood

Responding to my queries, Cllr Finn has ascertained that while the two CCTVs on the roof of Sainsburys, which currently need recommissioning, were installed by Sainsburys as part of the Section 106 agreement from when the store was built, unfortunately the agreement only covered the installation prior to occupation but not ongoing maintenance/operation. However, the Council, which has a live feed link to the cameras from their monitoring suite, will continue to work on getting them back online. Cllr Finn also confirmed that the two CCTVs have different ranges: one faces Portswood High Street and the junction of Highfield Lane. My understanding from PCSO Hayley Morrison is that the range could be as far as Westridge Road. The other CCTV camera faces the junction of Belmont Road and St Denys Road. Thank you to Cllr Finn for pursuing this.

Note: Other CCTVs in Portswood include two new ones being installed in Portswood High Street - one outside Roebridge farm shop facing Westridge Rd and one outside the Library opposite St Denys Rd, and an existing one outside Coffee#1.

6. 'Let's Talk' Survey launched to 'Help shape policing in your neighbourhood' by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary

This has been emailed to HRA by PCSO Hayley Morrison. She says it's regarding a messaging service to help the police stay in contact with their communities. She has asked if it could be disseminated to residents across Highfield. Visit this link to complete the survey: <https://survey.hampshirealert.co.uk/>

Nadine Johnson
Digital Comms

Annex 2 Notes from the Police And Community Together Meeting

Notes of PACT (Police and Community Together) Meeting, Portswood Church, 27/02/24

The meeting was useful.

On the 'Panel':

- PC Adam O'Neill, Dedicated Neighbourhood Officer, Portswood, Bassett, Swaythling
- Francesca Prior (FP), SCC Community Engagement Manager
- Malkeat Singh, SCC Community Engagement Officer.

In the 'Audience':

Cllrs Finn, Savage, Renyard and Denness (Bevois Valley).

Four HRA members attended: Barbara Claridge, two others from the HRA Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group and me. In total, it would appear from the Minutes that approximately 17 people attended. FP said it was hoped to hold these meetings bi-monthly.

1. I raised a couple of issues in response to queries from WhatsApp Group reps:

(a) Police to look at the community speed gun programme, particularly around excessive speeding in Highfield Lane (this was an action point under Matters Arising from the previous Minutes raised by one of our WhatsApp Group representatives)

The Portswood Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) had taken this on board and were due to undertake training in the use of the speed gun on 13/14 March, as National Police Guidelines dictated that they had to do the training course first. Once trained, the speed gun programme would be launched immediately as all cars are equipped. PC O'Neill said that Portswood NPT were keen on traffic and drug enforcement and will undertake this in their downtime. He said that they were often interlinked. He noted down Highfield Lane. Westwood Road and the junction of Tesco with Lodge Road were also mentioned. Cllr Renyard said that this was the first time he had heard of a NPT getting this level of training.

PC O'Neill said that when they attend a serious Road Traffic Collision, an incident report is sent to the relevant department. If they get enough of these, it prompts a review of speed or layout.

FP had contacted Highways for a representative to attend the meeting, but there had been no response. She will try again for the next PACT Meeting

(b) Handling of CCTV in 'low level' crimes

There had been feedback in the WhatsApp Group that occasionally the police are declining to take/follow-up what appears to be good CCTV with clear pictures of perpetrators. PC O'Neill acknowledged that CCTV isn't always taken in 'low level' crimes. He said that the police did have to prioritise things, it can be a resource issue, or sometimes footage can't be used for other reasons. However, he said if anyone had a grievance about good CCTV being refused, he would be happy to have a look at the footage to explain the decision.

2. Francesca Prior gave a brief report

For the month ending December 2023, there had been 222 crimes in the Portswood area, a 18% decrease as compared to 2023. Violent crimes were the most common (e.g. low-level assaults). This was followed by public order offences (e.g. shouting/swearing in the street); then vehicle related crime (vehicles taken and theft from vehicles); and then shoplifting.

3. Other issues discussed:

- **We were asked if 6.30 pm during the week was a good time for PACT meetings**
Suggestions included: 7 pm, staggering the times or as is. I mentioned that there used to be 'Cops and Coffee' - Beat Surgeries in places like Sainsburys on Saturday mornings which were useful for people while doing their shopping. PC O'Neill took this up and will look at using different business venues.
- **Electric scooters: enforcement has been quite lax.** The police now have more enforcement powers to seize illegal electric scooters (i.e. private e-scooters) on the spot and destroy them (crush them) if a formal notice/warning is ignored or if there is a road traffic violation. Voi e-scooters are legal and road worthy.
- **Cars parked on pavements/illegally parked in streets; an issue raised a lot.** There appeared to be a lack of enforcement in Portswood High Street. Traffic enforcement is mainly done by SCC Traffic Enforcement Officers; the police cannot enforce some illegal parking. For them to get more involved, it needs a change in the law. SCC had written a letter of support for such a change in Southampton. FP will put police in contact with Parking Enforcement Team to do a joint operation.
- **Low level drug dealing in parks will increase now the warmer weather is coming.** In the summer months there are lots of drugs operations running all the time; the police try to patrol as much as possible. Riverside Park is a real hot spot, also the Little Common. Reporting is encouraged, however small.
- **The police still have a Public Spaces Protection Order in place in Portswood High Street to control street drinking** and allow alcohol to be removed from people in the area. Alcohol is prohibited within the designated area. This is being enforced.

4. Post Meeting

I asked Adam if I could copy my HRA Committee report and any other emails to anyone else in case he was on leave/off duty. He said there wasn't really anyone; apparently Portswood NPT is not 24/7. However, he said that he and PCSO Hayley Morrison do the same shifts so I could also copy my emails to her in case one of them was absent.

Nadine Johnson, HRA Digital Communications Officer.