



Minutes of HRA Committee Meeting
Tuesday 14 May 2024 Highfield Church Halls 19:00h

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Present Committee: Prof Roger Brown (Chair), Nadine Johnson, Martin Benning, Ken Burtenshaw, Stephen Connolly, Dave White, Christine Rawnsley, Nicolla Martin, Karen Edwards

Others: Councillor John Savage, Councillor Marie Finn, Councillor Catherine Barbour, Councillor Matthew Bunday, Laura Graves (University), Pete Thomas (OTRA), Pete Errington (Uplands Est)

Welcome and opening remarks: The Chair, Prof. Roger Brown welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies: Barbara Claridge, Jerry Gillen, Councillor Thomas Gravatt (Swaythling)

Declaration of interests: none

Approval of minutes: The minutes of the 9 April 2024 Committee Meeting, previously circulated, were approved

Matters arising:

a. PB Steering Group: the first meeting would be held on the coming Thursday at which the terms of reference for the group would be discussed. One important factor would be the criteria for success for the ATZ. Information from the meeting would be published, most probably on the City Council website.

b. Enhanced Bus partnership Forum meeting 20 May: Barbara Claridge would be attending alongside Ward Councillor Finn and a representative of the Green Party as Councillor Barbour would be away. Roger acknowledged that Barbara had done an excellent job pushing this issue. She feels that the change is being driven by the University as much as Bluestar. This Forum meeting will be attended by the bus company – the next stage could be a representation to the university. *(Post meeting note from HonSec: Ward Councillors for Portswood and Swaythling were written to with a full background and asked to support HRA. Portswood Councillors Savage, Barbour and Finn have confirmed support: Swaythling Councillors Fielker, Bunday and Gravatt have also confirmed support. Cllr Finn confirmed she would also attend the Forum; Cllr Bunday has the Forum Meeting date in his diary and will try to attend. Councillor Barbour will be away (as will Cllr Savage). Cllr*

Barbour would ask a Green Party Representative to attend in her place. I made contact with Cllr Barbour's substitute, and she had the relevant documents to prepare for the meeting. HRA Member Graham Cole intended to attend as he has been resolute in his campaign to have the service reinstated.

The University had recently confirmed that the request to cut the Central Station stop was made in part by them, to enable students to travel from the University to NOCS in shorter time. I have requested data for this. Jon Walsh indicated the decision could be looked at in a meeting with operators (Bluestar) in August.

The HonSec had made arrangements to submit the HRA questions with David Garney, Senior Transport Planner – Enhanced Bus Partnership, who is organising the Forum Meeting. The HonSec will attend the meeting remotely and report back at the next meeting)

c. 112, Upper Shirley Avenue: despite this reassurance on 15 April from Planning Officer Craig Morrison: “ Unauthorised works in loft space

Following the grant of permission it appears that there may have been some attempt to sub-divide the larger room in the converted loft space however, having reviewed the enforcement file, it appears that this has now been removed so I believe this issue may be resolved. Please advise our planning enforcement team, and in particular Gavin Grayer if there is further evidence that more than 6 persons are living in the property and we can investigate further.”

The neighbour, a HRA member who lives in the attached semi, reported that his security CCTV picked up a plumbing supplies delivery of 7 shower trays, presumably for 7 en-suites. The saga continues

Cllr. Savage said that he would continue to ask the relevant case officer questions about this planning application.

d. Report of the Scrutiny Committee into the Private Rental Sector – the HonSec had circulated the report on Private Housing enforcement (HMOs) prior to the meeting:

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s70916/SCC%20Enforcement%20of%20PSH.pdf>.

And the links to these documents to read before the meeting:

[Draft Final Report Scrutiny Private Rented Sector Southampton.pdf](#)

[Draft Recommendations and Conclusions Scrutiny Private Rented Sector Southampton.pdf](#)

Christine Rawnsley said that she had found a summary of the discussions of each session on the City Council website and that there would be supplementary guidance issued which would deal with HMOs in certain areas of the city. The Report would be put to the Cabinet in June – Cllr Finn

said that she would ask the housing officer for more information. Roger stated that HRA would like to be involved in any further consultation around the issue of HMOs.

The Hon Sec reported (for the meeting) that possibly the most important thing to note was that the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme status ran out in 2023, although on reading the report, it looked as though the Council would continue that particular scheme. However, there seemed to be no requirement currently in place for HMO properties under 5-bed, in Portswood or Swaythling, to hold an HMO Licence. Any extension of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme had to be approved by Cabinet (June 2024) to be implemented by the end of 2024.

Information from Councillors:

Cllr. Barbour – the Mayor Making ceremony would take place on 15 May. Cllr. David Shields would become the new mayor with Cllr. James Bailey becoming the new Sheriff Elect.

25 people had written to Cllr. Barbour concerning bin collections. It appeared that the issues had now been resolved but Cllr. Barbour urged people to monitor the situation and continue to report any issues.

13, Grosvenor Road – it appeared there was a buyer (this property had previously caused HMO/Landlord issues).

All Aboard Festival - happening on the 5 June – Councillor Savage volunteered to send Nadine information for the website.

Cllr. Finn – there were concerns that carers are not always Blue Badge holders. Cllr. Finn urged people affected to contact their local carers group.

The city council have an ambition for all residents in the city to be within walking distance of a play area for children. Portswood Rec Users Group has started a petition asking for play equipment to be reinstated. They need 750 signatures to get the issue discussed at the Scrutiny Committee. A link to the petition will be posted on the HRA website.

Cllr. Savage – reported that he had a new Cabinet appointment as the Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero. He would be responsible for all the green spaces across the city as well as blue spaces. He recently held a meeting with the Director of Wastewater for Southern Water who appeared supportive of improving the water quality. There were plans to monitor the numbers of Atlantic salmon in the River Itchen - they had been falling over recent years. The licence under which the Kent Road Water Treatment Works operates was written in 1978 and the licence does not include the emission levels of nitrogen and ammonia nor does it include the need for UV treatment to kill bacteria before discharging into the river. Cllr. Savage also said that the Environment Agency needs to be persuaded to update the licence. DEFRA also had suspended all

new applications for safe swimming areas which included the R. Itchen. A new application process would start in the summer and would include input from all river users not just swimmers.

The Councillors were asked about the switching off of street lights at night – Cllr. Savage replied that main roads still had all night street lights. The reasons he gave for other street lights being turned off at 12 midnight was to save money and improve the night sky. He suggested that there had been no evidence of an increase in crime in the streets with the lights off. He also said that if residents in a particular street presented their Councillors with evidence of a problem, then the decision could be reviewed.

7. University Liaison – presented by Laura Graves

There had been a recent meeting with residents groups, organised by the University, to discuss the disposal of rubbish from student houses at the end of year (HRA had not been represented as CR had not been well). The meeting had also been attended by representative from Posh Pads letting agency. It had been agreed that an extra collection would take place on Saturday 29 June. Laura said that she would let Nadine know more details for inclusion on the HRA website. Laura also said that there would be a meeting after the end of term to discuss how the rubbish collection worked.

The University would be recruiting up to 140 new academics posts.

Southampton Science – October Books this Thursday at 7pm. Laura also mentioned an AI art festival at The Arc in Winchester on 2 June.

There were a number of Active Living Cafés across the city – Laura to give Nadine the details.

Pete Thomas asked about nuisance trees on University land overhanging residents' gardens. Laura suggested that he look at local2u@soton.ac.uk and report the problem.

Other University information in Annex ii.

8. HRA ATZ Workshop – BC had produced the Final Report of the outcomes from the meeting which the Committee endorsed.

In order to maintain member interest in the importance of the forthcoming ATZ Co-design workshops, all Attendees and Facilitators would receive a copy of the report which would also be published on the HRA Website. An e-news would be sent to all HRA members with a link to the report. It would also be offered to the PB Steering Group.

9. HRA Crime WhatsApp group

Reported incidents since the last HRA Committee Meeting of 9 April 2024: total: 6, although within this there were multiple incidents. This is an increase of 6 since the last meeting where there were no incidents. Details in Annex i.

Nadine Johnson Digital Comms

10. Planning

- a. 178 Portswood Road –had been granted planning approval for a previous similar Shisha Bar application. Possibly this had timed out and this was a reapplication. Therefore no grounds for HRA objection
- b. 4A Westbourne Crescent – Pete Thomas gave an outline of the planning applications as there had been issues with the plans for windows in the roof which the owner of the house had rectified. The re-submission had still included UPVC windows and garage doors. PT would be following up on this and HRA may be asked to support if the owner continued not to make the necessary changes. *(Post mtg note: RB submitted an HRA objection in BC’s absence)*
- c. 3 Abbotts Way – under control
- d. 243 Portswood Road – Piri Piri had applied to increase opening hours. HRA objected. Application had been refused.
- e. 158 Portswood Road – the new café Cha Sha. An application for 24-hour opening has been submitted. HRA will object; deadline 4 June.

Reports

- a. **Finance** – Income - £1006; Outgoings - £619 (£582 of which was the newsletter).
Current Account balance - £4071
High Interest Savings Account - £19,118
Reserve Account -£1041

Martin Benning Treasurer

- b. **Membership** - Paid up members as of 13 May 2024 = 347.

Rolling: January 24; February 9; March 44; April 77; Total Rolling 154

New members paid by BACS.	2
Renewing During April: Paid by BACS	36
Paid by cheque	33
Paid by cash	8
Total	77
Due in April and did not renew (as yet)	21

55 others have not renewed for two years and have been removed from the Membership database

Nicolla Martin Membership Secretary

c. Digital Communications –

Facebook/Website

There were now 1084 followers on the HRA Facebook page, an increase of 5 since HRA Committee Meeting of 9 April 2024.

Thank you to Ken and two other HRA members for their photos.

Discounts

Mettricks Portswood have withdrawn their HRA Member discount of 10% on food, Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm. They said: "due to the current economic climate and being a small local independently owned business, it is not viable for us to continue with this offer for the time being."

Other local news

Portswood Hardware are selling their lease on the shop. It is understood that they have now found a buyer and the potential buyer will not be using the premises as a hardware shop. It is also understood that the matter now has to go to Southampton City Council for approval.

Nadine Johnson Digital Comms

12. AOB

Karen Edwards has kindly taken over the distribution of newsletters to street reps from Nicolla Martin.

Date of next meeting - Tuesday 11 June.

Annex i

9. HRA Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group

1. Reported incidents since the last HRA Committee Meeting of 9 April 2024: total: 6, although within this there were multiple incidents. This is an increase of 6 since the last meeting where there were no incidents:

- A young man asked a boy returning home from school outside his house in Khartoum Road about collecting a bike/repairing a bike basket, saying he was given this address. This was not the case. The parents reported the incident to the police.
- 'Serial Flasher' exposed himself on and near to The Common (Daily Echo 22/4/24). Incidents were later reported in the Riverside Park area, Swaythling Station and other areas (Daily Echo 10/5/24). The police did not say whether the incidents were connected.
- One of the Crime Group's Representatives reported that a neighbour's daughter and her friend were flashed at outside Cantell School. The man then followed the friend home in a white Kia. A description of the man was given.
- Some public order offences and sexual assault in Highfield Lane and Portswood area were reported on Southampton Police on Facebook (26/04/24).
- A young man was knocking on doors in Church Lane after midnight and running off. Good, clear CCTV footage.
- A bike was stolen outside the Post Office in Portswood in broad daylight on 13/5/24 while the owner was in the GPO. This should be caught on the City Council CCTV if the camera was pointing in the right direction at the time

2. PACT (Police and Community Together) Meeting

The next PACT Meeting is at 6.30pm on Tuesday 21 May 2024 in Portswood Church, Portswood Road.

3. Councillor membership of the HRA Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group

Following the local elections on 2 May 2024, Councillor Mintoff, Swaythling Ward, withdrew from Group. Councillor Thomas Stephen Gravatt, newly elected Councillor for Swaythling Ward, is to be invited to join the Group.

Annex ii

7. University

34-year research project to unlock new insights into asthma and allergies

A 34-year follow-up of one of the oldest and most comprehensively studied birth cohorts is underway on the Isle of Wight to reveal new insights into allergies and asthma.

Researchers have been following up on the health of over a thousand people on the Isle of Wight from when they were born. They've been studying the prevalence, natural history, environmental risk factors and genetic susceptibility of allergies and asthma.

Read the full story on [our website](#) - also featured on [the BBC news page](#).

Southampton gets £1.4million to train future cancer scientists

The University of Southampton have been given a massive [cash injection to train more doctors as clinical scientists](#) dedicated to the fight against cancer.

Nearly £1.4million of funding was provided by Cancer Research UK to develop a new generation of experts working on life-saving treatments.

Clinician scientists play an essential role in translating cancer research – bridging the gap between the work carried out in laboratories and trials involving patients.

Read more about the University of Southampton's pioneering cancer research at www.southampton.ac.uk/research.

University to boost research excellence with major academic recruitment campaign

The University has launched a major academic recruitment campaign, to appoint up to 180 new academic colleagues by late 2025. This is an exciting investment in our already thriving staff community, at a time when we are further strengthening our reputation for education, research excellence and enterprise.

We are seeking to enhance our diversity with a variety of academic roles available across a broad range of subject areas and at all levels of seniority, including for prospective colleagues from non-traditional backgrounds.

There will be a particular focus on four key impact themes, chosen to build on the University's existing strengths and to address important challenges and opportunities: Artificial Intelligence, sustainability and resilience, decarbonisation and engineering better health, as well as enhancing disciplinary strengths.

For information visit [our website](#).

Southampton Science Comedy with Les Carr- Thursday 16 May at October Books, Portswood Road (to note this is on Thursday this week)

Join comedians from the University of Southampton for a delightful evening of science-themed stand-up comedy.

This month's guests are Merry Matyn and Joe Mayo, who will be previewing their new show "Nerd Mentality".

Merry (host of the "Let's Get Mean! The Average Game Show", winner of Queerovision '22 and semi-finalist of West End New Act of the Year 2024), and Joe (writer & researcher on BBC's "QI" and as seen on David Mitchell's "Outsiders").

Doors open at 7pm for a 7:30pm start. The venue is unlicensed, so Bring Your Own Bottles.

[Book your free ticket via eventbrite.](#)

You're invited: AI Arts Festival 2024

On Sunday 2 June, the [Web Science Institute](#), is proud to be hosting its inaugural Artificial Intelligence (AI) Arts Festival at the [ARC](#) and the [Theatre Royal](#) Winchester.

Join artists and musicians from our university, the Winchester School of Art and around the world to explore how AI and the arts are coming together in media from photography, fashion, and literature to comedy and jazz.

The interactive all-day event is open to the public and will showcase the ways in which the University of Southampton is using the convergence of AI and the arts to explore crucial questions around how we are going to live responsibly and in harmony with powerful machines unleashed by revolutions in computing power and machine learning.

Register for your free day time tickets [here](#).

ESRC Festival of Social Science 2024

The 22nd annual [Festival of Social Science](#) will be returning 19 October – 9 November this year, with the University of Southampton taking part for the sixth time.

Alongside this year's festival there is an opportunity to take part in an event celebrating Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts on **Saturday 9 November** in Southampton City Centre.