

Minutes HRA Committee Meeting Tuesday 7 October 2025

Highfield Church Halls 19:00h

Committee members present: Roger Brown, Paul Beard, Ken Burtenshaw, Stephen Connolly, Jerry Gillen, Nadine Johnson, Nicolla Martin, Barbara Claridge, Martin Benning



Non-committee members present: Cllr Katherine Barbour, Cllr Matt Bunday, Cllr John Savage, Sonia Cotterell (Chief Exec SUSU), Paddy Bedi (Associate Director Corporate Engagement. University of Southampton), Graham Linecar, Sarah Schofield, Ed Hill, Cllr Matt Bunday

1. **Welcome:** Roger introduced Sonia Cotterell Chief Executive SUSU and Gagandeep Bedi, the recently appointed Associate Director for Corporate Engagement SU
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Fielker, Cllr Finn, Malcolm White (OTRA), Karen Edwards, Dave White, Pete Thomas, Christine Rawnsley, Dave White
3. **Declarations of interest:** none
4. **Approval of the Minutes:** 16 September Committee Meeting - these were accepted
5. **Matters Arising** not covered elsewhere
 - a. Steering Group letter of 26 September - this had been circulated with the Agenda. It was assumed that the SG had in effect been disbanded. Nothing more had been received from Councillor Lambert
 - b. OSMC Meeting: Chair's letter and Recommendations – this was discussed briefly as both had been circulated with the Agenda. The Cabinet would consider the recommendations and normally agree some or all. A question was asked if there was a timescale for spending the TCF grant – no confirmation.
 - c. ASB Meeting arranged with Cllr Allen – RB, BC and NJ would attend. A walk along Portswood Broadway would conclude the short meeting. RB commented that the seat at Flagship Coffee was an unhelpful aid to anti-social behaviour. BC added that it would be nicer to have several seats and no ASB
6. **Information from Councillors**
 - a. Councillor Finn (Agenda Annex.iii. for full report): Student Residences; Parking in Oakmount Triangle; Traffic calming in Brookvale Road; Westwood Road bus; Clean Air outside schools and the Shared Prosperity Fund
 - b. Councillor Barbour reported that her biggest concerns at present were around the demonstrations outside the Highfield House Hotel . The demonstrators' use of megaphones had made the situation even more difficult. She was concerned about motorised bikes using the pavements on Portswood Broadway. The negative situation was partly due to the cumulative effect of the demonstrations on the locality, on the sheltered housing next door to the Highfield Hotel, on old and ill people and on ordinary residents. Portswood was not a peaceful place at the moment.
She had held a meeting with Paddy Bedi (University) and with Katherine Holmes (Brookvale RA) about road safety at Highfield Infant School
 - c. Councillor Savage also reported on the cumulative impact of the demonstrations. He had been in touch with Cllr Allen and the police to see if the loud hailer and large digital signage was possibly breaching planning regulations. Each week the situation was worsening incrementally. It was very frustrating.

Paul Beard thanked Cllr Savage and said advance intel was important and that without it the situation could get out of hand. John reported that there had been menacing emails to Councillors (this was not a crime, social media postings could turn things very nasty quickly).

Roger Brown commented that without the PSPO some behaviours could not be managed

Cllr Savage further reported that there had been some progress with Conservation Areas in the City regarding solar panels. He had attended the Labour Conference in Liverpool and attended a Junior Ministers meeting. He had met the Rivers and Floods Minister and these conversations had been well received. A meeting had been organised with trade union members of Unite at the Waste Management Depot

7. University Liaison

- a. Sonia Cottrell thanked HRA for the opportunity to attend. She briefed the meeting about the Student Survey at the three-month point in the Bus-gate Trail where the results were in line with those of Highfield residents. The report had ensured that the student voice was heard more locally. She then outlined the start of term for students. She particularly mentioned how life for students was much more positive now than during the years that had been affected by Covid restrictions. There had been a gradual shift in student behaviour and they seemed more reflective, were not so boisterous and were generally enjoying University life.

Ed Hill commented upon local issues around Highfield Hall with late night parties. Paddy Bedi (University) responded that it was possible to consider neighbourhood relations, 8 weeks into term, via Public affairs. It was possible to report via 'Local2U'.

Roger thanked Sonia for her contribution

- b. Paddy Bedi, Associate Director Corporate Engagement, addressed the meeting and talked about the revised plans for PBSA on Avenue Campus showing a display board. A public consultation meeting had been arranged for the following week.

Sarah Scholfield (HRA member) expressed concerns that even without new student halls, roads like Khartoum Road were impacted by deliveries to or waste collections from Avenue Campus at times when these should not be taking place according to current regulations. She also commented that if the residences were built, those nearby roads would be sandwiched between HMOs on one side and Student Accommodation on the other.

Graham Linecar (HRA member) commented that with regard to HMOs how many could there be in a local area? What about Purpose Built Student Accommodation? There was no Council Policy on cumulative impact and there was a really strong argument to request a review on that basis. PBSA was not regarded in the same way as HMOs.

The previous Local Plan stated there should be no building on Venue Campus open space. There was no updated Local Plan. Previous guidelines stated that student accommodation was best placed in the City. He reported disappointment that he had received no notification, no notice of substance about the revised plans and he lived next door to Avenue Campus on Highfield Road. The revised residences remained too close and too high.

Ed Hill (HRA Member) expressed dissatisfaction with the distribution of communication about the revised plans and the open meeting. The mailing should have been to the whole of Highfield as the plans would affect everyone. He also asked who would be at the consultation event and criticised the

resolution quality of the plans that had been posted on the University website. Details, like heights of buildings and distances were unable to be read.

A question was asked about the data to support the growth in student numbers

The Council was criticised for having no plans for Purpose Built Student Accommodation

Ed asked how many student bedrooms there would be – Paddy confirmed around 400

A comment was made that the original proposals were still live on the University website and that this was confusing.

A further question was asked about the impact of University staff / student parking on local roads as it seemed to be becoming worse in the Oakmount Triangle. Paddy agreed to look into this.

The University site at South Stoneham was mentioned for PBSA but there was no information about this

BC agreed to write an e-news to advertise the Public Meeting about the revised plans for Avenue Campus along with early notice of the HRA AGM

Roger thanked Sonia and Paddy for attending

8. HRA Crime WhatsApp Group for Highfield (NJ)

- a. Report (Agenda Annex ii.). Nadine reported that as there had only been 3 weeks between Committee meetings the report was ‘thin’
- b. Shoplifting in Boots – HRA member report (Agenda Annex.iii.). Sahar Schofield addressed the meetings as she had sent in the report. She expressed the opinion that if something wasn’t done to address the shoplifting, Boots would withdraw from the High Street. Waitrose reported daily shoplifting. Leightons Opticians now had to lock their door and entry was obtained by ringing a doorbell. This was a question for Councillor Allen to address and the Police.

Paul Beard said, “Portswood could turn into a new Shirley High Street. If we lose the proper shops”

9. Planning

- a. 25/01165/ELDC - 53 Roselands Gardens Southampton SO17 1QJ. A statement had been provided by the landlord to prove use and Licence as HMO for more than 10 years
- b. 25/00862/FUL | Change Licence of use from a dwelling house (Class C3) to a house in multiple occupation (HMO, Class C4) | 256 Burgess Road Southampton SO16 3AU. **Planning Refused** (See Agenda Annex.vi.)

10. Reports

- a. Finance (MB) – income/expenditure for the last period: Current Account £2315; High Interest Account £26,055
- b. Membership (NM) - renewals; new members; not renewed (to follow)
- c. Digital Communications (NJ) Report (Agenda Annex.v.)

11. A.O.B.

- a. Next meeting AGM Tuesday 11 November 2025 (49th)
- b. Tree replacement Donnington Grove – Christine R was concerned because a large pavement tree had to be cut down due to storm damage. Residents had been told it would not be possible to replace it due to narrow pavements. She wondered if there was a Council Policy about replacing damaged pavement trees.

- c. Autumn Newsletter – this was in hand and would be printed and delivered before the AGM on 11 November. The Street Reps had been contacted and some adjustment had been made to cover unavailability or opting out due to other circumstances. More Street. Reps were needed!
- d. HRA Hosted Open Studios event (MB). Martin explained that this Art Festival happened every August bank Holiday in Avenue Church Premises and was well supported. Over the last few years it had been organised by Outer Avenue RA, but they wanted to take a break. He proposed that HRA should take this over for at least 2026. This was agreed and Martin would co-ordinate.

End of Committee Meeting 8.05pm

Next meeting 11 November AGM

12. Reserved Business Committee Only

- a. AGM Preparation – outline Agenda and Financial Statement attached (Cttee Members only). The HonSec produced a sheet to share out responsibilities. This was accepted
- b. End of 2024 Financial Report (to follow for Committee Members). Martin informed the Committee and this was agreed