

## THE FRIENDS OF OLD PORTSMOUTH ASSOCIATION, 18 January 2023

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Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held on 18 January 2023 at BAR.

**Present** - Gail Baird (Chair, Website), Sharon Morris (Heritage & Conservation) - Minutes, Eileen Measey (Environment), Mike Dobson (Traffic), Liz Winder (Treasurer), Graeme Swinburne (Planning), Bob Stewart (Spice Island), Mark Jeffery (Ward Councillor).

**1 Apologies** - Chris Attwell (Ward Councillor), Ian Holder (Ward Councillor), Anna Koor (Secretary), Mary Tollow (Membership), Sonia Banks – see item 4.

**2 Declarations of Interest** – All reminded to confirm their declarations of interest should any matters of that nature arise during the course of FOOPA business.

### 3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting on 14 December 2022 were circulated to all via email and approved by the Chair.

### 4 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

**Social Secretary** – Sonia Banks has decided that she is now unable to commit to the Social Secretary role due to changed circumstances, so this Committee position is still vacant.

**School Streets Initiative** – We had previously been told that a public engagement exercise is to take place during January however nothing has yet been heard on this. Cllr Mark to follow-up.

**Draft Safeguarding Policy** – Anna to follow up with Sandy Davis at Hive, when she returns.

### 5 Correspondence and Communications

**Gunwharf Gate Association** – Contacted Gail to explore mutual support. They consist of 160 households. A new crossing in St George's Road is believed to be on the PCC 2024 plan and would benefit any new use of the Mary Rose & Dragon public house. Mike requested contact details - Traffic and Wightlink are likely shared interests.

**Portsmouth Society** – Gail has been approached by The Portsmouth Society, to explore mutual interests/projects.

**6 Treasurer's Report** – Details for the month / year have been prepared along with the report for the Annual Review. The significant expenditure in December was the Christmas event, £830, and the insurance premium, £88.66. The December month end balance is £9493.16.

**7 Membership Report** – Approximately 47 households who paid in 2022 have not yet paid for 2023. Sadly this is a time to report members who have died during the year. Membership is currently 197, made up of 133 households. Higher numbers of short-term rentals locally may also account for decline. A social meet event was suggested as the AGM is limited to 60 attendees. Eileen and Sharon volunteered to do some leaflet deliveries.

### 8 Planning

**Mary Rose Pub** – This was called in to Planning Committee, which was earlier today. PCC Planning has resourcing and retention issues, which shows in the consistency / quality of its work. Sharon suggested it is difficult to build a team and communication paths for new staff following Covid, especially if staff are working from home.

### 9 Heritage & Conservation

**Local Listings Document** – No change. Nor any action on the feedback provided by the FOOPA committee on the Heritage Statement. Inconsistencies in Conservation Area adherence are not limited to Old Portsmouth.

**10 Social Programme** – The next event is the AGM on 21 March 2023 with a talk on the local Seagrass project.

### 11 Environment

**Long Curtain Grassed Embankment** – Eileen is trying to get photos of the recent planting exercise with St Jude's pupils. Gail reminded Eileen to retain the receipt for the plants, to be reimbursed. Wildflowers are due to be planted at the beginning of May. Eileen will get a week's notice of this to identify and alert volunteers.

**Grand Parade/Nelson Statue** - We have been offered a single bed as a trial. However only 'wildflowers' are permitted and details are to be agreed with PCC. FOOPA's questions are: what defines a wildflower and is new planting planned by PCC for the other beds? Surely salt-tolerant is more/as important? A water barrel will be needed – will this be supplied by the Council? Eileen/Gail to follow up with Hannah regarding volunteers.

**Hotwalls / ARTches** – Wildflowers will be planted at the base of the trees. Their roots are pushing up the gratings.

**Square Tower New Planters** - On PCC's advice, Gail had contacted Historic England (HE) about planters by the Square Tower. HE batted this back to liaise with PCC in the first instance. FOOPA's reading of the guidance suggests that moveable planters would be OK. There is no response from Zoe or Kimberly.

**12 Website** – Nothing new to report. Any items, please pass on to Gail to promote.

### 13 Traffic

**Deputation to Traffic & Transportation Committee** – Following Mike's deputation on 8 December, Mike submitted a FOI request for details of the traffic metrics used to explain how PCC's Road Safety Manager, Michelle Love, could state that Old Portsmouth does not have a problem with speeding. This is contrary to the evidence gathered by FOOPA over the last decade, together with analysis in the Old Portsmouth Area Traffic Study. Still waiting on response. In the briefing pack for councillors the lead officer replaced references to 'FOOPA' with 'Resident', giving the impression the statement was from an individual not a community organisation. The response: it was necessary for anonymity. However FOOPA has made numerous deputations and comments over the years and PCC has never removed references to FOOPA. This backfired for PCC because it was reported in The News and on local radio. Compounding this, another officer questioned Mike's mandate to speak on behalf of FOOPA. The committee agreed this raises important issues regarding PCC's democratic process and their treatment of community organisations, potentially undermining their existence. Gail will be writing to PCC to seek a full explanation and apology. Mike had asked Cllr Chris to seek clarification on this issue at the last meeting. Mike to contact Cllr Pitt (copying ward councillors) to ask how questions and answers are counted, as concern is that the FOI will be unanswered. Similarly when the public report issues to PCC, there is no feedback to say that the repair or correction has been made, or won't be addressed, so how does the Council report this?

**New Councillor Walkaround** – Overdue! Mike to suggest dates/times.

**14 Ward Councillor Reports** – Regarding the two road crossings on Broad Street and High Street, we have still not been advised of the final consultation results, but the funding is there and the need is urgent. A Grand Parade consultation regarding repairs to the saluting platform and improvements will take place by the end of the year. There are concerns over inflation affecting PCC spending – approx. £24m is needed to maintain the same services.

### 15 Committee Admin

**FOOPA AGM** – Will be held at Cathedral House on Tuesday 21 March 2023. New T&Cs: maximum capacity is now 60 people and an hourly fee of £34 has been introduced for non-profit groups. Gail has secured a speaker from the Solent Seagrass project.

**March Meeting** – There is a clash at the Bowls Club so this may have to be rescheduled.

**Draft FOOPA Health & Safety Policy** – To finalise. Anna to work on a basic Checklist. Trial event will be the AGM – Anna is the 'Event Owner'.

**Public Liability Insurance** – Following their research, Gail and Liz set up a policy with PolicyBee for £88 per year. The policy document was circulated to members and all agreed this policy seems to cover FOOPA's current needs. There is a query over the maximum number of members a qualifying organisation should have - Gail will enquire.

### 16 AOB

**Memorials at Point** – Bob requested that the memorial tributes are cleared/tidied.

**Restorative Communities** – Gail attended a meeting earlier in the day. Sadly no 'young people' were directly involved. They are looking to Motiv8 and Portsmouth in the Community to get involved. Guidance is needed from PCC about what is possible. A suggestion was made about trained 'Pastors/Wardens' with volunteers being able to engage effectively with young people, for example on the BAR Apron. This sort of visibility has improved the crime numbers in Guildhall Square at club closing times. Restorative training is offered and other techniques were discussed. Mike sent an explanation of 'Verbal Judo' after the meeting. There will be a Motiv8-run exhibition in the Round Tower around Easter. A question was raised about follow-up on how the money allocated is spent?

**Committee Vacancy (Planning)** - Gail announced that Graeme will be standing down from the Committee at the AGM, though Graeme did suggest that he may be available for some consultancy.

**17 Date of Next Meeting** – Wednesday 15 February 2023, 7.30pm, BAR Technologies Building.