

## THE FRIENDS OF OLD PORTSMOUTH ASSOCIATION, 26 July 2023

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Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held on 26 July 2023 at Pembroke Gardens Bowls Club.

**Present** - Mike Dobson (Traffic), Sharon Morris (Planning, Heritage & Conservation), Bob Stewart (Spice Island), Mary Tollow (Treasurer and Membership), Anna Koor (Secretary), Chris Attwell (Ward Councillor).

**1 Apologies** - Eileen Measey (Environment), Gail Baird (Chair, Website), Councillors Mark Jeffery, Ian Holder.

**2 Declarations of Interest** – All were 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 June 2023 had been circulated to the Committee by email and agreed by the Chair with no amendments.

### 4 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

**BAR Fencing** – The Committee commented that its purpose seems to be to corral the young visitors who come to the site in fine weather. With cars parked on the BAR apron, some residents feel it has deterred large gatherings, though these groups have since moved to other equally hazardous areas.

**Right of Way** – The long-running campaign has raised almost £4000 in donations over the last 4 weeks according to the applicants. The funds are needed to contribute towards legal advice from a Rights of Way barrister in preparation for a Public Inquiry on 21 November 2023.

**Resurrecting Neighbourhood Forums** – Having come to a halt during the pandemic, Anna agreed to enquire as to their re-activation with Leader and Cllr Steve Pitt. Cllr Chris understands Steve has taken up that portfolio but said that funding may be a problem. The Committee referred to the draft Statement of Community Involvement currently out to public consultation, which highlights the important role of Forums in the planning process.

### 5 Correspondence and Communications

**Re-opened Long Curtain frontage** – FOOPA raised this again with Cllr Chris as Sharon had not received a response regarding installation of interpretation panels and No Cycling signage.

**6 Treasurer's Report** – The closing balance at 30 June in the current account was £4334.74 and £5010 in the savings account including accrued interest. Anna will email Andy regarding the overpayment for the last 3 months hire charges. A balance of £10 is owed to the Bowls Club for tonight's committee meeting.

**7 Social Programme** – Gail was not able to attend tonight so discussions regarding a potential Royal Opera House visit were carried forward to September. A provisional date for a Quiz with Fish n Chip Supper has been booked with the Bowls Club for 27 September with pay bar. It was decided this would be promoted towards the end of August as many members are away. Ticket prices to be discussed and agreed.

**8 Membership Report** – One new member joined last month, bringing the total to 253 comprising 173 households. One member paid their annual subscription in July.

### 9 Traffic

**Southern Water at Pembroke Road** – Emails have been bouncing around as FOOPA attempts to establish what has gone so awry with communications to residents, programming of works and the lack of management by PCC. Following an alert from FOOPA member and historian Rob Kennedy, Mike's research with Historic England, with help from local historian Celia Clarke, has been positive. There is a Tudor Tunnel that runs under Southern Water's temporary pipework compound that is at risk of damage. When PCC was alerted they decided no action was necessary as it is not a scheduled monument. However it is listed on the Portsmouth Historic Environment Record and there is a legal requirement to pay regard to heritage assets - covered by the Environment Act. Mike is meeting Colas on Friday to explain why the signage / diversion routes are confusing, and point out inadequate adherence to national guidance on cyclist safety at roadworks. Given this unacceptable situation, FOOPA would like this case examined by PCC's Transport Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel. Anna will contact its Chair, Judith Smythe.

**Parking Strategy Workshop** – The Council invited selected organisations to take part in an early scoping workshop on 18 July. After submitting a request, Mike attended as a FOOPA residents' group representative. There was near universal opinion among attendees that the city has too many cars and those cars are getting bigger, taking up more road space. PCC might like to consider charging motorists based on vehicle size.

**Road Crossings at High Street/Broad Street** – Cllr Attwell has had some difficult conversations with officers regarding the urgency of implementation. The latest committed date for implementation is October 2023.

**St Jude's School Streets** – Residents remain unaware of its implementation, bar being told to wait until the new head at St Jude's starts in September. Sharon highlighted the urgency following a collision when a school parent drove into Sharon's parked car with such force it was shunted onto the pavement. She reported that the Penny Street safety bollards have been toppled by drivers twice in the last month.

**Car Club** – Despite getting the go-ahead at a decision meeting of the Traffic & Transport Committee on 23 March 2023, and FOOPA persistently asking, there is still no news regarding a launch date.

## 10 Planning

**Pembroke House conversion to Government (MOD) Offices** – The case is being heard at Planning Committee on 2 August. It was agreed to draft a deputation and request it be read out by a ward councillor.

**Tesco - Mary Rose/Gloucester Hotel** – A secondary application for Tesco signage has been submitted. Sharon has taken a look and has no objection to it – the signage seems to have been designed sensitively. Sharon repeated FOOPA's request for a heritage board at the site, explaining its 300 year history.

**45 St Thomas's Street** – Sharon submitted comments to planning regarding lack of detail on design and material aspects, considering its listed building status. The proposed work is visible from the street, however the application implies it is not.

## 11 Heritage & Conservation

**Restoration of Memorial** – Cllr Chris was updated about the possibility of a transcription of the stone tablet memorial to two horses, because the inscription is fading. It is along the public path from Pembroke Road to Governors Green near the Royal Garrison Church - [http://www.memorialsinportsmouth.co.uk/old-portsmouth/comus\\_and\\_chief.html](http://www.memorialsinportsmouth.co.uk/old-portsmouth/comus_and_chief.html). Cllr Chris will take this up with PCC's David Evans.

**12 Environment** - Eileen is away but submitted a report.

**Wildflower Bank** – Following a few bursts of rain, the wild flowers across the grassy banks of Long Curtain have bloomed ferociously. Now that it's clearly successful, Eileen would like to make this an annual event.

**Nelson Herb Bed** - Thanks to the faithful gardening volunteers the bed remains in good shape, despite the drought. The woody herbs survived but others are in recovery.

**The Moat** - Tim Ferrero from the Seagrass Project would still like to explore a trial patch but other commitments have delayed this until September / October.

**Fullers site at Point** – There is no confirmation of rumours that the brewery has submitted plans for a hotel.

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

**14 Ward Councillor Reports** – A new chief executive is in post: Natalie Brahma-Pearl. She comes from Crawley Borough Council where she was CE since 2017. The new bus tenders have been determined – the No. 25 timetable will remain the same with Stagecoach.

**15 Committee Admin** – None.

## 16 AOB

**Hampshire Calligraphers Exhibition** – At the cathedral until 31 July 2023.

**Clean Air Zone (CAZ)** – Portsmouth's CAZ was launched on 29 November 2021 following ministerial direction from the Government ordering 60 UK cities to reduce air pollution in the shortest possible time. Many clean air campaigners were of the opinion that the class and size of CAZ should apply to a much wider area and a greater range of polluting vehicles. At the time, the Council was hopeful that the CAZ would be lifted after 2 years. It is not known if the city's air pollution levels have been reduced to safe levels. Cllr Chris will ask.

**Duke of Buckingham** – Its new reincarnation as Florio's D'Italia is due to open on Tuesday 1 August.

**Nell's Café** – Unfortunately this business is due to close on 29 July.

**17 Date of Next Meeting** – Wednesday 20 September 2023, 7.30pm, Pembroke Gardens Bowls Club.