

THE FRIENDS OF OLD PORTSMOUTH ASSOCIATION, 20 September 2023

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Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held on 20 September 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), Gail Baird (Chair, Website).

1 Apologies - Eileen Measey (Environment).

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 26 July 2023 were circulated to the Committee by email and agreed by the Chair with no amendments.

4 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Clean Air Zone (CAZ) – Anna had a response from Bethan Mose, PCC's Transport Delivery Manager: the CAZ will remain in place until compliance with legal limits are met and proved to be permanent. Portsmouth must then provide demonstrable evidence of success, such that removal of the CAZ does not lower air quality. The earliest review is November 2024 and any changes are subject to Government approval. The first year operational report is available here: <https://cleanerairportsmouth.co.uk/reporting/> but does not include air quality outcomes. This data is being analysed by Government and will be sent to PCC shortly. A review of the air quality impact of the CAZ will then be brought to Cabinet.

5 Correspondence and Communications

Re-opened Long Curtain frontage – No interpretation panels as yet, however they could be imminent.

Resurrecting Neighbourhood Forums – Anna has liaised with PCC's Lee Todd, Marketing Communications & Engagement and has looked at facilities at Portsmouth Grammar School – the David Russell Theatre holds 325 people and has disabled access. Anna is awaiting confirmation/cost details from PGS and PCC so that a date can be set (Jan/Feb 2024) to hold an AGM and elect a new committee.

6 Treasurer's Report – The only outgoings have been the monthly website costs. The closing balance at 31 August 2023 is £4534.24 in the current account and £5019.35 in the savings account.

7 Social Programme – Flyers went out for the Quiz / Fish n Chip Supper at the Bowls Club on 27 September. Mary has had 34 bookings at a ticket price of £12.50pp. The venue cost is £75 and the Fish & Chips are £10 per head including delivery, so the event breaks even. It was decided that the proposed Opera House trip would prove too pricey and there is no discount or benefits of a group trip. There was a brief discussion of local trips that might be of interest. Mike recommended Stanstead House – Anna will investigate. The Bowls Club is not available for the FOOPA Xmas Lunch – all will investigate alternatives.

8 Membership Report – There are currently 174 households and 255 members.

9 Traffic

Southern Water (SW) at Pembroke Road – Mike sent PCC (copied to councillors) a detailed summary of the SW fiasco on 24 July outlining the community's concerns and referencing SW's statutory responsibilities under the Water Services Act. There is a legal requirement on water companies to consider the natural and heritage environment when undertaking works. SW appears not to have done so when setting down heavy pipework over a Tudor tunnel. SW may have acted unlawfully and PCC as custodian should have conscientiously managed the situation. PCC refuses to accept any fault or admission that they should do better in future. Anna will chase a response from Cllr Judith Smythe, Chair of PCC's Transport Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel. If this fails then FOOPA will consider submitting an FOI.

Road Crossings promised for High Street/Broad Street – With the lack of progress and no information from councillors, Anna agreed to write to Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Cabinet Member, Traffic & Transportation.

St Jude's School Streets – Now schools are back and weather deteriorated the hazardous vehicle gymnastics outside St Jude's and at the junction with Peacock Lane / Penny Street, has resumed.

Car Club – The Enterprise scheme is up and running. Registering and joining is easy via the website but the rates are not that enticing. £20 annual membership for the first year might persuade some to test it out.

10 Planning

Pembroke House conversion to Government (MOD) Offices – Planning permission was refused, the reasons given were loss of greenery and the parking allocation breaches the Council's travel to work policy. Sharon is concerned that her deputation has not been attached to the case record. She pointed out the disparity with the senseless removal of hedge along the adjacent Pembroke Park frontage.

Tesco - Mary Rose/Gloucestter Hotel – Still no response to Sharon's request for a heritage board.

45 St Thomas's Street – The application for a new balcony on this listed property was approved. The applicant did not submit details of its materials. FOOPA objected on these grounds and that, contrary to the application, the new structure will be visible from St Thomas's Street and Lombard Street.

90 St Thomas's Street – Work continues on the front boundary of the property.

Pembroke Road, Fire Escape rear of The Salon – There is an application for its repair.

6 Oyster Mews – The application has been withdrawn. Comments by FOOPA were removed from the online portal and have since re-appeared, without explanation.

Statement of Community Involvement – Sharon submitted a lengthy response to the consultation, and has had confirmation of receipt. An updated document is due to be published this Autumn.

11 Heritage & Conservation

Restoration of Memorial – Sharon welcomed the enthusiasm from Cllr Chris and James Daly, PCC's Cultural Development & Projects Officer. However, all agreed it is not a prominent memorial that warrants large sums spending on it. A simple panel transcribing the text of the memorial is adequate, however it not advisable to attach it to the historical wall. As the path is very narrow, the panel could be mounted in the same position along the much wider parallel path, which is more widely used by the public so will be seen.

Street Art, Broad Street – As part of the Portsmouth Look Up Street Art Festival on 9/10 September, two new artworks have been created on Broad Street, one of them in the listed Capstan House Arch. More information here: <https://www.lookup-portsmouth.co.uk/> Sharon asked if whether consent should apply in conservation areas – it is understood that in other parts of the city, permission was required. Neighbours have so far responded positively.

12 Environment - Eileen is away.

Right of Way – A successful Crowdfunder campaign reached its £4K target, enabling the Camber Action Group to obtain advice from a Rights of Way barrister. Statements of Case have been submitted to the Planning Inspector by 4 other parties (all objectors to the Right of Way) including the Council.

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

14 Ward Councillor Reports – No councillors present.

15 Committee Admin – None.

16 AOB

Duke of Buckingham – Florio's D'Italia is proving very popular with local residents as well as visitors.

Hotwalls & Camber Dock Restorative Support Group – Gail joined today's meeting. There are now 30 or so people who attend from local organisations, businesses, as well as residents. They agreed that the Camber Community Day on August Bank Holiday weekend could have been more successful with better planning. Smaller sub-groups were tasked to come up with different ideas for events/activities. Gail related views from residents, who feel these meetings are not having any impact to the point that they are becoming disengaged. One of the biggest problems, that could be easily fixed, is the Police crime reporting system, which is not fit for purpose. It is not acceptable to ask residents to stay on the phone for 2 hours or report online with difficulty. Without meaningful data, police resources cannot be allocated effectively.

Port Community Open Day – On 7 October 2023, register to book free tickets at <https://portsmouth-port.co.uk/news/register-your-interest-in-our-community-open-day/>

17 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 18 October 2023, 7.30pm, Pembroke Gardens Bowls Club.