

The Federation of Bath Resident's Associations Minutes of a meeting held at 6.30 on 18th July 2019 at Widcombe Junior School

1 Chairman Robin Kerr welcomed all to the meeting after tea and coffee had been served. The **Secretary** read out apologies. (Details at end). Everyone introduced themselves. There were 8 Observers. (details at end)

2 Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting of 9th May 2019 were proposed by Nick Tobin and seconded by Charles Draper.

3 Outcome of Council Elections: The Chairman reported that the new (Lib Dem) administration are now getting their feet well under the table, which is good, as time is short and there is much to do. He had had a long conversation with Cllr Dine Romero, the new Leader, on 24th May: Nick Tobin and the Chairman will be seeking a face to face meeting with her very soon. The Cabinet members with whom FoBRA are most likely to interact are:

- a. Cllr Richard Samuel, as Deputy Leader, responsible for Resources, Kirstie has circulated a Statement from him.
- b. Cllrs Neil Butters and Joanna Wright (shared), on Transport. Patrick Rotheram and he had a meeting with them on 11th June and he said they would be seeking another in early September.
- c. Cllr Tim Ball on Housing, Planning and Economic Development. The Chairman had a meeting with him on 17th June, accompanied by Patrick, at which FoBRA's points of concern had been listed, with all of which he seemed to agree. Moreover, he has already put those words into action over Party Houses.
- d. Cllrs David Wood and Sarah Warren (shared), Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services. Cllr Wood deals with Refuse policy, so Rachael has already arranged a meeting with him. The other half of this pairing, Cllr Warren, does Pollution, including Clean Air Zone, so Patrick will be getting in touch with her.

4 Chairman's Report: The report had been circulated on 14th July. The Chairman had 5 items he wished to comment on:

- a. Licensing. As FoBRA has no expert the Chairman had talked to Ian Perkins, who is. He says that TARA are still formulating their response but thinks it is likely to focus primarily on the code of practice: he will keep us posted so that we can put ours together before the deadline.
- b. NORA membership. Pleasingly some of the FoBRA membership are planning to join. These so far are Pera, Widcombe, Lansdown Crescent; and also Bathwick Estate and Cavendish Road. This is good as NORA needs to have numbers for it to be listened to by Govt.
- c. Short term letting and party houses. The Chairman hoped that all had read the letter from FoBRA in the Chronicle last month (also on the website) with reference to Airbnb. The Cabinet Member, Cllr Tim Ball, has personally assured the Chairman that he supports it and that he will say so in public! The story of the party house in Greenway Lane has had a good outcome, after much campaigning and use of the FoBRA's anonymous Nuisance Log. The Appeal was refused, and the owner was re-served with the Enforcement Order and must close the party house down within two

months. This is the first time this has been achieved in Bath so we hope it will set a precedent. There was an article in the Chronicle 18th July. The Inspector turned down the Appeal on all grounds, these being:

1. Unauthorised change of use
2. Unacceptable nuisance
3. Undesirable reduction in the long-term housing stock.

Questions were asked as to how information was gathered: apparently photographs had had an impact. Taxis etc at unsavoury hours etc.

d. Refuse. The summary of the Chronicle's two week campaign on rubbish and litter written by Rachael Hushon had been circulated. Rachael will be meeting the Cabinet Member, Cllr David Wood on return from holiday. The Chairman mentioned also the third episode of the Chronicle's campaign, on 18th July, where it covers the collection of Business Refuse, as well as the recently appointed 'Litter Police' and whether their contracts should be renewed.

e. Climate Change. The Chairman showed copies of Bath Preservation Trust's 'Warmer Bath' which may soon be updated and reissued, and copies of the Council's SPD as promised.

5 FOBRA Biennial Priorities: As the Chairman had said at the March and May meetings, this is the time when FoBRA reviews its Priorities. We look at these once every two years, and refresh the associated Position Papers more often. At the last meeting, we dealt with Traffic & Air Pollution; Planning & Development Management; and Housing; while agreeing to drop Engagement as a separate Priority, subsuming it into general administration. Following that meeting, Diana Lockwood proposed a new Priority entitled 'Environment' submitting a thoughtful essay on it, and proposing the incorporation into it of several items from elsewhere. This is taking shape, in discussion with various other Subject Experts, and looks likely to include Water Pollution & Flood Risk, Litter Waste, and Noise & Light Pollution, while alluding to the coverage of Air Pollution already covered under the 'Traffic & Air Pollution' Priority. If this were to come to a successful conclusion, we might, perhaps, propose amalgamation of Planning & Development Management with Housing; and possibly add a further one, on Governance, as this subject will probably rear its head with the BCF revisions, but nothing is decided yet. There is no rush; as we need to take this review carefully. He proposes to come back with a fuller proposal in September.

6 Rec and New Stadium Proposals: The Chairman said PERA had provided a briefing paper which was issued with the agenda. The Friends of the Rec had also provided us with a campaigning pamphlet which was available; there were copies on the table. Peter Knight was then asked to take us through his latest update. Peter said that not much had changed in the designs although the car park had been reduced from 700 spaces to 670! The PR by the development company was fantastic, and most of the images were from above, therefore not showing how large the development is to be. There is generally a feeling that people are not anti-Bath Rugby nor even a new Stadium, but that what is being proposed is far more than that and will be huge and completely out of scale with its site. There was concern also about the possibility that there would be a temporary stadium on half the ground during construction: would this ever be returned to a recreational green space? The Environmental Impact Statement has been produced which is the prelude to the planning application: 75 pages + appendices. The process should be that BANES

and the developers will look at this and then BANES should consult with others such as FoBRA, PERA and others.

It is still felt that the car park will cause pollution, congestion, noise and reduce the green spaces in the centre of Bath. The car park is all to do with maximisation of finance. The Chairman said that there may be a difference in view now that there is a new administration; the Lib Dems seem more green and worried about the car park. It is thought that the new administration are aware of, and have reacted favourably to, PERA's position on the environmental and heritage impact of the stadium. With a break from the norm the Chairman asked the Observers if they had anything to say. Steve Osgood talked about the issue of the covenants of 1922 and 1956 and the idea of a court case. In general FoBRA and PERA distanced themselves from this as all the covenants are independent and people felt differently about their individual covenants, though Nicola Isherwood pressed for better explanation of the Covenants' significance, which the Chairman agreed to obtain. **Action - Chairman**

The most common thread throughout the discussion was that the proposal would remove a large area of green space from the centre of Bath when everyone, Government, Council, activist, etc were trying to encourage green spaces to be kept in towns and Cities to let them breathe!

In conclusion it was agreed that FoBRA and PERA were closely aligned. PERA had asked, and FoBRA agreed, to seek amendment of the Local Plan to remove references to car parking on the Rec. **Action – Vice Chairman**

Emilio Pimentel-Reid asked whether FoBRA had a position on Green spaces and it was agreed that we should revisit our position. **Action Mark O'Sullivan**
Diana would add green spaces on her position paper. The Chairman pointed out that Bath had to find space for 7,000 new homes which had meant building on Green Belt in Odd Down, yet at the same time at least 1,500 homes had been lost to Short Term Letting ('AirBnB').

There then followed considerable discussion about the use of green spaces in Bath with short term commercialisation. The local plan will have to be reviewed in this respect.

7 Planning Report: The report had been circulated on 5th July. Nick Tobin reported that Bath City Football and Hartwells planning applications had had objections to yet more student accommodation, but the supporters of Bath City Football were a large number. General discussion as to how much Bath needs more student accommodation, particularly when in Green Park House half of the student accommodation was now AirBnB. This represents the removal of brown field sites which could be used for families. Locksbrook bridge is due possibly for refurbishment as a pedestrian and cycle bridge. The funding stream for this had been used also for the Quays Bridge, as the Council could not afford it, but the money will be found from WECA sources, earmarked for cycling infrastructure. It was asked whether there were any way of finding out how many rooms which had been built with planning approval for students were now AirBnB, as unbelievably there appeared to be no way of finding out. Is it legal to change the use? There is an issue of safety which is

why in Green Park House they have divided the student accommodation from the AirBnB. This will be discussed with Cllr Ball.

Greenway! highlighted that the Foxhill skyline was exceptionally sensitive both in WHS and in AONB terms, yet despite strong objections from FoBRA, the BPS and others it was now threatened by the Mulberry Park development as a result of a reserved matters consent recently given under officer delegation, which would leave virtually no tree screening within the developers' control. It was urged that FoBRA should try to recruit other protection for the skyline, for example calling on the National Trust to acquire and conserve the stretch of woodland immediately outside the site boundary. The decision also suggested that Council officers might require additional training in conservation policy issues, perhaps through a visit to cities like Edinburgh which seemed to handle such cases rather better. This is also a problem at Charlecombe Valley where the houses are far more prominent than the old MOD buildings. The farmer is planting trees, by arrangement with BPT and Charlecombe Parish.

It was asked whether the Council Delegated officers are doing a satisfactory job. At the NORA AGM an officer from the RTPi came to brief on their help facility called 'Planning Aid'. Kirstie sent out the charts from the presentation on 25th May. It was hoped that Associations may consider using the service, especially as it's largely free.

8 Transport: Patrick Rotheram's report had been issued on 5th July. The new administration is reviewing the CAZ boundaries but have confirmed that they will proceed with a Class C CAZ (excluding cars). There might be some minor adjustments to the scheme. Adam Reynolds was invited to talk about Low Traffic Neighbourhoods. The idea is to reduce all traffic and discourage people from using residential areas; this has been done in Islington, Greater Manchester, Cardiff, Waltham Forest etc. A vital prerequisite was to have a traffic movement plan for the city which identified key routes. He was asked whether this would ultimately make some areas much more polluted whilst others became pollution free. Patrick pointed out that it was our policy that iconic places like Queen Square and the Circus should also be largely traffic free, but a comprehensive traffic management plan was required to protect other areas.

9 Summer Party: Despite the wet weather the party had been a terrific success in the Davison's beautiful house. 42 people had attended and it looked that there might be a small profit. Please give a round of applause to Morny – who although not in attendance did receive a generous applause. The meeting was asked whether they would still like to hold a winter reception, as it would be an excellent time to meet the new administration. The meeting agreed that a winter reception should be held.

Action - Treasurer

10 AOB:

1. Mark O'Sullivan had asked for a questionnaire to be sent out on health issues which was important as authorities are being encouraged to work together and B&NES is expected to become closer to Wiltshire and Swindon so very helpful to have a good response. The survey needs to be completed by 31st July.

2. Adam Reynolds had attended Wera Hobhouse's Climate Change conference and had thought it good. There had been discussion about the airport extension in Bristol. Adam felt that were it not for the car parks there would be no financial viability which is why the airport management is not enthusiastic about a tram or trains to get to the airport. There was a general feeling that no one in the room was for the expansion, as Bath was and would be in the flight path.

3. Stephen Huard talked about the use of Victoria Park for events like the Pub in the Park. The noise level had reached 65 decibels for 3 days which is the maximum allowed for the year! The Circus will not be coming as it is now too expensive. There is worry over the diesel fumes used by the generators, such as at a concert at the Rec should the plans go ahead and it be used more as a venue. The good thing is that many events have been cancelled. Apparently the Council inform people who complain about noise to contact the actual event. Things are improving but the Association is working hard on the problems and other Associations are now getting involved. The meeting felt that the Council should charge more for events to be held there.

Future dates: Thursday 19th September at Widcombe Junior School

Kirstie Rowlandson 19th July 2019

FoBRA Attendees – Meeting 18th July 2019

Anderson	Janet	Camden	Representative
Barnes	Neil	Sion Hill and Summerhill Road RA	Treasurer/FoBRA Treasurer
Baldwin	Malcolm	CARA	Representative
Bellamy	Terry	Macaulay Prospect	Representative
Donnithorne	Pip	Sion Hill and Summerhill Road RA	Secretary
Draeger	Justin	Cavendish Road Society	Chairman
Draper	Charles	BERA	Chairman
Du Bose	Van	St James's Square	Representative
Edwards	Nola	Foxhill RA	Chairman
Feltham	Graham	LOPRA	Chairman
Hoyle	Ben	Avondale and Osborne Road	Representative
Huard	Stephen	Marlborough Lane and Buildings RA	Chairman
Humphreys	Ceris	PERA	Representative
Isherwood	Nicola	RCS	Chairman
Kerr	Robin	LCA	Chairman/FoBRA Chairman

Knight	Peter	PERA	Representative
Labram	Jeremy	Camden RA	Representative
Lockwood	Diana	Hensley and Egerton	Representative
Miles	Tony	UOPRA	Representative
Nesbitt-Larking	Jazz	Bath Spa SU	President
O'Sullivan	Mark	Greenway Lane Area Resident Forum	Representative
Reynolds	Adam	Cycle Bath	Representative
Pimentel-Reid	Emilio	Cavendish Road Society	Secretary
Robertson	Megan	Bath Spa SU	Vice President
Rotheram	Patrick	Vineyard RA/FoBRA	Transport Lead
Rowlandson	Kirstie	UOPRA	Secretary/FoBRA Secretary
Roy	Mike	Riverside Community Voice	Representative
Rushton	John	Sydney Buildings	Representative
Sandford	Paul	UOPRA	Chairman
Tobin Chairman	Nick	ABCPRA	Chairman/FoBRA Vice

Observers and Speakers

Greenwood	Caroline	PERA	Observer
Hatch	Roy	PERA	Observer
Prof Morley	Bernie	University of Bath	Observer
McLaughlin	Graham	PERA	Observer
Osgood	Steve	PERA&SBHA	Observer
Sutton	Verna	PERA	Observer
Wright	Nola	Bathwick Estate	Observer

Apologies

Clark	Colin	Bathwick Hill RA	Representative
Davison	Morny	Catharine Place	Representative
Franklin	Theresa	Cavendish Crescent RA	Representative

Hallam	Liz	LOPRA	Representative
Hushon	Rachael	Lansdown Crescent	Representative
Little	Stephen	Royal Crescent Society	
Lobo	Alisha	University of Bath SU	Representative
Richardson	Rob	Avondale and Osborne	Chairman

Annex A

PERA update on the REC Stadium Planning application.

PERA has had no further contact with Arena 1865 Ltd regarding the stadium development since January this year. We understand that they are finalising their planning application and that they will make public those plans during July. We expect the planning application to be lodged soon afterwards, perhaps late July/Early August.

We are in the process of collating our objections and would welcome working with FoBRA on this.

Having surveyed our membership and discussed the issues extensively PERA's main objections fall under:

Environment

The proposed commercial stadium is almost double the size of the existing stadium. The impact on the local environment will be considerable. It is estimated that the short stay car park alone will produce an additional 5,000 car movements a day on local roads to the stadium. These roads are already some of the most polluted and congested in Bath, exceeding National and European pollution safety limits. The proposed car park will significantly increase these pollution levels as well as add to congestion. PERA is totally opposed to any scheme that produces more pollution/congestion in the local area. An important part of the green heart of Bath will be covered in concrete.

Heritage.

The driver behind this design is the need to provide an attractive return for the financiers and not to add to the rich and deep heritage of the city. It's footprint is massive. Visitors to Bath come to see it's two thousand year old UNESCO recognised heritage - not a collection of retail outlets built on top of a car park (aka another Podium) - albeit with a sports stadium on top.

Alternative design

Having recognised these concerns, PERA members believe that it is possible to build a "Environmentally led" stadium on the existing footprint, built to roughly the same height as the existing stadium. Such a stadium would not have a car park nor encroach further onto the Rec. Its size and design would be in keeping with its heritage position.

The Planning issues we face are considerable, not least because in the Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan

https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Placemaking-Plan/cs_pmp_vol_2_bath.pdf, on page 44 - covering The Rec - it states that "In discussion with landowners explore options for parking in this area or on adjacent sites" The draft plan still needs to be reviewed and approved by the current administration. Given green issues were at the heart of the Lib/Dem policy, particularly pollution

and congestion, it is hoped that the issue of a car park on The Rec will be reviewed and reversed.

We need FoBRA's support in pushing for the reference to a car park on the Rec to be removed from the Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan as soon as possible.

Nigel Websper (Chair PERA)
Peter Knight (Treasurer PERA)

3 July 2019

Chronicle Campaign on Refuse – July 2019

The Chronicle have launched a campaign “Clean up Bath”, so far appearing in two July issues. Many residents are writing in complaining about scavenging Gulls, litter bins overflowing, and recycling sacks and boxes being left out beyond bin collection day.

Introduction: The work of BID, led by Allison Herbert CEO, has been discussed, as the commercial waste collection in the city centre was blamed for the littering and Gull issues there. A Mayor’s Tour Guide made his observations about littering in the city centre and detailed how stretched the cleansing team are. Allison Herbert has discussed the BID arrangements for waste removal, attempts to use gull proof sacks, and how the Suez refuse team often helped the Council during seasonal peaks.

Subsequent letters group together the issues of littering, commercial waste and domestic waste. One resident (from Royal Crescent) even suggested a return to bin men collecting from basements of Georgian Houses (this assumes that bins can be stored in basements of sub divided buildings – most can’t because owners of basements don’t want other flat dwellers to use their courtyards for bin storage, never mind how much time this would take the crews). There are a lot of suggestions about communal bins for domestic waste, many people questioning enforcement.

Domestic: What we do know is that the changes in domestic refuse collection have resulted in massively improved recycling rates, especially food waste, and a big reduction in non recyclable waste, which is good news. This has saved money for Bath too. The streets that traditionally cared about their environment still do and have generally complied with the new scheme. Sometimes containers go missing but they are replaced quickly. The scheme which was introduced did recognise that the dense flat dwelling areas of heritage Bath were not designed for refuse storage. This was sensible and resulted in these streets retaining weekly collections, albeit with smaller capacity reusable sacks.

Elderly or disabled residents can request help with “assisted” collections, and residents can order replacement containers from the website.

The streets which have always been a problem (pre changes) have not got worse (a few have improved due to local residents pressurising owners of HMOs e.g. Park Street or using Fixmystreet.com).

Residents’ Associations in many streets are proactive in cleaning up their streets.

Communal bins (used extensively across Europe and in certain London Boroughs) wouldn’t help the Council meet environmental targets to reduce landfill. People slip back to irresponsible habits and bin-stores can overflow or else the Council have to commit to emptying daily - not very responsible or cost effective. They become magnets for fly-tipping.

Enforcement seems to be controversial. Those who comply feel that enforcement is appropriate, but the culprits do not.

Gulls cause controversy too, but many feel that numbers should be controlled in humane ways.

Litter: The cleansing team have a difficult job: however they can be directed more effectively by residents who use fixmystreet.com . People just need to care enough to report it! The response rates seem very good (data to follow). In addition the council have worked with the Universities this year to ensure the massive student clear up is paid for by them not by the Council. I would urge to council to charge more for commercial events which take over our parks , as the organisers often clear up only the immediate vicinity and ignore the wider park area which can be left with overflowing bins.

Commercial waste: Residents in the city centre are concerned about the placement of large bins which often overflow. Compliance and proper management for businesses outside BID should be raised.

FoBRA plans to find out the following when we meet with Councillor Dave Wood, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency & Neighbourhood Services:

1. Current recycling rate vs. pre change, current food waste recycling tonnage and rates
- 2 Levels of non recyclable waste collected now vs. pre change . Savings in tonnage, and £
3. Reports to fix my street and average response rate.

4. Council plans to monitor and reduce Gull population,

5. Enforcement plans

Rachael Hushon, 15th July 19