

Federation of Bath Residents Association

Minutes of the meeting of 14th January 2021 held on Zoom at 6.pm

41 members were present

The Chairman welcomed everyone and announced that Paul Crowsley, who is FoBRA webmaster, has joined the Executive. He also mentioned Mark Hynes from the newly formed North Road RA who was attending as an observer with the intention of NRRA joining FOBRA.

1. Minutes. There were two corrections to the previous minutes, in 3. the date was 2022 not 2025 and the final paragraph in item 5 was to be removed. Future Minutes are to be streamline.

2. Friends of Englishcombe Lane Fields. This group was voted on as an affiliate member. They have amassed over 3,000 signatures for their petition. They intend to take it to the council.

3. Liveable neighbourhoods/LTA. The Council's report on the survey is still awaited. No known timescale.

4. Transport. A report has been circulated before the meeting. The period for reply to the City Centre survey is end of January, there is to be a public enquiry into the expansion of Bristol Airport at the end of 2021. Bath alliance of Transport and Public Realm will look at it and Ceris Humphreys will talk to Robin Kerr with respect to a plan of action.

5. Planned City Centre Security. The Chairman introduced Ian Perkins from TARA who explained the situation with the proposed City Centre Security, which appears not to have given any thought to the 1,400 households (approximately 5,500 people) who will be affected by the inability to take a vehicle in or out of the centre of the City. It is claimed to be a Police initiative, but there does not seem any plan for the disabled, for emergencies, deliveries etc, there would be no blue badge parking. It was asked whether it was a Government initiative, it was thought not. The Chairman agreed to liaise with TARA and Ian Perkins so see what FoBRA can do to help TARA.

6. Bath Business Support Group. Kari Erickson has been busy with the newly formed committee. There are a number of initiatives in the City trying to see what help can be given to struggling businesses. Kari mentioned one which is the local currency app PIXEY which encourages money to be spent in the local community. This information will be sent to all RAs. The Council had set up some initiatives, but had not invited FoBRA. The group is talking with other groups to try and establish a holistic approach.

7. Planning. The Local Plan is open for comment from 7th Jan to 18th Feb. It would help if all individual RA's commented and sent copies of their comments to FoBRA. There was concern expressed about the future development of the Bath Spa Campus site for which a development application is being applied. There should be care about the trees and the traffic on local roads if a large housing development is planned. It was asked whether FoBRA has yet pressed the council on the erection of masts for 5 G, at the moment the applications have been refused, but if an overall plan were asked for it would make more sense than arbitrary applications. They could then be included in the Local Plan. FoBRA was asked to press the Council.

High Common and Entry Hill golf course. Nothing much has happened, final tenders for Entry Hill were meant to be in on 14th January. Despite a petition of over 1,000 names the Council continues to ignore the inhabitants, the High Common has a petition with 840 names and is still collecting names. But it appears that the Council will decide the matter and then inform the neighbourhood. The Chairman has written from FoBRA to the Council about both sites, but to date has not had a response. It was suggested that the head of Aspire Heritage should be asked to come and talk to FoBRA.

8. Covid and the University. A statement has been sent with the Universities action plan for the return of students. Prof Bernie Morley said that the lateral flow test was far better than the press had stated. Universities cannot force students to have a test as it is considered medical intervention. The number of cases was retained within the university area and he did not believe that the students has caused the virus to spread to the local area.

9. Local Democracy. The Chairman stated that he felt very strongly that Bath should have a parish level council, with Chester, Bath is the only place not to have local representation. All the tiny villages within BANES have elected parish representation. He is in talks with Dine Romero and would like to press this forward.

10. AOB. Charles Draper's committee obtained money and help from the Council to plant trees, his colleague would be happy to talk to FoBRA about how other RAs could also obtain help. Graffiti is becoming a problem in Widcombe and along the river passed Locksbrook road. It was suggested that Paul Crossley should be spoken to as this problem would fall under his remit. The Chairman was asked whether he has spoken to the Leader of the Council this year, he replied he was intending to before the end of the month, It was pointed out that we are always hearing the point of view of the cyclists, would it be possible to have members of the Bath walking group also from the Bus users group to come and talk to FoBRA, perhaps even become affiliates. Neil Barnes reminded all RAs that he would be asking for their numbers (number of households) before sending out the demand for the annual dues. Theresa Franklin asked that Angharad Hart who runs Aspire be included on any further Zoom meetings or discussions on the High Common / Approach Golf course. She and her company applied for an ACV for Approach Golf Course. She was successful and the golf course has been designated an ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE since she is now a primary stakeholder.