

**MINUTES of a Meeting of the FoBRA Committee
on Tuesday 13th January 2015 at 6.30pm in Widcombe Junior School**

1. **Welcome** by Robin Kerr, Chairman, to 21 representatives, 3 observers and guest speaker – details on the last page..
2. **Conservative Councillor Tim Warren** was the second of the Council Party Leaders to speak to us about their aims if successful in the Local Government elections on 7th May. He wanted a Council which is efficient and well run; invests in the long term; and puts residents first.

“Our No.1 priority is transport and air quality... support transport strategy recently adopted ... need for the Eastern park and ride ... will work closely with bus companies - involving the Universities as well - seeking introduction of oyster-style cards and improvements in timetables. Support campaign to re-open Corsham station and for a new station in Saltford ... innovative ways of improving traffic flows using professionals ... work with residents on parking review. More concerted action needed on gulls, street maintenance and cleaning.”

Questions	Answers
Patrick Rotheram (Vineyards): We want action not words on transport/air pollution and continuity in implementation.	Yes. Parties must work together on these long term matters. The strategy is a bit lacking in detail and leaves some tough decisions.
Marian McNeir (Lansdown Crescent): Would you cut down HGVs through Bath?	Yes but we need to get Wiltshire on side - they are now looking again at a Westbury by-pass.
Ken Ayers: (BERA) Is an A36/46 link road in your priorities?	Yes but we can't promise it as it is dependent on agreement with other authorities.
Ian Herve (Henrietta Park): 2,000 homes are at an unacceptable flood risk	Believe there are plans for possibly beneficial marina and wetlands scheme.
Tommy Parker (TP) (Bath Uni S U): Student housing need - but not to pay Council Tax!	It won't happen - but landlord business rate status needs clarification with Government.
Chris Beezley (Beech Avenue): No clear policy on HMO/student housing in Oldfield	After current developments, looking for stability with more of any future needs at campus.
TP argued not enough room on campus. Robert Gould (Bath Spa Uni S U): HMOs and student housing not always the same.	Scope for numbers and plans to be clearer and correlated.

3. **St James's Park R A** change of name. Laurie Coombs, Secretary, had reported a Special General Meeting on 11th November 2014: had resolved to change its name with immediate effect to **St James's Park cul-de-sac Residents Association** with their Constitution and Objectives modified to include the change. These were noted and accepted without dissent.
4. **Minutes** of the meeting on 4th November 2014, previously circulated - A proposed correction had also been circulated in item 7 (Party Houses Progress): After TARA (in the middle) delete *elected Community Protection Notices, for which there is a threshold defined by local agencies, taking account of harm or potential harm, persistence and adequacy of response;* So the sentence will simply read: *TARA "pulled the Community trigger" on 20th October ...* The Minute thus corrected for the record was agreed without dissent.

Bank Mandate – The Secretary reported this had been updated to provide for any two signatures on cheques from among the four current executive office bearers.

Members List 2015 had been circulated at the turn of the year. The Secretary asked that any updates required be sent to him as soon as they arise. BERA has asked us to note Charles Draper does not take over from Julie Trollope as Chairman until agreed at their AGM in March.
5. **The Chairman's Report**, previously circulated, was noted. He made the following comments on four items in his Report, and added three new ones:
 - a. **Council's Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on Upstream Flooding** - Ceris Humphreys has said this may not happen until after the elections.

- b. **Police Station changes** meeting on 20th January – The Chairman plans to attend and, of course, others are welcome too.
- c. **Amplified Busking Consultation:** There will be a Council workshop on 25th February.
- d. **FoBRA subscriptions** – The Chairman urged those member Associations who had not yet paid their subscriptions to send to the Treasurer now as it was not fair to others.
- e. **A letter in last week’s Chronicle** asked who “these Federation people” were, and questioned our right to call for reductions in off-street parking and city centre driving. With the help of other Executive members the Chairman has sent a riposte – inviting the writer to start a Residents’ Association where he lives in Weston.
- f. **Bogus Council emails:** News of a scam about Council tax demands would be circulated by the Secretary.
- g. **The date of the AGM** was left undecided in the agenda. Following much negotiation, it will now be held **on Tuesday 12th May**. We have had rather a lot of recent meetings on Tuesdays, which will not please Mark O’Sullivan, but this hall is not available on Mondays or Wednesdays, and no Thursday in May could be made to fit. Consequently **close of nominations, etc to the Secretary will now be 31st March**.

6. **A Directly Elected Mayor for B&NES?** Following Stephen Taylor’s presentation on 10th July, Van DuBose introduced Simon Johnson who reported that the campaign had now secured about 5,000 of the 7,500 signatures they needed to trigger a referendum on the issue. They hoped to achieve their target by the end of March in time to submit it to the Electoral Registration Officer before the final stages of the General and Local Election campaigns, with a view to an official referendum in October.

Questions	Answers
Patrick Rotheram (Vineyards): Would an Elected Mayor be ceremonial (as in Bath) or the executive Leader of the authority?	The latter.
Morny Davison (Catharine Place): Is a minimum turnout required?	No.
Marian McNeir (Lansdown Cres): Could party candidates stand?	Yes.
Ian Herve (Henrietta Park): If a low turnout, would a win by just a few votes be valid?	Majority of 1 is enough.

7. **B&NES Council’s Placemaking Plan:** After production by our Working Group of nine successive drafts for FoBRA’s response to this enormous and crucial Options Document, draft 10 was circulated to all Associations with the Agenda on 28th December. Our proposed comments were based on:

- a) Treating central Bath as a “Place”;
- b) Space standards;
- c) A student housing policy;
- d) The new Transport Strategy; and
- e) Brownfield before Greenfield.

Despite the daunting size of this document, a welcome flurry of new comments and suggestions were received and considered by the Working Group who then issued draft 11 highlighting the changes and was circulated to all by the Secretary a few days ago. We also shared our views with the Bath Preservation Trust, who welcomed them but have not yet completed their response process.

The Chairman initiated a discussion which suggested a remarkable degree of unanimity in support of the Working Group’s efforts and consequently it was agreed to submit FoBRA’s final comments to the Council by the deadline – Friday 30th January.

8. **FoBRA Priorities:** The Chairman explained that, in previous years, new FoBRA priorities were derived in three stages, so today we would have an unstructured table-round, as signalled in the agenda, to bring out all potential headings for discussion. This would be analysed by the Secretary to create a “long list” with a view to determining in March a “short

list” of the top four or five preferences. Then, at the AGM in May, the results could be finalised and the priorities for the next two years put in place.

But first, a review of the outcomes of the last two years, when our priorities were:

- a. Transport.** This has seldom been off our agenda. Long and hard lobbying resulted in:
 - i. FoBRA gaining a place on the Transport Commission (which no other comparable group has done); and
 - ii. The recent production by the Council of a Bath Transport Strategy, which has just gained all-party support and generally been welcomed by our member Associations.
- b. Public realm.** We have possibly been less successful with this, largely because the Council pulled the finance from their Public Realm and Movement Strategy. However cleanliness has improved a bit, in accordance with the recommendations of the joint Task and Finish Group, which we chaired and there has been some movement, such as the modified High Street layout, and a few new good bus shelters with electronic indicators.
- c. Planning and major developments.** We have devoted a lot of work to this – witness the helpful Planning Reports attached to every agenda. Major efforts were devoted to the Core Strategy and its Hearings; and to the Tesco proposals and its Appeal process – both of which were successful from our collective viewpoint.
- d. Governance:** There have been several major debates and consultations on this, to all of which FoBRA has contributed – and these debates continue.

Now for the future: The following ‘views’ are listed as said, in the order in which people happened to be sitting, and later contributions may have been influenced by earlier ones:

Greenway (Roger Nunn) - Not Rec affairs; **Lansdown Crescent** (Marian McNeir) - Transport, Green spaces, The River; **Catharine Place** (Morny Davison) – On-street parking, pedestrianisation of city centre; **St James’s Square** (Van DuBose) - Transport, Public Realm (including PRMS), Economic Development, Enterprise Zone spatial design, Not Governance; **Marlborough Buildings & Lane** (Joy Bowker) - Gulls, Street cleaning, Noise in Victoria Park and from city centre buskers; **Bathwick Hill** (Colin Clark) - Happy with FoBRA, push for speedier responses, Transport, Cleanliness, Economic Development; **Henrietta Park** (Ian Herve) – River Flooding risk, Spread of night time economy, Green Spaces Designation; **Vineyards** (Pat Rotheram) - Transport, Pollution, Planning, Public realm, Governance (Stat Consultee); **Beech Avenue** (Chris Beezley) - Interface with Universities, Student Housing strategy; **Widcombe** (Jan Shepley) – River, Footpaths & Public realm, Get Council action on published strategies; **Sydney Buildings** (John Rushton) - Transport, Pollution, Maintenance and cleanliness of roads and common areas, Canal maintenance and noise on it (though really a local issue); **Uni of Bath** (Tommy Parker) - Engagement with R As, Volunteering, Understanding students as residents; **Bathwick Estate** (Julie Trollope) - Traffic, Pollution, HGVs, Pavement parking, cost to taxpayer of new Boris Bikes, Street cleaning, Night time economy, Gulls, Buskers, Flooding / Blocked drains, Potholes; **Ainslie’s Belvedere & Caroline Place** (Nick Tobin) - Creation of more R As; Secretary (Barry Henderson) - Council prioritising given financial constraints, Improve buses; Simplify upgrade processes (eg insulation) for listed buildings.

- 9. Planning Report** by Vice-chairman Nick Tobin, previously circulated, was noted with thanks. He initiated a brief discussion on the new opportunity for Associations to identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection through Local Green Space Designations in the Placemaking Plan within National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

BRLSI: Attention was drawn to a current exhibition on Bridges and a meeting on the River.

10. Suggestions for next meeting on Tues 24th Mar 2015:

- a. Address by and questions to the Leader of the Council Labour Group;
- b. Network Rail update on electrification – if anything new;
- c. FoBRA Priorities stage 2 (maybe a ballot?);
- d. Task and Finish (including Cleansing) Group’s report & way ahead;
- e. University of Bath presentation.
- f. Suggestions for AGM agenda (Nominations and motions to Secretary by Fri 31st March);
- g. Chairman’s and Planning Reports;

- h. Winter party wash-up & Summer party decision.
- i. Possibly Community Service Redesign – the gap between hospital and GP services.

Future meeting: AGM on Tuesday 12th May 2015.

- 11. Winter Reception on Tuesday 20th January in Victoria Art Gallery:** If anyone has not yet got tickets a cheque to the Treasurer, Stephen Little might yet secure.

Attendance and apologies

Present:

Robin	Kerr	Lansdown Crescent Association	FoBRA Chairman
Nick	Tobin,	Ainslie's Belvedere & Caroline Place R A	FoBRA V-Chair
Barry	Henderson		FoBRA Secretary
Robert	Gould	Bath Spa University Students' Union	V-Pres – Welfare
Tommy	Parker	Bath University Students' Union	Chairman
Ken	Ayers	Bathwick Estate Residents' Association	Representative
Julie	Trollope	Bathwick Estate Residents' Association	Chairman
Colin	Clark	Bathwick Hill Residents' Association	Representative
Clyde	Hunter	Bear Flat Association	Chairman
Chris	Beezley	Beech Avenue Residents' Association	Chairman
Morny	Davison	Catharine Place Residents' Association	Representative
Ian	Herve	Henrietta Park Association	Secretary
Marian	McNeir	Lansdown Crescent Association	Representative
Joy	Bowker	Marlborough Lane & Buildings Res Assoc	Chairman
Van	Du Bose	St James's Square Bath Ltd	Representative
John	Rushton	Sydney Buildings Householders Association	Representative
Patrick	Rotheram	Vineyards Residents' Association	Chairman
Liz	Littlewood	Widcombe Association	Secretary
Jan	Shepley	Widcombe Association	Representative
Michael	Wrigley	Widcombe Association	Representative
A N	Other	Who did not sign in	?

In Attendance Cllr Tim Warren, Leader of the B&NES Council Conservative Group

Observers: Nola Wright Bathwick Estate Residents Association
 Charles Draper Bathwick Estate Residents Association (part)
 Simon Johnson speaker on item 6

Apologies

Pat	Lunt	Bath Bus Users' Group	Chairman
David	Greenwood	Bath Independent Guest Houses Association	Representative
Clyde	Hunter	Bear Flat Association	Chairman
Janet	Anderson	Camden Association	Secretary
Sally	Rothwell	Circus Area Residents' Association	Chairman
Ron	Temperton	Circus Area Residents' Association	Representative
Mark	O'Sullivan	Greenway Lane Area Residents' Forum	Representative
Ceris	Humphreys	Henrietta Park Association	Chairman
Don	Grimes	Hensley & Egerton Road Association (HERA)	Chairman
Tom	Marshall	Macaulay Prospect Association	Representative
David	Carr	Pulteney Estate Residents' Association	Representative
Nigel	Websper	Pulteney Estate Residents' Association	Chairman
Stephen	Little	Royal Crescent Society	FoBRA Treasurer
Laurie	Coombs	St James's Park cul-de-sac Residents Assoc	Secretary
June	Player	Westmorland Residents' Association (WRAG)	Chairman

Signed Barry Henderson, Secretary 19 January 2015