

**MINUTES of a Meeting of the FoBRA Committee
on Tuesday 24th March 2015 at 6.30pm in Widcombe Junior School**

1. **Welcome** by Robin Kerr, Chairman, to 21 representatives + 4 guests – details on back page.
2. **Labour Councillor John Bull** was the third of the Council Party Leaders to speak to us about their aims if successful in the Local Government elections on 7th May. He sees B&NES as a whole and presented five themes:
 - i) **Transport** – travel to/from and in Bath. The Council's Strategy had little new and was weak on bus services.
 - ii) **Affordable housing** – Bath suffers from high house prices and low personal incomes. More houses are needed nationally - and locally on brownfield sites.
 - iii) **Living wage** – The Council must set an example as an employer, formally.
 - iv) **Tourism** – Expansion is wanted outside Bath – more in North East Somerset.
 - v) **Education** – Pressure on Primary places while Secondary have too many. Labour wants more strategic approach with a middle tier of management.

Questions	Answers
Michael Wrigley: Why not stop sale of Council Houses?	Surplus from sales going into Housing Benefit instead of into replacement houses. Most social housing now through HAs which are normally not for sale.
Nigel Sherwen: Might bus regulation help pollution and reduce car journeys?	Scope for 'quality contracts'. Most Councils are wary of introducing a congestion charge.
Pat Lunt: Run own buses like Reading?	Not being actively considered here.
Robin Kerr: How do you solve the housing shortage?	Supply has not caught up with demand; Labour would prevent 'land banking'
Tom Marshall: Can you force people to build without compulsory purchase?	Council have not come up with conclusions. Against an elected Mayor as in Bristol.

3. **Rail electrification update: Andy Haynes**, Network Rail West of England Route Director, supported by **Archie Tait**, Programme Manager for the Bath Corridor, and **Elaine Robinson**, communications manager, spoke briefly of the main line electrification, re-signaling, track lowering and bridge raising. More information from Elaine.Robinson@networkrail.co.uk

Robin Kerr: Will Bath to London time improvement be only 3 minutes?	Between 3 and 8 minutes. The main benefit will be in capacity – 20% more seats. Bristol Parkway to London much quicker; fewer stops.
Ron Temperton: How capacity improved?	More carriages; Bath platforms extra 35 metres.
Morny Davison: Delays in the Summer?	Bath will be open throughout – even when lowering track in Box Tunnel & Sydney Gardens by ½ metre. Only ½ hour extra journey time.
N Sherwen, S Little: bike capacity/stowage	Uncertain – will come back to us with details.
Tom Marshall: Would '3 rd rail' be better?	Not for fast main lines.
Michael Wrigley: Design of pylons and parapets?	Local stone mason – Mock up display in Sydney Gardens in May. Looking at options elsewhere.
Ceris Humphreys: Quicker for commuters to take extra ½ hr via Parkway or use bus?	Full timetable information will be published.

4. **Minutes** of the meeting on 14th January 2015, previously circulated: The Secretary had also circulated two proposed corrections: Clyde Hunter, Bear Flat, had sent apologies as stated and should therefore be deleted from those present; and A N Other to be deleted from those present with Roger Nunn, Greenway added. The Minutes **were then agreed** without dissent.

5. **The Chairman's Report**, previously circulated. He added:
- a. **Transport:** I wrote to Don Foster MP, supporting the Council seeking powers to help with congestion and pollution – for example the ability to pursue Moving Traffic Offences. Obviously, with his imminent retirement, the real target is officials in DoT.
 - b. **Local Flood Representatives:** I have asked **Ian Herve to advise us** on an appropriate response to the Council's paper.
 - c. **Bath City Conference** will be on Friday 10th July this year – a bit later than normal because of the elections, but **please let your members know**.
 - d. **Local Green Space Designation:** Following Associations' efforts, the Council has now produced a list – appended to these minutes **so Members can check it is complete**.
 - e. **Rossiter Road project management:** I have heard nothing more, though Paddy Doyle tells me that the Council Leader did meet Widcombe's steering group a few days ago.
 - f. **Sydney Gardens:** Colin Clark reports that the recent "walk-round" went well; another is planned for April, with a revised works proposal. A recent press release quoted supportive comments from a range of stakeholders.
 - g. **Amplified Busking:** FoBRA has said nothing, except to query the accuracy of the minutes of a workshop on 25th February. Should we comment? **Agreed not to do so**.
 - h. **FoBRA Treasurer: Please help us find a volunteer!** We can't do without one.
 - i. **Batheaston Forward's request for membership.** It was agreed to **offer Affiliate status**¹.
6. **FoBRA Priorities:** The Secretary initiated a discussion on the Annex B analysis, to help to determine Members' preferences. Ceris Humphreys suggested fewer/more focused priorities while Ron Temperton felt *Pollution* deserved a category in its own right, not just as an aspect of traffic/transport. The Chairman's suggestion of *lobbying for a Low Emission Zone* was well supported – it could reduce pollution and was within the Council's present powers, but without affecting congestion.
- A traffic survey** by the Highways Agency around Westbury whilst the A36 is closed for remedial work was urged by Ron Temperton. This could provide a base line to inform future discussion, which was sadly lacking in earlier debates – for example, when a traffic count on Bathwick Street revealed the volume of traffic in an hour which led to some relief².
- Member Associations were encouraged to send any further thoughts to the Secretary** so that final decisions to set the next two years' priorities could be made at the AGM in May³.
7. **Task & Finish Group:** Robin Davies (CARA) reported: Six years ago our city was a complete mess until FoBRA, working with the Council, set up the Task & Finish Group with cross party support to propose how to become 'The cleanest city in the Country'. It has taken all this time to achieve a few of the Group's recommendations. Much credit is due to the contribution from the *BID Rangers'* street cleaning team. Bath now has:–
- Modern mechanical plant to sweep, vacuum and wash the pavements.
 - City centre temporary depot where the equipment can be housed.
 - A separate litter bin emptying team
 - The Big Belly solars – compacting smart litter bins.
- Five major issues still need to be addressed:–
- i. A pavement slabs / gratings / grouting programme over five or more years.
 - ii. Effective food waste recycling / disposal from domestic and commercial premises to eliminate the major food source for seagulls.
 - iii. Provide a modern cleansing depot with maintenance, changing and washing facilities.
 - iv. An enforced A-Board policy.
 - v. Enforcement of all the bye-laws and rules governing our littering and waste.

¹ Action 1 & 4 - Chair

² Action 2 – P Rotheram

³ Action 3 - All

8. **University of Bath Presentation:** Tommy Parker, the SU Community Officer spoke of their **V Team**, a student volunteering group who undertake events for the Community. They also use the Student Community Partnership (SCP), and their funds, to run co-operative events.

The Community Ceilidh organised by students with the Widcombe Association, was an example that brought together students and local residents, highlighting the benefits of working together to make their community better. Other charity fundraisers were mentioned. Tommy encouraged Member Associations to utilise the student volunteer network

Associations should contact Debbie Thornton D.T.Thornton@bath.ac.uk, who can help with events and recruit volunteers, or Tommy Parker sucommunity@bath.ac.uk. More information is also on their website <http://www.bathstudent.com/volunteer/>

9. **AGM on Tuesday 12th May** – The Secretary has received valid nominations for the offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and A/cs Examiner (but not yet for the Treasurer). Any other nominations or proposed business should be submitted to him by 31st March⁵.
10. **Planning Report** by Vice-chairman Nick Tobin, previously circulated as Annex A, was noted with thanks. The importance of being involved in the Strategic Planning for the West of England was stressed – visit www.westofenglandlep.co.uk/jointstrategicplanningstrategy for more information

It was confirmed that the Police still use the ground floor of the building in Manvers Street, but the building and site have been sold to the University of Bath which, following planning permission, will be adapted to its needs. It was suggested the site should incorporate a bus stop. The location of a future police station in Bath has yet to be decided.

11. **a. Winter Party:** It was agreed this had been a success – 54 people paid for their tickets; key guests had responded well and participated actively. The small loss seemed acceptable.
- b. Summer party – Violet Bank Farm** (halfway up Widcombe Hill) was suggested as a possible venue following a reconnaissance by the Chairman and Vice Chairman. It belongs to Richard and Sue Wales (Richard is a past Chairman of the Widcombe Association) and has lovely gardens and facilities. The suggestion was warmly welcomed and a date of **Thursday 23rd July agreed – please encourage members to put this in their diaries⁶.**

12. **Suggestions for next meeting - with AGM - on Tuesday 12th May 2015:**
Finalise FoBRA Priorities; Chairman's and Planning Reports; Sale of Summer Party tickets; conclude with drinks and nibbles.

Other forward Dates: Thurs 16th July, Thurs 23rd July (Party) and Thurs 10th September.

Attendance and apologies on next page

⁵ Action 5 - All

⁶ Action 6 - All

Attendance and apologies

Present:

Robin	Kerr	Lansdown Crescent Association	FoBRA Chairman
Nick	Tobin,	Ainslie's Belvedere & Caroline Place R A	FoBRA V-Chair
Stephen	Little	The Royal Crescent Society	FoBRA Treasurer
Barry	Henderson		FoBRA Secretary
Pat	Lunt	Bath Bus Users' Group	Chairman
Tommy	Parker	Bath University Students' Union	V-P Community
Nola	Wright	Bathwick Estate Residents Association	Representative
Clyde	Hunter	Bear Flat Association	Chairman
Janet	Anderson	Camden Residents' Association	Secretary
Nigel	Sherwen	Camden Residents' Association	Chairman
Morny	Davison	Catharine Place Residents' Association	Representative
Robin	Davies	Circus Area Residents' Association	Representative
Ron	Temperton	Circus Area Residents' Association	Representative
Ceris	Humphreys	Henrietta Park Association	Chairman
Diana	Lockwood	Hensley & Egerton Road Association (HERA)	Representative
Tom	Marshall	Macaulay Prospect Association	Representative
Joy	Bowker	Marlborough Lane & Buildings Res Assoc	Chairman
David	Carr	Pulteney Estate Residents' Association	Representative
Van	Du Bose	St James's Square Bath Ltd	Representative
John	Rushton	Sydney Buildings Householders Association	Representative
Michael	Wrigley	Widcombe Association	Representative

In Attendance Cllr John Bull Leader of the B&NES Council Labour Group for Item 2
Andy Haynes, Archie Tait and Elaine Robinson, Network Rail for Item 3

Apologies

David	Greenwood	Bath Independent Guest Houses Association	Representative
Robert	Gould	Bath Spa University Students' Union	V-Pres – Welfare
Jordan	Kenny	Bath University Students Union	President
Charles	Draper	Bathwick Estate Residents Association	Chairman
Julie	Trollope	Bathwick Estate Residents' Association	Chairman
Colin	Clark	Bathwick Hill Residents' Association	Representative
Sally	Rothwell	Circus Area Residents' Association	Chairman
Roger	Nunn	Greenway Lane Area Residents' Forum	Convenor
Mark	O'Sullivan	Greenway Lane Area Residents' Forum	Representative
Ian	Herve	Henrietta Park Association	Secretary
Julian	Caldecott	Hensley & Egerton Road Association (HERA)	Representative
Don	Grimes	Hensley & Egerton Road Association (HERA)	Chairman
Marian	McNeir	Lansdown Crescent Association	Representative
Caroline	Kilner	Pulteney Estate Residents' Association	
Nigel	Websper	Pulteney Estate Residents' Association	Chairman
Paul	Dowling	The Royal Crescent Society	Representative
Patrick	Rotheram	Vineyards Residents' Association	Chairman

Signed Barry Henderson, Secretary 31 March 2015