



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday
6 March 2017 at Fellowship House Willifield Way at 8 pm

Present: David B Lewis - in the Chair, Barbara Bliss, Tony Brand, Alan Brudney, Terry Brooks, Tony Ghilchik, Colin Gregory, Jeremy Hershkorn, Louise Hillman, David Littaur, Peter McCluskie, Max Petersen, Gary Shaw, Ann Spencer, Ian Tutton, Diane Walsh Rosemary Goldstein (Secretary to the Council).

Visitors: Brian Ingram, James Levy, Joyce Littaur, Emma Howard.

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from Jonathan Seres, Charles Gale and Simon Sackman

2. Question Time

Traffic Congestion

Brian Ingram asked why the RA does not have a traffic policy for the Suburb and he cited the recent fatal accident in Market Place and the relaying of water mains which had caused severe traffic problems around the Brookland Schools. He wanted the RA to arrange for notices to be circulated to residents regarding water main works and also when there is a road traffic accident. Max Petersen thought that this is not an RA matter.

Gary Shaw said that the RA was not told in advance about the works carried out by the water company and Brookland School should contact the water company regarding any congestion around the School. The RA was not in a position to inform residents if accidents occur which is the responsibility of the Police or the relevant public authority.

Gary Shaw will contact TFL regarding the accident to find out what had happened and he will report back to Council. Barbara Bliss thought that the traffic lights in Market Place need re-phasing. The Chairman agreed. **Action GS**

Leaf Blowers

James Levy, who lives in Golders Green, wanted to know what the RA was doing about leaf blowers. Gary Shaw said that it is difficult to make progress as our MP was not willing to assist. Gary has been in contact with other RA's throughout the country. It was agreed the matter should be kept in the limelight.

James Levy asked whether the RA have any plans to put forward a local Councillor to stand for election to promote this issue. The Chairman said that the RA is a non political organisation although it may support a particular candidate. Colin Gregory reminded Council that some years ago a residents wanted the RA to put forward a Councillor to take a stand on a particular issue but because Councillors need to have a policy on many different issues it was not appropriate to promote an RA Councillor. Tony Ghilchik said that that the HGS Trust manages some of the roads and green spaces and they contact residents to ask whether they would be prepared to pay to

have this work done by hand rather than by leaf blowers which would be more expensive. None of the roads which were contacted agreed to this do this. The Chairman said that the Trust could lead on this by setting a good example but it does not want to.

3. **Approval of the Minutes**

Meeting of Council held on 7 February

These were approved.

Receipt of Executive Committee Minutes held on 21 February.

The Chairman will circulate these to Council.

Action DBL

4. **Matters arising from the Minutes not on the Agenda**

Bute Mews

Peter McCluskie explained that Consam had drawn up a list of comments on this planning application which has not yet been finalised. The deadline for submitting this to the HGS Trust is 8 March and there is no flexibility. There are some 40 areas of concern as a result of comments made by residents. He will be working on this after the Meeting.

LB Barnet does not have its planning meeting to discuss this application until May which gives more time to respond.

Jeremy Hershkorn said that the Public Meeting was well attended and it was good publicity for the RA. The Trust stated that they have no position on this application.

Peter McCluskie will circulate the response to Council members and they should reply to him immediately if they have any comments they wish to make. **Action PM**

5. **Finance**

Approval of Annual Accounts 2016

Louise Hillman said that the accounts which were circulated to Council have been examined by Paul Hartley.

Louise Hillman proposed and the Chairman seconded a Motion

That the Annual Accounts of the HGS RA for 2016 are approved

This was passed unanimously

Management Accounts

Louise Hillman said that there had not been any great deviation from the budget but the unexpected surplus arose because less money was spent on new street trees because Barnet reduced its own expenditure and the agreement is that Barnet must match the payment by the RA

Louise Hillman is retiring from the RA after two years as Treasurer

There was a unanimous vote of thanks to her for all the work she had done.

6. **Procedures for the representation of RA policy to outside bodies**

The Chairman explained the reason for the proposed motion which he suggested should be incorporated into the RA's Standing Orders. He said that the wording could be amended but he would like the agreement in principle by Council

RA Council declares that representatives on Outside Bodies are appointed by Council and represent Council. Often they will report to a Standing Committee in the first instance. They have limited discretion but do not have the right to advocate policies which have not been approved by Council. When a controversial issue arises they will need to refer back to Standing Committees or RA Council for instructions on how to speak or vote.

Peter McCluskie read out paragraph 27(a) of the RA's Standing Orders which he thought covers the position. *When controversial issues arise representatives of the RA must go back to Council or to a standing committee for their instructions.*

This matter had arisen because at a meeting of the Steering Group of the Central Square Flower Beds Committee Tony Ghilchik had proposed that the trees at the back of the tennis courts adjoining Central Square (but not in Central Square) should be trimmed to restore the view to Harrow which had become obscured. He initially made this proposal on 22nd November, 2016. There had been no prior discussion with either the Trees & Open Spaces Committee, The Executive Committee or RA Council when he made this proposal.

At Council Tony said he was aware that this was Henrietta Barnett's favourite view and he considered that he has a good understanding of what residents want after a lifetime living on the Suburb. Tony stated that he objected to the letter sent by the Chairman to the Trust saying that this policy had not been discussed by Council and was not RA policy. However, it was stated there had been a Council meeting after the Central Square Committee Meeting and the matter had not been disclosed. The Chairman said that he did not want the Trust to think that the RA had endorsed this policy when no RA Committee had discussed it.. The chairman wrote that the RA does not have a policy of cutting down trees and wishes to preserve trees. There was no mention nor was there criticism of any person in the letter to the Trust.

Terry Brooks thought that it is better to allow RA representatives freedom to act which can be overridden by Council once they have discussed the particular issue.

Colin Gregory agreed and thought that it is better for RA representatives to use their judgement. They are rarely taken by surprise and know in advance about controversial issues. He suggested leaving things as they are.

Ian Tutton said that it seemed that there was no proposer mechanism in place to approve this and he wanted the EC to discuss it in a more relaxed way as 'hard cases make bad law'

Colin Gregory proposed a Motion which was seconded by Terry Brooks

That this motion be not put

This was passed by 13 votes in favour with 1 against and 1 abstention

7. Friends of Bigwood

The Chairman had circulated a letter to Council from the Friends of Bigwood inviting the RA to join this organisation. The annual membership fee is £50 a year.

The Chairman proposed and Terry Brooks seconded a Motion

That the RA joins the Friends of Bigwood with an annual subscription of £50pa

The Chairman said that Peter Falk has done a good job and the RA should support this organisation and become involved. Tony Ghilchik said that the money will help to compensate for the forthcoming cuts in grants. Colin Gregory said that Peter Falk had done an excellent work on raising awareness of Bigwood. Louise Hillman thought that this should have initially been discussed by the EC in accordance with RA procedure. The Chairman said that as the amount was so small, this was not necessary.

Colin Gregory proposed and Ann Spencer seconded a Motion

That £50 annual membership subscription is given to Friends of Bigwood and that the EC should consider whether subscriptions should go through the application process in the future.

This was passed unanimously

8. AGM matters

GS had received nominations papers for Council Membership.

There were a number of issues discussed at the February EC meeting

Membership Committee are unable to organise setting up tables and checking membership and issuing voting cards at the AGM. Diane Walsh offered to help as did Gary Shaw, Max Petersen and Jeremy Hershkorn. **Action DW, GS, MP, JH**

9. Committee reports

Allotments

Alan Brudney reported that a paper had been circulated to Council but no comments had been received. He will talk to Patricia Major and ask her to give a verbal report on the allotments Committee as there had been no annual Allotment report inserted in Suburb News with other committee reports **Action AB**

Terry Brooks had written to ask Patricia Major if she would write an article in Suburb News about the allotments. Alan Brudney said that there will be four Allotments Committee meetings this year

Trees and Open Spaces

Colin Gregory talked about the model boating pond in Hampstead Heath
A paper had been circulated from the consultative committee about whether it should be kept as a nature reserve or open to the public. There was a further option of opening half to the public and keep half as a nature reserve or to close it for the nesting period.

The City of London recommended the compromise solution but dogs should be excluded. Although the Heath and Hampstead Society prefer to have the nature reserve which Colin Gregory said may be visually intrusive with a fence, tree roots could be trampled on and there could also be a problem with anglers. The first option may be the best one. It was stated that the adjoining pond is a bird sanctuary. There are fewer swans but they would be able to nest near to where people are.

Ann Spencer said that having wild life and children running round is incompatible and it should be one or the other and she wondered whether there was much demand for a model boating pond any more. Tony Ghilchik said that there is not so much demand as in the past. There is a need to get the balance right. This is the only pond where people have full access and the others are fenced off. TG will attend the next meeting on Monday where he will use his discretion in discussing this. **Action TG**

10. Chairmanship of the RA

The Meeting went into closed session to discuss this item.

11. Any other Urgent Business

There was none.

12. To confirm the date of the next two RA Council meetings

Tuesday 4th April and Tuesday 2nd May at Fellowship House were confirmed
Open Meetings: normally on a Tuesday to be arranged subject to topics – all ideas welcome.