



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday,
3rd March 2015 at Fellowship House at 8.00pm.

Present: Jonathan Seres - in the Chair, Douglas Blausten, Tony Brand, Terry Brooks, Charles Gale, Tony Ghilchik, Colin Gregory, Brian Ingram, David Lewis, David Littaur, and John Sells, Gary Shaw, Ann Spencer, Diane Walsh. Rosemary Goldstein (Secretary to the Council).

Visitors: Joyce Littaur, Jennye Seres and Louise Hillman

1. (a) Apologies for Absence

Received from, Jeremy Clynes, Jeremy Hershkorn, Stephanie Hurst, Max Petersen, Rosalind Josephs, Paul Wenham.

(b) Any other business not on Agenda to be mentioned here

There was none.

2. Questions from visiting residents

RA Activities

Joyce Littaur wanted to see the RA do more for young people including school children and immigrants. The Chairman pointed out that the new year's eve party was well attended by diverse residents from several blocks of flats in Lyttelton Road who had seen the poster in the library, and that Events are organising a toddler's party on the weekend of 26/27th April, to repeat last year's following Joyce's initiative at the time.

Brian Ingram would also like to see the RA become involved with school children and the local schools.

H2 bus

Regarding the two questions raised at the previous meeting, Gary Shaw had spoken to TfL regarding the state, and the practice of one of the drivers, of the H2 bus.

3. Council minutes

(a) Approval of minutes of 3 February 2015

These were approved.

(b) Matters arising, not on Agenda

Minute 5 referred to discussions with other potential nominees for Council. These names had been circulated to Council on 18 February and approved by email, so that in addition to the minuted nominations of Jonathan Seres and Lynda Cook, Council had been circulated on 18 February with the names of Anita Harlow, Hella Schrader and Simon Sackman, and by 19th 14 had responded in favour and none against so that all were in the circulated draft Notice of AGM (with a note that members could nominate up to 20 March).

Litter Pickers

Charles Gale had agreed to take over from Rosalind Josephs as co-ordinator for the litter pickers. He said that he had purchased 12 'grabbers' for new volunteers, and had Rosalind's list of 100 volunteers.

4. Finance and Admin

(a) Management Accounts to 31 January

These had been circulated to Council on 25 February by the Treasurer. The Chairman noted that, as usual in January, there had been little financial movement over the month.

(b) Annual Accounts 2014

These had been circulated, both in the long form received from the Hon Accountant, and in the shorter form printed with the draft Notice of AGM for members, with an agenda note to Council mentioning (a) the similar surplus figure in the management accounts discussed at the previous meeting (b) the same certificate as the previous year, conforming to professional requirements (c) that the Balance Sheet incorporates the Gallery assets, and will include the word "Consolidated" as confirmed by the Hon Accountant and (d) the Chairman's note in the AGM print as requested by the Treasurer, the text being the Chairman's. The form in the print followed recent previous years' format, plus the points mentioned in the note.

Ann Spencer asked, regarding the 'available if needed' grant of £4,000 to the Fellowship House appeal, agreed at last April's Council Meeting, whether its appearance in the accounts indicated that the appeal had needed it. The Chairman had received informal confirmation in September, but would formally check. *[post-meeting note: done, and indeed needed, 6.3.15]*

A **Motion** was proposed by Gary Shaw and seconded by John Sells:

'That the Annual Accounts for 2014, both in the long form received from the Hon Accountant, and in the shorter form circulated with the draft Notice of AGM for members, be approved'

This was passed unanimously

(c) Life Member

Simon Abbott had been proposed to the RA as Hon Life Member after many years of service to the RA and the Suburb in numerous roles, as circulated to Council.

A **Motion** was proposed by David Littaur and seconded by Brian Ingram and carried overwhelmingly:

'That Simon Abbott be awarded Honorary Life Membership of the RA'

5. Annual Grants

(a) Proms at St Judes: RA's contribution of £2,750 to sponsor the free lunchtime concerts.

The Chairman pointed out that this had been an annual grant for some years, and had been fully debated two years previously. It had been included in the budget that had been provisionally approved by Council at the previous meeting, but we now had the full application on the RA's grant form, as circulated. As previously noted, the lunchtime audience differs from the evening attendees, and comprises mainly Suburb

residents and children, including usually one concert specifically aimed at schoolchildren attending by arrangement.

The Friday performer will be receiving a fee sponsored by the Livery Company of Musicians who will be mentioned by the RA's name in the programme. The EC is content that a single entry, but not more than two were it to arise in future years, would not dilute the branding of the RA.

Brian Ingram pointed out that 75% of the money raised goes to Toynbee Hall and 25% to the North London Hospice. He believed that there are children bussed in for the lunchtime concerts and it was not obvious that it was an RA sponsored event and it was not good value for money. Tony Brand thought that the children walked from the local schools.

David Littaur pointed out that the Rev Alan Walker publicly thanks the RA at all the lunchtime concerts and it is a valuable marketing opportunity as the RA is also mentioned at least eight times in the brochure.

A **Motion** was proposed by Terry Brooks and seconded by Tony Ghilchik:

'That the RA make a grant of £2,750 to sponsor the St Jude's Proms free lunchtime concerts'

This was passed by 12 votes in favour and 2 against.

(b) Open House:

Last April's note regarding the annual September Open House weekend had been circulated, followed by the current application on the RA's grant form. Our ward Councillors were supportive of LB Barnet making a grant but saw no prospect at present.

It was proposed that, as last year, the RA commits to £800 but seeks a repeat of previous years' £200 from the Free Church.

Ann Spencer was not convinced that this is the best use of residents' money and that it is good value for subscription income. She thought that it is not the RA's job to try to attract other residents to the Suburb.

The Chairman said that Suburb residents will have access to the iconic buildings in Barnet, as well as the brochure listing buildings throughout London, with photos in many cases, but Tony Ghilchik pointed out that in Barnet most of these are actually on the Suburb.

Colin Gregory said that Open House falls within the constitutional remit of the RA and is in the interest of residents, and we should look outwards and encourage visitors.

David Lewis asked if we do not give this financial support would the Suburb be included in the Open House brochure; the Chairman was uncertain, although there was an overall fee requirement, and without our payment our logo would not appear. AS asked why the Trust does not increase its contribution. The Chairman said that their Grants Committee had rejected Alan Jacobs' request to increase their proportion this year.

Wrotham Park and the Phoenix Cinema also make payments, and, like the RA and Trust, have logos in the brochure.

Brian Ingram proposed an amendment that the RA make a grant of £400. No one agreed to second this amendment.

Colin Gregory proposed and Terry Brooks seconded a **Motion**:

'That the RA make a grant of £800 to the Open House Weekend 2015, less the amount of any contribution by the Free Church.'

This was passed by 9 votes in favour, 3 against and 2 abstentions

Diane Walsh said that there is only a limited marketing benefit to this expenditure. It was agreed that there should be a full discussion in the Autumn when Alan Jacobs will be invited to make the case for RA support for Open House in 2016.

6. Budget 2015

Rose Garden

Ahead of the agenda item, Brian Ingram raised the Rose Garden and told Council that he had provided LB Barnet with the names of the people involved on his committee. The names were also read out to Council. He also said that the RA's proposal had envisaged expenditure of £50,000. Tony Ghilchik responded that the sum of £50,000 had never been considered by Trees and Open Spaces Committee. The approximate estimate had always been £5,000. The pergola is not included in the first stage of the Scheme. BI was informed that the completed application form for a grant is still awaited, as stated at the November meeting, and again at January's.

(a) To finalise the Budget provisionally approved at the last meeting

John Sells had suggested that we should allocate a percentage to each spending committee, but Hella Schrader had been prevented by illness from attending and presenting an analysis of the percentages spent over the last three years to this meeting. She had, however emailed the chairman that (a) the RA subscription income had declined – but not all of this decline can be attributed to the withdrawn associate members of the Theatre Club (b) Advertising and sponsorship income had increased but fluctuated (c) the RA's administration charges had increased significantly since 2012 – but, the Chairman pointed out, for a period which he thought had been during 2012 there had been no bookkeeping charges pending a new appointee (d) Events expenditure had increased - but the bucket collection at the fireworks and the sponsorship had also increased.

John Sells considered that the RA should state what percentages of RA income are spent by the spending committees which would give a clear idea of expenditure and give a more transparent flavour, as well as better for a strategic view.

Colin Gregory asked how Consam would be represented, eg on a pie chart of RA activities, as it does not spend money; a broader picture must be presented. Tony Ghilchik said that we want to avoid committees being given a pot of money and then encouraged to spend it.

Diane Walsh thought it was too late to implement this for the coming year but she was in favour of looking at the RA's income and how it is generated and having a full discussion for next year.

Ann Spencer thought that we should have a membership drive and we should try to find out what members want the RA to do. CoG had sent the chairman a copy of a paper produced some years earlier after a member survey.

John Sells proposed and Tony Brand seconded a **Motion**:

'That the format for the calculation of the RA Budget for 2016 should be an Agenda item for discussion at the September Council'

This was passed by 13 votes in favour and 1 against.

Regarding the reduced number of subscriptions, the Chairman mentioned that a marketing letter will be sent out, at the time of the renewal mailings, to 212 new residents who had come to live on the Suburb during the last 20 months. The mail house would despatch these at the end of the week or next Monday.

It was suggested, but not discussed, that there could be a follow up letter with details of the RA's summer events.

Terry Brooks proposed and David Lewis seconded a **Motion**:

'That the budget for 2015 which had been provisionally approved be now formally approved'

This was passed by 10 votes in favour 1 against and 3 abstentions

(b) Plaque for houses where Elizabeth Taylor and Donald Sinden had lived

Following the May 2014 discussion about erecting a plaque for Elizabeth Taylor's house, a proposal had been put to EC for the house where Donald Sinden had lived. English Heritage is required to wait for 20 years after a death before placing a plaque on a house.

The Hon Secretary had obtained an estimate from the company which had made the plaque for the Harold Wilson house. The cost would be £186 + vat for each plaque, with a delivery charge of £30 and £550 for the labour costs.

GS will look into these costs, particularly a less costly alternative for fixing the plaques, and there will be a full discussion at Council before approaching house-owners.

GS

David Lewis pointed out that a resident had agreed to pay half the cost of the plaque for the Elizabeth Taylor house.

7. AGM and the preceding Constitutional meeting

- The draft Notice of AGM had been circulated as part of the leaflet with the Accounts (approved in Minute 4 above) and the draft Notice of Special General Meeting mentioned in the next bullet point. There were no comments on the Notice of AGM.
- The proposed Notice of the Special General Meeting had been circulated, including an explanation before each of the three constitutional changes, and two presentational suggestions had been circulated by David Lewis that would be incorporated. The Chairman drew attention to the footnote in the draft, and the corresponding motion proposed in the Agenda which he explained. Accordingly a **Motion** was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Gary Shaw:

'That the draft Notice of the Special General Meeting be approved including the insertion of the words ", if he or she so wishes," in paragraph (ii) of the proposed amendment No. 3'.

This was passed by 11 votes in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention.

- The Leaflet containing the Notices will be mailed out to members with the renewal requests shortly after the Council meeting.
- Layout will, as in recent years, be with the audience facing the fireplace.

- The sound system will be organised by Tim Hand, at a reduced fee of £450 due to earlier access and a cheaper subcontractor for the loop and roving mics.
- Voting cards will, as usual, be one per household in membership, in accordance with the Constitution.
- The Annual Report is on the web site and standing committees have been offered an opportunity to add to their committee activity report in Suburb News, taken up by Events committee.

8. Hustings

David Littaur reported that this will be held on Tuesday 21 April in the Free Church. Tony Brand is organising this and he was congratulated on getting the agreement of the candidates from the five main parliamentary candidates to attend.

9. Committees: matters arising on Minutes plus major issues indicated by Chairmen

9.1 Executive - None

9.2 Allotments - None

9.3 Consam

John Sells was looking to obtain contact details for the short listed properties for the Alexander Stuart Gray Award.

The Chairman had received that day an email from another resident architect registering concern about the proposal to erect antennae on the St Jude's tower. JS commented that so far no planning application had been notified.

9.4 Events - None apart from items 7 & 8 above

9.5 Gallery -None

9.6 Marketing - None

9.7 Membership

The email renewal invitations had been sent on 14 Feb. Letters to all members will be posted with the Notice of AGM at the end of the week.

9.8 Publications

The 2015 Suburb Directory will include a page about the work of the RA, as agreed with Marketing committee

9.9 Roads & Traffic - None

9.10 Trees & Open Spaces

Bigwood Open Day

Tony Ghilchik asked Council members to attend the activity day on Saturday at 10.00am.

Rubbish behind Market Place

Brian Ingram drew attention to the rubbish which had accumulated next to Sherrards behind the alleyway at the rear of the shops. The meeting then referred to the

rubbish between the alleyway and the green. Diane Walsh mentioned rubbish along Lyttelton Road. Gary Shaw agreed to look into these items. **GS**

9.11 Feedback from Trust Estates Committee re Central Square Tennis Courts

The Trust will shortly refurbish the south court. They had informed the Chairman that it will be available free of charge for residents but not for tennis coaching. If it becomes necessary a booking system will be set up on line, but initially it would simply be left open for use.

10. To note future programme of Council and Open meetings:

10.1 RA Council Meetings

Meetings will be held on Tuesdays 7 April (to appoint committees and representatives), 5 May, 7 July, 1 September, 3 November at 8pm at Fellowship House.

Open Meetings - Potentially June 2, 13(not 6) October, 1 December.

10.2 RA AGM:

Monday 30 March 2015, at Henrietta Barnett School Main Hall, immediately after Special Meeting re constitution at 7.45pm.

11. Any Other Business

As this was the last Council meeting where Jonathan Seres would be Chairman, David Littaur proposed thanks to him for the enormous amount of work he had carried out for the RA as Vice-Chairman for two years and then as Chairman, and this received applause.