

Minutes of 63rd APRA committee meeting at 8:00 pm on 28 September 2023 via Zoom

Present: John Hedges (JH, Chair), Robert Pankhurst (RP), Kate Buckley (KB), Jacky Stephen (JS). NB this includes notes from a schedule meeting of 21 September which was inquorate (JH, KB, RP and JS)

1. Minutes of previous meeting (10 August). Approved. ACTION RP
2. Matters arising
 - Abbey Orchard wall – JH had sent a further email to David Adams without response, and highlighted further more recent damage caused by loading materials for the UH graduation ceremony.
 - Road Closures. Phase 3 is now 10 November to April 2024, with Market Street closed, High Street open and George Street closed at weekends (open one-way, down, Monday-Friday). Mitigation measures would be considered if George Street were to remain partly closed beyond the Trial.
 - St Albans School coaches. The School had restated its position on coach transportation and had turned down our request for a dedicated meeting to discuss the APRA-proposed Code of Conduct and safety issues. It was agreed that a letter should be sent explaining that APRA saw no purpose in continuing dialogue through the biannual Local Community Group as no amelioration of the effects on our streets had transpired in 10 years. ACTION JH
 - Verulamium Park. Moragh and Michael Ormiston were actively opposing the SADC-proposed extension of event-related days from 28 to 56. There have been a large number of objections and the proposal will go before the Planning Committee.
 - Website. Two sixth-formers from St Albans School had been extremely helpful in setting up a potentially cheaper alternative site and overcoming errors and problems. This needs to be tested fully before switching over. With the start of the new school year we cannot rely on further support but should try to get one more meeting to tie up loose ends, after which we will need to establish our own management routine. We should find an appropriate way to thank the boys for their help ACTION JH/RP
 - SADC draft Local Plan. The Civic Society, Conservation 50, the CCRA, ARA and VRARA had all undertaken to submit comprehensive comments before the 25 September deadline. We had also sent an endorsement of the CCRA comments (to which APRA had contributed) together with a few APRA-specific additions if possible ACTION RP
3. Planning. KB had noted new applications which we should review promptly ACTION RP
4. Membership.
 - JS reported a reduction in the number of paid-up members (currently 83). A few had now paid back-dated subscriptions. We should give notice that failure to pay subs would result in removal from the current mailing list (144). JS would investigate the most efficient way of e-mailing members. ACTION JS
5. Finance. No report as AY was unable to attend. ACTION AY
6. AGM planning.
 - Date fixed for 16 November. Announcement should go out by 16 October. Details deferred to next meeting. Ideas for a speaker (10-15 Minutes max.) should be sent to RP by next week ACTION ALL/RP
7. Priorities and responsibilities (28 September)
 - JH produced a draft chart which would be revised to reflect 1) members' priorities, 2) operational tasks, and 3) liaison with other groups. This should be used to identify the roles for which new committee members were needed. ACTION ALL

8. APRA committee planning (discussion continued on 28 September).

It was abundantly clear that the committee structure was barely working, with far too much resting on the shoulders of very few. APRA desperately needs more, active, committee members, and we should make a real effort to enlist help from the membership, or we will not be able to continue.

RP repeated his intention to stand down as Secretary at the AGM. He agreed to list the various tasks of the role so that they might be reallocated once a larger committee was identified.

ACTION RP/ALL

Next meeting: Thursday 19 October 8 pm

End 9:50 pm