

Minutes of 68th APRA committee meeting at 8:00 pm on 14th March 2024

Present: John Hedges (JH, Chair), Kate Buckley (KB)(via WhatsApp)), Robert Pankhurst (RP)), Jacky Stephen (JS), Ian Woodroof (IW), Malcolm Hull (MH), Geoff Dyson (GD)

1. No apologies received

2. Minutes of previous meeting (15th Feb). Approved.

3. Matters arising

KB considering getting Zoom for own use. Continued use of WhatsApp until further notice.

ACTION: KB

Summer Social. RP has spoken to Bishop Norman but future of Parkside House is unknown. Alternatives suggested include Orchard St, Fighting Cocks, Ormiston's garden, Abbey Orchard Committee to await further news on Parkside House.

Any other matters will be covered under their headings in the following minutes

4. Abbey Orchard Events.

University graduations have finished and the ancillary structures have been removed.

A fork lift truck caused damage to the Abbey Gateway on 6th March and shed its load, blocking Abbey Mill Lane and Romeland for 30 minutes. IW to circulate photo of damage.

MH reported the blocking of public footpaths in the Abbey Orchard to HCC.

JH reported the incident to the HSE. More information was requested but no action is expected as the event is now over.

JH requested SADC carry out a formal scrutiny of the planning department's involvement or lack of it. No response so far.

RP reported that the Civic Society have written to the Abbey about the damage to the Gateway.

St Albans School are concerned about the damage to their property, the noise and disruption to classes held above the gateway and blocking of fire exits by construction vehicles.

General concern about the state of the grass and whether it will be restored.

The Committee will await further developments.

ACTION :JH IW

5. School Buses update

Awaiting further developments

6. Waste Collection

KB reported late collections of waste for Abbey Mill Lane, Orchard St and College Place this week. This was due to problems with crews. The operator has 48 hours to collect the waste before being fined.

SADC unable to change current arrangements until Central Government decide on universal policy for bin collection.

JS reported that there had been no feedback from members re damage from refuse vehicles.

7. Planning - Special Measures

SADC Planning Department has been put into Special Measures.

RP reported details of how planning will work as understood by Sarah Ashton at SADC. APRA concerned about notification to wider public rather than just neighbours. RP to ask for notification

ACTION:RP

8. Verulam Park Events

This will be discussed at the Planning Meeting on Monday 18th March at 7pm. Julian Degg and Jonathan Rodwell will speak. JH to check if J Rodwell speaking on behalf of APRA

ACTION: JH

9. Park and Lake update

The tree that had fallen in the river has been removed.

The flooding is worse due to further heavy rainfall and the boating lake is cut off.

Verulam Park consultation forum will meet next week. MH will report back.

Green Space Action Plan - no news

New bins have been placed in the park. These were vandalised but have been cleaned.

Toilet Block at the athletics track is closed . MH asking for an update.

He will ask for Westminster Lodge toilets to be made available and sign posted.

Committee expressed the view that something needs to be done about access through Bell Meadow, eg installation of a board walk

ACTION:MH

10. Travel and Movement Group

The majority of Committee members had attended the presentation on 13th March.

It was agreed that TAM is the best mechanism to talk to the Council about traffic.

Version 13 document circulated after the meeting on the 13th agreed to be the best document going forward.

KB is on TAM and represents APRA

11. City Vision

KB to update Committee of any developments at appropriate time

ACTION: KB

12. Solar Panels

A working group of RAs and SADC has been set up to formulate guidance to home owners in Article 4 areas. This is being led by Tim Leicester and also involves Sarah Ashton and Gerard Livett.

RP to circulate APRA area survey when complete.

Circulate information to members at appropriate time

ACTION:RP

13. Parking

IW had done a walk around Zone B with local councillor Edgar Hill and a parking official. They have identified up to 12 potential additional spaces. Any changes will not take effect until next year.

14. Membership.

One new member welcomed. Outstanding subs to be chased up when JS has up to date bank information.

ACTION:JS

15. Finance

No report on finance as AY not present. No update on online banking. JH and JS to arrange meeting with AY to discuss online banking.

ACTION: JH JS

16. Emails and Communications

KB requested that her gmail address be used for all APRA communications.

It was agreed to put whether action required in all future email headings.

JS to investigate a new 'secretarial' gmail address

ACTION:JS

17. Vehicle Damage

No further incidents reported

18. AOB

Note to members regarding closure of Welclose St 19th/20th March

ACTION:JS

19. Date of next meeting

Thursday 18th April at 8pm 3 Abbey Mill Lane

Meeting closed at 9.45 pm