



ABOYNE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Committee Meeting
30 November 2016 7.30pm

Present:

Brian Benson (Chair)	Barry Cropper (Treasurer)
Fiona Couper (Vice-Chair)	Nigel Gale
Julia Duschenes (Sec)	Sue Noon

1. Welcome

BB welcomed the committee.

2. Apologies for Absence

Christine McLauchlan sent apologies.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Were agreed for accuracy.

4. Matters Arising

Item 10, Albany Lodge: Lucy Povoas (Resident and now street rep for Church Cresc), Chris White and BB attended a meeting with three managers of Albany Lodge: John Lavelle, Service Line Lead (Acute and Rehab), Julie Madden, Team Leader, Albany Lodge, and Lucy Preece, Modern Matron; who clarified their responsibilities about smoking in the area. It was agreed that staff would not be allowed to smoke on the street and service users would be given longer breaks to walk further away/go up into town for their smoke breaks. There were promises of better monitoring of this and LP will watch.

5. Treasurer's Report

BC reported that the funds stand as at last meeting: £786.53.

6. Comms Report

FC reported that the three direct emails she had done to members on emergency matters had received good feedback.

She has looked into an ARA Facebook page, but it is proving more complex since she felt that too much control might be given away. For further investigation.

It was agreed that 4 Newsletters per year were probably sufficient with emails for immediate topics.

FC

7. Planning Applications

A Dentist in Russell Avenue was refused permission to extend the treatment room back into the garden and to install a (noisy?) compressor outside. He has appealed on a socio-economic basis. BB and BC to repeat their initial objections and to encourage the immediate neighbours to do likewise.

BB/BC

7 contd. There has been an application to turn a restaurant in Spencer St into residences. BB to ask Rita to investigate, especially on the vexed question of residents' parking places. BB

Also in Spencer Street, The White Swan Pub has applied to extend its hours for serving drinks, live music and recorded music. Members were encouraged to submit objections.

JD to write to the council about recent installation of sash windows at No.1 Selby Ave which do not appear to have had planning permission and seem not to comply with conservation area restrictions. JD

8. Major Local Plans

8.1 Strategic Local Plan (SLP)

The Inspector's report was published yesterday: in his view SADC has not fulfilled its legal duty to cooperate with their immediate council neighbours. SADC must now consult properly especially where strategic cross-boundary issues need to be met. It was felt that more "trading" between the councils needs to happen and to be properly documented. To be watched.

8.2. Detailed Local Plan

Is now out to consultation with exhibitions held in the Civic Offices on 8 and 12 December. During lengthy discussions it was agreed that NG would write a response to the consultation which BB would then sign off from the ARA. It would contain the following points: NG/BB

- the mapping of the area is vague
- Aboyne Lodge school should not be included in the town centre development
- "sustainability" does not feature anywhere in the DLP in sharp contrast with the SLP where it features substantially
- Heritage Assets should feature in the SLP, not the DLP [It may be too late for this, but might be worth making the objection]
- Several items which appear in the SLP for solution in the DLP then fail to appear in the latter document
- the lack of analysis of retail space in St Albans is antediluvian: viz the total unlikelihood of a department store agreeing to rent space here
- the multi-storey carpark is currently zoned for retail development. If this is the case, where would all the cars go?
- the categories for zoning need additions to the current short list: e.g. parking, school
- the Night-time Economy (see also below) fails to get a mention in the DLP. Why?
- the CCOS (City Center Opportunity Site) is not being used to capacity in the DLP with concentration on the other side of St Peter's Street.
- Transport Strategy (see below)

It was agreed that the committee saw no rationale underpinning the ideas in the DLP.

FC agreed to meet the Headteacher of Aboyne Lodge School to learn about her understanding of where or when funding might be found for repair of the building. It was felt that the school must not be allowed to become so dilapidated that it is then condemned. FC

9. The Night-time Economy

Although ARA and APRA were credited with contributions to this report, it was felt that the council had achieved nothing since their only ideas were alcohol fuelled and the other retailers did not wish to stay open later and could not be forced to do so. Whilst the council had appeared to like the RA's ideas of local improvements such as litter picking, pothole-fixing and care of street furniture, none of these

made the report. Damp squib.

It remains to be seen what the new BID local development will bring and there was a question of whether the ARA wished to be involved. Watch.

ALL

10. Herts Transport Strategy

The consultation on Transport Vision 2050 closes soon. It was felt that where there were some good ideas, the council probably wouldn't follow through as too expensive, whereas the some hair-brained and cheaper ideas needed challenging: e.g. East-West Herts bus routes through the middle of St Albans instead of on A414. The Abbey Flier is once again under threat, though it has its own ginger group. The proposed rail link through St Albans to the East Coast Mainline was not felt to be realistic. NG has spent much time investigating and will respond via BB as above.

NG/BB

11. The Brickyard

Following the demise of the business, a planning application has been received for "change of use" ostensibly into a 3-bedroomed house, though this needs watching in case it turns into something else.

ALL

12. ARA's Response to Parking Survey

FC had emailed all residents asking for comments and formulated a response which was discussed at length. It was felt to be very difficult to present a solution which all parts of the ARA can agree upon since the pressures on different parts of the system vary considerably. Three main points to be taken to council:

- Residents' parking to be extended to 22:00 and a cessation of the 1-hour vouchers
- width of Upton Ave is said to be able to take 3 lanes: one of parked cars, one queueing for carpark and one through lane. Residents dispute this. BC will object as a street resident. However, it was felt that the overall system might benefit from at least trialing such a scheme.
- The speed of the carpark barrier must be improved in order to expedite matters.

FC to contact John Charlton for clarification about input and then to compile final thoughts and circulate to all members via group email and to encourage ALL to respond as council only listens to voluminous response.

FC

13. AGM Plans

Venue booked. Notices to go out by end January 2017.

FC to approach John Charlton to speak about parking.

Since BB will be stepping down at the AGM, FC kindly volunteered to stand as Chair, BC to stand again as Treasurer and JD, Secretary.

FC

17. AOB

All committee members and street reps invited to BB's, 11 Selby Avenue, on Thursday 8 December at 8pm for Christmas drinks. Contributions of bottles appreciated.

ALL

18. Future Meetings

Thursday 12 January 2017 Full Committee prior to

AGM Tuesday 21 February, 8pm

The meeting ended at 9.30pm