

**MINUTES of a Meeting of the FoBRA Committee
on Tuesday 4th November 2014 at 6.30pm in Widcombe Junior School**

1. **Welcome** by Robin Kerr, Chairman, of 22 representatives and our guests.
2. **Observers:** Two attended – all present are listed at the end, with apologies received.
3. **Lib-Dem Cllr Crossley** was the first of the Council Party Leaders to speak to us about their aims if successful in the Local Government elections on 7th May. He said whichever Party won the General Election, on the same day, there would be even less money for local government. The key to a robust local economy was development of our creative digital industry which was already bigger than retail or tourism. His other priorities included Transport, Social Justice, Well-being, and the Environment.

Questions	Answers
Ian Herve (Henrietta Park): Action on upstream flood risk?	Council were looking at this; concerned about absorbent landscape and need to discourage global warming.
Nigel Websper (Pulteney Estate R A): Double glazing on listed buildings?	Seeking change in English Heritage attitudes
Ron Temperton: (Circus Area RA) why did the Council not enforce its bye-laws?	Two new recruits to the enforcement unit: plan for 'non-amplification zone' around the Abbey.
Nick Tobin (ABCPRA): Devolve power in England to e.g linked Bristol and B&NES?	'Anti-Avon in any guise' but wants devolved powers to a partnership of nearby authorities.

4. **Victor da Cunha, CEO of Curo:** Minutes of a recent meeting of the Chairman and Vice-chairman with him had been previously circulated. Victor joined Curo as Chief Executive in April 2011, having worked in housing for over 15 years. He spoke of his Company's structure, purposes and how, as a big local employer modernising social housing, they were keen to find better ways to connect with residents and their representatives. He responded to questions, confirming the circulated Minutes, and left his contact details with the Secretary.
5. **Minutes** of the meeting on 9th September, previously circulated, were agreed without dissent.
6. **The Chairman's Report**, previously circulated, was noted. He added:
 - a. **The B&NES Transport Strategy** is now on the Council website. We broadly support this crucial strategy but are aware of lobbying resistance from Parishes to the East of the City. All members are urged to make known to their Councillors our carefully considered views (an updated brief is being circulated) and to attend / support the Chairman and Patrick Rotheram at meetings of the Council's PTE Scrutiny Panel on 11 Nov, Cabinet on 12 Nov and the full Council on 13 November¹.
 - b. **Upstream Flooding risk:** Arising from the presentation by the Henrietta Park Association at the last meeting, we have pressed the Council to take this concern seriously and consider Council policy funding for reduction of the threat to eastern low-lying dwellings within the City, upstream of Pulteney Bridge, and to ensure a practical scheme is devised to reduce the risk, with emergency evacuation plans, particularly for vulnerable people.
 - c. **FoBRA priorities:** Members were asked to think about what our priorities should now be, as well as to put forward suggestions for our next Committee Agenda.
 - d. **Winter Reception is on Tuesday 20th January** in the Victoria Art Gallery from 6.30pm. A flyer was enclosed with the agenda. Julie Trollope, Social Secretary, sold tickets on the spot and can provide more information: julietrollope@hotmail.com or 01225 460 396.
 - e. **FoBRA Website** has been updated – please comment on the site including new material.
 - f. **FoBRA Secretary:** Barry Henderson was appointed – He can be contacted at jsbh@ic24.net 01225 316 115.

¹ Post meeting note: Transport Strategy was passed by the Council.

- 7. Party Houses progress** – CARA, TARA & PERA. Ian Perkins and Sally Rothwell said the bye-laws had not brought effective action against trouble makers. The objective was to get the authorities to address the problem across Bath and not just ‘fire fight’. Having reviewed the legal environment with help from officials nationally and locally, their best hope was to use the new *Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014* (19 previous measures simplified into 6): TARA selected Community Protection Notices, for which there is a threshold defined by local agencies, taking account of harm or potential harm, persistence and adequacy of response. They “pulled the Community trigger” on 20th October (possibly the first under the Act). If accepted, it should force a review with all relevant agencies taking a ‘joined up’ problem-solving approach to find a solution.
- 8. Student Activities:** Robert Gould reported that the *Volunteering Society* had recruited over 50 students. While their plans are all good they may not fully address community anxieties about student activities. They have met Bath Spa Live to improve relations.
- 9. Planning Report** by Vice-chairman Nick Tobin, previously circulated, was noted. Mark O’Sullivan said the Foxhill Development had traffic implications for other areas of Bath.
- 10. Clarification of Accounts:** In the absence of the Treasurer abroad, the Chairman referred to an email sent to all representatives the previous day recalling that the Accounts for 2013–14 had been accepted by the Examiner, presented at the AGM in May and adopted. Subsequently, the Treasurer, for clarity, had amended some cost sub-headings but the totals remained as before. Nigel Websper (PERA) submitted four questions on 1st Nov which the Chairman, having consulted the Treasurer by email, did his best to answer as follows:

Question	Explanation
Why have Print Ink / Secretarial costs almost trebled from £158 in 10/11 to £450 in 13/14? The Treasurer’s analysis shows this to be mostly Printing Ink. This seems odd as most communication is electronic. If anything I would expect this to have fallen.	Secretarial expenses have only been charged in two of the last four years; the past year’s is actually a reduction on the year before. Printing ink: The figure this year covers two year’s actual expenditure. Over four years the average is about £198 yearly.
Website costs were £24 in 11/12, £108 in 12/13, and £348 in 13/14. What is the reason?	One should properly note also £245 in 10/11. This reflects the domain name - renewed two years later. In 13/14 we decided to buy another domain name to prevent others’ use.
Conference fees were £95 in 10/11, £99 in 11/12, £252 in 12/13, £276 in 13/14. Whilst in one sense these are not high, in another we have very limited resources and are these appropriate?	The Committee decided, after discussion, on additional attendance at Conferences and to allow those travelling on FoBRA business to claim modest travelling expenses – Associated increased subscriptions were also agreed.
Are these Accounts prepared on an accruals or a cash basis?	Our Accounts have always been on a cash basis i.e. payments are recorded in the year they are made / received by the Treasurer.

These explanations were accepted, subject to confirmation by the Treasurer on his return². The Chairman also noted the Treasurer’s request that any expense claims should be submitted by February annually to allow for payment / clearance in time to be recorded in the appropriate accounting year. This was followed by a robust discussion on the necessity for paper and ink in this electronic age!

11. Suggestions for next meeting agenda:

- a. Mark O’Sullivan suggested looking at the Community Service Redesign on the gap between hospital and GP services.
- b. Following a spirited exchange, it was agreed to add a debate about which issues FoBRA should cover and how it should do this.

² Post meeting note – confirmed on 11th Nov

- 12. Winter Party tickets:** The flyer is attached to help those who have not yet applied for tickets (to the Treasurer, Stephen Little, enclosing a cheque and S.A.E. please).

Attendance and apologies

Present:

Robin	Kerr	Chairman & Lansdown Crescent Association
Nick	Tobin,	Vice-Chairman & Ainslie's Belvedere & Caroline Place Res Assoc
Barry	Henderson	Secretary
Robert	Gould	Bath Spa University Students' Union, Vice-President – Welfare
Ben	Jessup	Bath University Students' Union (for Tommy Parker)
Ken	Ayers	Bathwick Estate Residents' Association
Julie	Trollope	Bathwick Estate Residents' Association, Chairman
Clyde	Hunter	Bear Flat Association, Chairman
Janet	Anderson	Camden Association, Secretary
Sally	Rothwell	Circus Area Residents' Association, Chairman
Ron	Temperton	Circus Area Residents' Association, Vice-Chair
Julia	Snow	Entry Hill Drive Residents' Association
Mark	O'Sullivan	Greenway
Ceris	Humphreys	Henrietta Park Association, Chairman
Ian	Herve	Henrietta Park Association, Secretary
Tom	Marshall	Macaulay Prospect
Joy	Bowker	Marlborough Lane & Buildings Res Assoc
David.	Carr	Pulteney Estate Residents' Association
Nigel	Websper	Pulteney Estate Residents' Association
Van	Du Bose	St James's Square Ltd
John	Rushton	Sydney Buildings Householders' Association
Ian	Perkins	The Abbey Residents' Association, Chairman

In Attendance Cllr Paul Crossley, Leader of the Council; Mr Victor da Cunha, CEO of Curo.

Observers: Nola Wright, Bathwick Estate Residents Association and Steve Bradley (part)

Apologies

Stephen	Little	Treasurer & Royal Crescent Society
David	Greenwood	Bath Independent Guest Houses Association
Jordan	Kenny	Bath University Students' Union
Tommy	Parker	Bath University Students' Union
Morny	Davison	Catharine Place Residents' Association, Secretary
Caroline	Kilner	Pulteney Estate Residents' Association
Paul	Dowling	Royal Crescent Society (RCS)
Liz	Littlewood	Widcombe Association.
Andy	Benwell	Hensley and Egerton Road Association
Colin	Clark	Bathwick Hill Residents' Association
Jan	Shepley	Widcombe Association
Nigel	Sherwen	Camden Association

Signed Barry Henderson, Secretary 20 November 2014