
NOTE of a meeting of the Committee of Iffley Fields Residents' Association, held on Monday 13th July 2020 at 18:30 via Zoom

Present: Jon Rees (Chair), Christine Hogg, Ben Pinches. Samantha Robertson, Simon Fisher, Janet Hall, Luke Bolton, Mari Girling, Barbara Ashcroft.

Sue Hale, Ned Wells, Cllr Richard Tarver, Cllr Steve Curran,

Apologies: Thelma Martin, Cllr Damian Haywood,

Thelma asked it to be noted that, though she was not attending, she was very impressed with the energy and the progress made by IFRA in the last few months.

1 Minutes of the SGM on held on 11th Mary were accepted as a correct record.

2 Matters Arising:

- Actions on the Code of Conduct. The Officers had very reluctantly felt that they had no option but to suspend an IFRA Committee member who had been abusive and declined to apologise for the distress caused.
- Shirelake ditch Pollution: The City Council reported that Thames Water reported this was caused by a collapsed sewer and had now been repaired. It was reported that it had not been caused by sewers misconnected to surface water drains in houses in Bullingdon Road. The advice from EA remained that river swimming was only safe in designated bathing areas, though there are no designated bathing areas in rivers in the UK at this time. Jon

3 Litter and heavy use of open spaces during lockdown

- Bins in Meadow Lane- Cllr Tarver had taken this up with Council Officer Chris Bell, who replied that there was no budget for additional bins but that he had asked for more frequent emptying of the bins. It was noted that the situation had improved but that additional bins were still needed. Jon agreed to write to Chris Bell with a copy to Richard, thanking the Council for the more frequent collections but stating the need for more bins.
- Field next to the Scout Hut: Ben reported that this had been heavily used during lockdown, resulting in a litter problem. The owners (Oxford Preservation Trust) had put notices up restricting use and some residents had complained about this. They wanted to assure residents that this was only a temporary measure.
- Kidneys fence: It was noted that the fence by Bedford street was broken. Cllr Curran agreed to take this up.

4 Sub Groups

Access to Waterways:

Ben reported that the first meeting would be held that week to decide the objectives and terms of reference. Members were Ben Pinches, Eleanor Blyth, Samantha Robinson, Dave Gasca, Damien Clahane and Tom Green

Cllr Louise Upton was responsible for waterways and Ben agreed to report back to Cllr Richard Tarver who might involve Cllr Upton after the meeting.

Planning Subgroup

Christine reported that there were only a few planning applications a year where it was appropriate for IFRA to comment, but weekly monitoring of applications was important. If there were any that had implications for the area in general, they would be put on the new IFRA planning group site and residents would be alerted through the Street Connectors, Facebook and What's App groups. The objective was to set up a system that was more transparent and encourage those who wanted to, to be involved. Luke suggested the Subgroup could carry out a poll to gather residents views on IFRA's default Planning Policy positions.

IFRA did not normally comment on single house extensions, but did sometimes comment on applications to change a house into an HMO (House of Multiple Occupancy). It was noted that too high a proportion of HMOs in an area led to a more transient population who might have less of a commitment to the area. However, housing was a big problem in Oxford then a balance was required. It was agreed that all applications for HMOs should be considered on their individual merits.

The draft terms of reference were agreed by a simple majority vote and would be reviewed in 6 months. Christine and Thelma were willing to continue and hoped others might wish to join the group.

5 Street Connectors:

Sue Hale was welcomed as she had volunteered to be a Connector. Jon reported that the purpose of the role was to:

- Provide additional conduits for communications between residents and IFRA
- To bring forward issues and highlight issues in their street neighbourhood to IFRA Committee (or subgroups), either online, by telephone, face-to-face
- Help disseminate knowledge of IFRA meetings
- If a user of a Street WhatsApp group, to make people aware of IFRA consultations or surveys
- To be an honest mirror to communicate what the community thinks about IFRA, and wants from it.

These terms of reference were agreed by a simple majority vote and more detailed arrangements would be discussed with the volunteers. So far, the following had volunteered:

Argyle Street- Sue Hale, Simon Fisher
Bedford Street - Janet Hall
Chester Street –Luke Bolton
Fairacres Road – Janey Carline, Barbara Ashworth
Stratford Street - Ben Pinches
Warwick Street - Darren Clahane
Eyot Place/Meadow Lane: no volunteers as yet

6 Safe Space Event

Ben reported that several neighbours had suggested that a safe event might be organised on Meadow Lane Rec, where people could safely meet, up though it was noted that those shielding would not be able to attend. People would bring their own picnic but there would be a band etc. Ben agreed to take this further and discuss with those who generally organised the Argyle and Bedford Street Party. No date had been fixed but the August Bank Holiday or previous weekend were among those considered. It was agreed that IFRA would underwrite this up to £300.

7 The Fields

Mari reported that she had enough material for a new edition of the Fields and could advertise the Safe Event.

8 Dates of future meetings

September 14th 2020

November 9th 2020

9. Mari mentioned there might be interest from another resident in being co-opted to IFRA Committee.

10. The meeting closed at 19.40
