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## **Roussillon Park Residents' Association**

### **Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 22 November 2021 at 7.00pm in the Community Hall**

**FS Note: These minutes do not necessarily follow the order of the original Agenda but for easier reference are grouped around similar topics brought up across different Agenda items.**

#### **1 Preliminaries**

##### **1.1 Introductions**

Peter Day (PD – chairing) welcomed residents to the meeting which was very well attended given COVID restrictions. He introduced the members of the Committee present - namely Gerry Cleaver (Treasurer and Membership), Robert Johnston, and Fiona Steele (Minutes Secretary). Apologies for absence were received by Committee members Jemima Noyce, Pat Riches and Susan Rose

##### **1.2 Apologies for absence from residents**

James and Emma Bradshaw, Tony Brant, John and Sam Carney, Tricia Cormack, Sally Day, John and Liz Downing, Chris Skelker

##### **1.3 Minutes of 25 September 2019 AGM**

Accepted as a correct record (proposer Paul Quade, seconder Gerry Dawson)

#### **2 Presentation by Clare de Bathe (Director, Chichester Community Development Trust, CCDT, CdeB)**

CdeB's presentation was taken following the preliminaries as she had to leave the meeting early. She summarised the wide-ranging activities which are being developed by the CCDT at the Roussillon and Graylingwell Parks. These include special activities for children 'from tots to teens', sports events, fitness classes and various music activities. At Graylingwell The Pavilion Café and Wellness Centre are in full swing, and a significant opening in 2022 will be The Chapel to enable even more activities to be launched. Roussillon has the Community Hall and here a variety of events are held as well as meetings of residents. Facilities at both Parks are provided either free for residents (via the £50 per head annual contribution in the estate service charge) or at a subsidised cost. Revenue is boosted by commercial income, grants and endowments. The accounts are published on the CCDT website. CdeB concluded her presentation by calling for more volunteers to help run events (tickets free for residents). PD thanked her for her contribution to the meeting.

### **3 Election of Committee Members for 2021/2**

No additional nominations had been received but members of the current Committee had offered to continue to serve and this was agreed by the meeting. Lory Lloyd (see Gardening Group item 7 below) was persuaded to rejoin the Committee after a gap of a year and this was welcomed. PD urged other residents to consider serving.

*Afternote: it was established subsequent to the meeting that in fact Tony Brant had put himself forward for membership of the Committee. As he was not formally approved at the meeting, he will be co-opted to the Committee*

### **4 Treasurer's Report (Gerry Cleaver, GC)**

Owing to lack of activity as a consequence of COVID (with no income and events), GC had very little to report on the financial front but mentioned that as a consequence of pressure from the bank it had been necessary to transfer £15 from petty cash to the RAPRA current account to keep the account 'live'. At the moment the current account stands at £381.40 with £5.35 in petty cash.

Re membership, 30 households had signed up at the meeting at £5 per household for 2021/2. GC had been promised further subscriptions but she asked those present to help promote membership to those unable to attend.

### **5 RAPRA Review (Peter Day, PD)**

#### **5.1 Ken Jones**

PD commenced his review by paying tribute to the commitment to RAPRA shown by Ken Jones (KJ) who had been Chairman for 5 years until September when he and his wife moved to York. Ken had worked tirelessly on behalf of residents in forging links with cognate community organisations and making representations to ZeroC and Local Government. His contribution was very much appreciated by the meeting and RAPRA's thanks will be passed to him (**Action: Committee**)

#### **5.2 Activities**

Apart from organising a very successful collection in December 2020 for the Chichester Food Bank (both food items and cash donations), the Committee has not been able to hold any in-person events for residents in the last 2 years because of COVID. However the Committee has met via Zoom and more recently in person to review the developing situation, and the 2021/2 season will commence with the traditional 'Carols on the Green' (followed by mulled wine and mince pies) to be held on Sunday, 19 December at 4.00pm - the selected charity this year is 'The Four Streets Project' for the homeless and deprived in Chichester.

PD also referred to the publication of Roussillon Post (edited by David Coke) which has seen 3 issues and will be published 3 times a year with articles featuring the history of the Park and the military associated with it, activities undertaken on the Park, gardening matters, and, for clarification, notes on what can and what cannot be done with properties in response to restrictive covenants laid out when the estate was originally developed. The meeting agreed that RP is a very good communication medium and it was also suggested that more could be made of social media communication routes such as the RAPRA Facebook Page,

### **6 Report from the Shadow Management Company (Manco) (David Coke, DC)**

#### **6.1 Management Structure**

By shadowing the estate Management Company (Manco), the Shadow Manco was set up to pave the way for the ultimate takeover by residents of the running of the estate following

satisfactory completion of the developer's (ZeroC) responsibilities. The Shadow Manco is an important channel of communication between residents and the Manco and its site management company RMG, although, unlike RAPRA, it is not an elected body but consists of volunteer residents and putative Directors.

DC referred to the recent appointment of a new RMG site manager, Anthony Bradley (AB), to take over from Toby Felton (TB) although it is understood that the latter will still have some involvement in the Phase 1 biomass heating system replacement (namely individual gas boilers). DC has met AB briefly and it is hoped that a meeting with him and the Shadow Manco can be arranged early in the New Year

DC has also had a recent very helpful contact with Jon Byrom of Homes England (to which ZeroC is accountable for the estate) who will be joining the Manco and who is anxious to complete the remaining biomass issues and progress the handover to residents of the communal land still in HE ownership. Handover is now expected towards the end of 2022.

DC further reported that it had been agreed that the estate reserves would need to be boosted in order to meet future liabilities relating to infrastructure repair and renewal (eg the perimeter wall, roads, pavements, drains, streetlighting etc). Consequently it has been agreed that residents' contributions to the reserves will increase above inflation over the next 5 years in order to be ready for this need.

#### **Discussion on Relations with RMG**

Residents felt that RMG should be far more responsive to their concerns. It is slow to react to requests for action and to residents' complaints; and it communicates infrequently on what it is doing on behalf of residents. It was suggested that a collective formal complaint should be made by RAPRA (**Action: Committee**) and also that individual residents might also wish to notify their concerns (**Action: Residents**). The communication route would normally be via the site manager in the first instance but a resident suggested that an approach to the MD of RMG could also be considered (Hugh McGeever, hugh.mcgeever@rmguk.com, 08450 024444)

#### **6.2 Communal TV Aerial**

DC referred to a reception problem with the communal TV aerial sited on the roof of Royal Sussex House which had been going on for an unacceptably long time (not helped by a spate of bad weather). An issue had been obtaining access to the equipment which is via a locked door; and to-ings and fro-ings between residents, Hastoe (which own Royal Sussex House) and RMG had not yet led to a resolution of the problem. However he understood that progress had now been made and that the repair should be effected shortly.

#### **Discussion on the Communal Aerial Problem**

Residents were extremely concerned at the lack of progress in solving the problems and some of them had had to incur unacceptable and unnecessary expense in seeking alternative solutions. It was agreed that RAPRA should write formally to RMG expressing the need for urgent action (**Action: Committee**)

*Afternote: on 23 November an email was sent to all residents by RMG apologising for all the delays and informing them that the problems would be fixed by 27 November.*

#### **6.3 Parking**

This is a perennial sore point and DC indicated that the work of the earlier Shadow Manco parking Working Party is to be revisited and the Working Party reconvened to consider the latest situation and suggest further ideas to control unauthorised parking on the estate. The situation has been exacerbated by the extension of Chichester District Council's restrictions on parking in the Broyle and Summersdale areas which has meant that more cars from non-RP residents are being parked on the estate. He called for more input and ideas from residents on the way forward and suggested that professional parking management might have to be instituted.

## **Discussion**

This is obviously a very contentious issue and residents were insistent that something should be done. It was agreed that ideas should be submitted to the Shadow Manco and residents were also asked to put forward any additional names for membership of the Working Party. Brian Dawson immediately put his name forward, not least because of his expertise in the legality of what might or might not be put forward as a solution. It was also suggested that residents should be polled on any interim ideas and recommendations that might be proposed. A resident asked if anyone knew whether going forward the Government will be providing funds for the expansion of electric car charging points – DC suggested that the Working Party could also take up this question.

## **6.5 Gardening Matters**

DC reported on a number of very positive gardening-related developments on the estate and these are described in more detail in the Gardening Report (item 7 below). He noted that the Shadow Manco had decided that it would not be appropriate to plant large evergreen trees.

*In view of the significance of the issues raised in item 6 above, DC's full report is attached as an appendix to these minutes*

## **7 Gardening (Lory Lloyd, LL )**

LL reported that the Gardening Group of volunteer residents had been very active since the last AGM, concentrating particularly on watering, border maintenance, new shrub and bulb planting round the estate, while outside contractors (with which the Group has developed an excellent rapport) have undertaken the heavy work of mowing the green areas and tree maintenance etc. The Group has been successful in applying to the Chichester District Council's Tree Planting Scheme and will shortly take delivery of 10 whips (small trees) and has identified suitable planting positions in consultation with nearby residents. A bid has been made to the Woodland Trust to fund hedging along the railings on the north boundary of the estate, and it is understood that appropriate suitable foliage will be available to the Group in spring 2022. LL referred to the enthusiasm of the gardeners but more would certainly be welcome and residents were asked to register their interest ([lory.lloyd@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lory.lloyd@hotmail.co.uk)).

## **Discussion**

Residents enthusiastically welcomed the work of the Gardening Group with compliments to and an ovation for LL for the effort she has put and is putting in personally and for her coordination. The estate looks very smart and compliments have also been received from visitors as well as residents.

## **8 Any Other Business**

A resident expressed concern over anti-social behaviour on the estate citing problems on Halloween night and asked what action might be taken. DC responded that residents should not attempt to enter into conversation with the offenders but any such behaviour should be immediately reported to the police. He noted that the letter had been very helpful in dealing with a previous incident earlier in the year.

No other matters were raised not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

The Chairman thanked residents for attending and hoped that more would come forward to assist in running the Association (FS241121)

Roussillon Park Shadow Management Company – David Coke’s report to the RPRA AGM 22-11-2021

It is in my capacity as ‘Hon Sec’ of the Shadow Management Company that I am reporting to you today. The volunteer residents of the Shadow Manco continue to be vigilant on behalf of all residents, doing our best to ensure that this estate runs smoothly and more-or-less painlessly both now and into the future.

The Shadow Manco’s most recent meeting was on 12 Nov; here are the main issues that came up –

1. Toby Felton (property manager) has been reassigned by RMG, so we now have yet another new property manager, Anthony Bradley, with effect from 15 November.
2. On our financial situation, our Finance and Scrutiny sub-committees are happy with the estate’s income and expenditure, which still has a small running surplus. Two continuing causes for concern – first, the clarity and transparency of our accounts as presented by RMG; we have done our very best to improve this, and have made tiny steps forward, but we are not going to get the accounts exactly as we want them until residents are directors. The shamefully low level of our Capital Reserve still causes concern, but with the agreed 4-5 year above-inflation rise in the estate fee to bring our annual Reserves contribution up to about £40,000, things should start to look healthier by the end of the decade. This accumulating Capital reserve is vital to us all, not only to cover annual capital costs today, but also to provide funds for the maintenance and future replacement of all Roussillon’s infrastructure – the roadways and pavements, the surface drains, the stock of protected trees, the street lighting, the playground, and, most worryingly, the Victorian Perimeter wall. Since the replacement of just one bay of our wall this year cost

almost £18,000, you will see why we are concerned. This particular cost was met by an insurance company, but this will not always happen.

3. The Gardening Group's current tree planting plans are most welcome, and it is agreed that planting trees is important for all sorts of reasons. However, it was strongly recommended that no large evergreen trees should be planted anywhere on the estate's common areas, and the Queen Juliana Green's central area has to be left free of trees.

We all have to do our bit to fight the climate crisis, and agreeing to trees being planted near our homes seems like a really easy option. Apart from their beauty, and the numerous benefits they produce for our environment, there is another more pragmatic reason for planting more trees, which is to discourage illegal incursions onto the green. The more trees we have around the green, especially near the main Entranceway, the more difficult it would be for caravans to access the grass. So, is the meeting generally in favour of more trees? [*most of those present agreed*]

4. Next, we had an update from our Homes England contact and director designate, Jonathan Byrom, who is helping to push things along on the completion of the District Heating replacement in Phase One. Progress here continues to be slow, but it is at least positively moving forward now, and the direct involvement of Homes England appears to have provided a new urgency to the process. It looks now as though the project to replace the problematic District Heating System with new boilers should proceed from Spring 2022, and will take 6 months to complete. Following completion, ZeroC will arrange for the transfer of all the remaining parts of the estate (our common areas, roadways and greens, as well as some of the leasehold blocks) to the Management Company, after which

the handover of the Manco to residents will be possible, and the long-awaited election of resident directors can take place.

5. Finally, the SManco has decided to reinstate a car-parking working party to have another look at the problem, which is still causing widespread concern, especially with the local authority's plans for paid on-street parking. If anybody here is interested in working with us on this, please do talk to me after the meeting or email me at the address in the Roussillon Post. I would like to ask whether residents' opinions on employing a parking management company have changed since we did the last parking survey a few years ago. *[DC asks for an informal, non-binding show of hands, to ascertain whether a residents' EGM on the subject would be viable. A significant portion of those present showed that they are still opposed to professional parking management; it was suggested from the floor that other 'softer' measure should be explored first].*

*The delayed repair to the communal television aerial was discussed at length, with the result that RMG and Hastoe have now (Tuesday 23 Nov.) collaborated to ensure that the problems that caused the delay will not happen again (we hope). If anybody spots a similar problem in the future, either with TV reception, or with street lights not working etc., please contact RMG direct either through their online chat service at [www.rmguk.com](http://www.rmguk.com) or their customer service address [customerservice@rmguk.com](mailto:customerservice@rmguk.com), or else email D. Coke at the address on the back of the Roussillon Post.*

*There was a question from the floor about what should be done if anybody notices vandalism or anti-social behaviour taking place here; in all such cases, the police should be called as soon as possible. Residents should not attempt to intervene.*

David Coke, 22-11-2021

