

HURST PARK ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

AGM 2020

7.00pm on Sun 10 May 2020

Via Zoom

1. Present:

Committee Michael Page (chair), Nicky Webb (secretary), John Beasley, Richard Cushing, Andrew Milbourn, Mary Pountain, Barbara Thomas, Jane Wheatley.

Plus around 30 residents who logged in to the meeting.

2. Introduction and Welcome:

Michael Page chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone. Michael expressed his hope that the social aspect of previous meetings should go ahead at some point in future, but he was pleased that so many people had made the effort to join this virtual meeting at this strange and unsettling time.

3. Apologies for absence:

There were no apologies for absence.

4. Minutes of 2019 AGM

The Minutes were agreed and signed. There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's report and accounts

Michael Page read his report:

This is my fifth (and last) Chair's report . . .

We came together in Jan 2016 as a result of the threat to our neighbourhood caused by outrageous plans for Milton Road. 180 people filled the hall at the Church of the Good Shepherd at our inaugural meeting.

In March this year we came together once again – in response to a different kind of threat to our neighbourhood – a virulent pandemic changing people's lives and testing our resilience. It's pleasing to see that HPERA has played its part in helping to lead the community effort in the emergency response, and thanks are due to the more than 50 volunteers who came forward to support neighbours who are no longer able to leave their homes. I should also mention local shopkeepers who have changed their ways of working to keep us supplied with food and deliveries, and a special mention to local resident Robin Standring of Cam Home & Garden, who organised supplies of vegetable plants and sundries to keep us gardening.

This, along with events such as our annual pudding and wine evening, Christmas carol singing and the replanting of the Arbury Park hedge by fourteen volunteers has established HPERA as a focus for social cohesion in our community.

However HPERA's other role as a watchdog and pressure group remains undiminished. During last year we:

- made representations at City and County Council committee meetings, maintained a seat on the **Local Liaison Forum** at the Greater Cambridge Partnership and were observers at the **Citizens' Assembly process**
- continued to support the Federation of Cambridge RAs (FeCRA) in promoting the interests of residents across city in dealing with the challenges of growth, transport and densification
- successfully overcame institutional opposition and inertia to get the Arbury Play Park hedge re-planted alongside the new cycle path
- took part in early consultation meetings regarding **a new high-rise development for up to 18,000 people** on the site of the water treatment plant at Cambridge North
- carried out parking surveys and met on numerous occasions with City and County Councillors of both parties and with other resident groups in an attempt to mitigate the parking congestion crisis. But our efforts on this are now on hold thanks to a bizarre decision by the County Council to suspend all work on parking schemes for 12 months.
- secured environmental improvements such as additional street lighting, repairs to the planters and improvements to the cycle way between Highworth Avenue and Leys Road, yellow lines at street corners, and the provision of an estate notice-board (on the way we hope)
- kept an eye on planning applications which might have an impact on the character and infrastructure of our neighbourhood

However, there is still much unfinished business. The new Local Plan is being put together and will affect us all, particularly in relation to issues such as local responses to climate change, the growth agenda, our water supply. A huge new high-rise development with up to 8000 homes is planned for Cambridge North, and we will all be affected by parking congestion, walking and cycling safety, and plans for the CAM Metro.

We are now faced by a new threat to local democracy posed by a County Council that seems ever more detached from the interests of city dwellers. The seat of county democracy is being moved from Cambridge to Alconbury so that Shire Hall can be redeveloped by Brookgate Ltd, and the County Council is poised to push through the abolition of our local highways committee (CJAC) which means that all decisions will be delegated to county officers or taken by county councillors - the majority of whom live far from the city. If you have not already done so, I urge you to sign the petition which is featured on the home page of our website.

So, as you can see there will be plenty for our Association to scrutinise in the coming weeks, months and years.

It has been a pleasure to be your Chair for the last 4½ years, and I would like to thank all committee members past and present for their hard work and support. We have achieved a lot, not least the remodelling of the Milton Road project using our own design concept developed in collaboration with Camcycle and Milton Road Residents' Association. This was accomplished against all the odds and in the face of stunned opposition from old-school highways officers and consultants. My only disappointment is that successive changes to the construction schedule mean that our efforts won't bear fruit for some time to come, and in the meantime we will still have to put up with poor pavements and running repairs to pot-holes.

We will need to continue our support for the community during the Covid crisis, but I'm looking forward to the day when we can return to more normal social activities and, for example, enjoy a proper street party!

6. Q @ A

Nicky Webb opened the meeting to Questions.

- John Latham began by expressing thanks to current and past committee members for all their hard work, especially to outgoing chairman Michael Page and asked what hobbies he intended taking up to fill his time (A: painting and drawing!). He commented that the underhand abolition of the CJAC committee was absolutely undemocratic and would impair local democracy.
- Steve Bunkhall also expressed his thanks to MP, and commented that the petition re the abolition of CJAC closes this evening.
- Richard Cushing commented that our county councillors represent such large areas that they often don't have intimate knowledge of their constituencies.
- Graham Cox also thanked Mike and asked whether, in view of the way in which the decision had been made to abolish CJAC, anyone had any confidence that a petition would influence the Council. He suggested that direct action might have more impact.
- MP responded that given the lock-down it was difficult to see how direct action might work, but it would be worth further thought. MP thought it would be necessary to work with FeCRA or other Residents' Associations, but there seemed little appetite for this from FeCRA. At the moment almost impossible to challenge decisions such as this because all meetings are online and while members of the public can observe, they are not able to speak.
- Mary Pountain proposed a vote of thanks to MPa, and presented him with a (non-virtual) bottle of wine as a token. She paid tribute to Michael's tenacity, good humour and attention to details. Attendees joined her in applauding Michael.
- Steve Bunkhall added that attendees might wish to email the leader of the council about the decision.

7. Accounts

Treasurer John Beasley presented HPERA's accounts for the year ended 31 December 2019.

Income was attributed entirely to donations from local residents, mostly taken during the last AGM event. Special thanks are due to Cam Home and Garden which donated £55 to HPERA, derived from the sales on the day of their excellent plants.

| <i>Income & Expenditure</i> | <i>1 January – 31 December 2019</i> | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| | <i>2019</i> | | <i>2018</i> | |
| <i>Income</i> | <i>£</i> | <i>£</i> | <i>£</i> | <i>£</i> |
| <i>Donations</i> | 267.50 | | 319.13 | |
| <i>Total Income</i> | | 267.50 | | 319.13 |
| <i>Expenditure</i> | | | | |
| <i>Room & Refreshments</i> | 109.87 | | 91.08 | |
| <i>Printing & Stationery</i> | 129.00 | | 247.58 | |
| <i>Total Expenditure</i> | | (238.87) | | (338.66) |
| <i>Balance – Current year</i> | | 28.63 | | (19.53) |
| <i>Balance Brought Forward</i> | | 468.80 | | 488.33 |
| <i>Balance Carried Forward</i> | | 497.43 | | 468.80 |

2020 Expenditure to-date:

Since 1st January 2020, total expenditure (on printing costs and the domain name renewal) amounts to £147.98, so the net cash reserve of HPERA at the date of this report amounts to: £349.45.

The Association has no membership fee, and relies upon donations for income. It will be seen that expenditure is roughly matched by income, and the Association has sufficient reserves to absorb fluctuations. From the outset, the Association has operated a Community current account with Barclays Bank plc. Most transactions are made on-line, with expenditure authorised by any two of the signatories. The signatories (of which there are 4) are able to inspect the bank transactions at any time by logging in to the account. No overdraft facility is sought.

Prepared by John Beasley, Treasurer, 21st April 2020.

8. Election of committee for 2020-2021

Richard Cushing is standing down and ideally should be replaced by another resident from Highworth Avenue.

Nicky Webb proposed that Highworth Avenue resident Sophie Musson join the committee. Seconded by Richard Cushing. Attenders at the meeting were invited to vote and Sophie was unanimously elected.

Jim Smith proposed that all remaining committee members be re-elected en-bloc. The proposal was seconded by John Latham. The meeting voted unanimously to re-elect the entire committee.

In accordance with the 4-year rule in our constitution, Michael Page is standing down as Chair but is content to continue to serve on the committee. The committee recommended that Andrew Milbourn should take Michael's place. Proposed by Michael Page and seconded by Mary Pountain. The meeting voted unanimously that Andrew Milbourn be invited to chair the committee.

Mary Pountain proposed a vote of thanks to Michael Page for all his work as Chairman over the past 4 years. All those present agreed.

The committee now comprises:

Andrew Milbourn (Chair), Nicky Webb (secretary), John Beasley (treasurer), Sophie Musson, Michael Page, Mary Pountain, Barbara Thomas, Jane Wheatley.

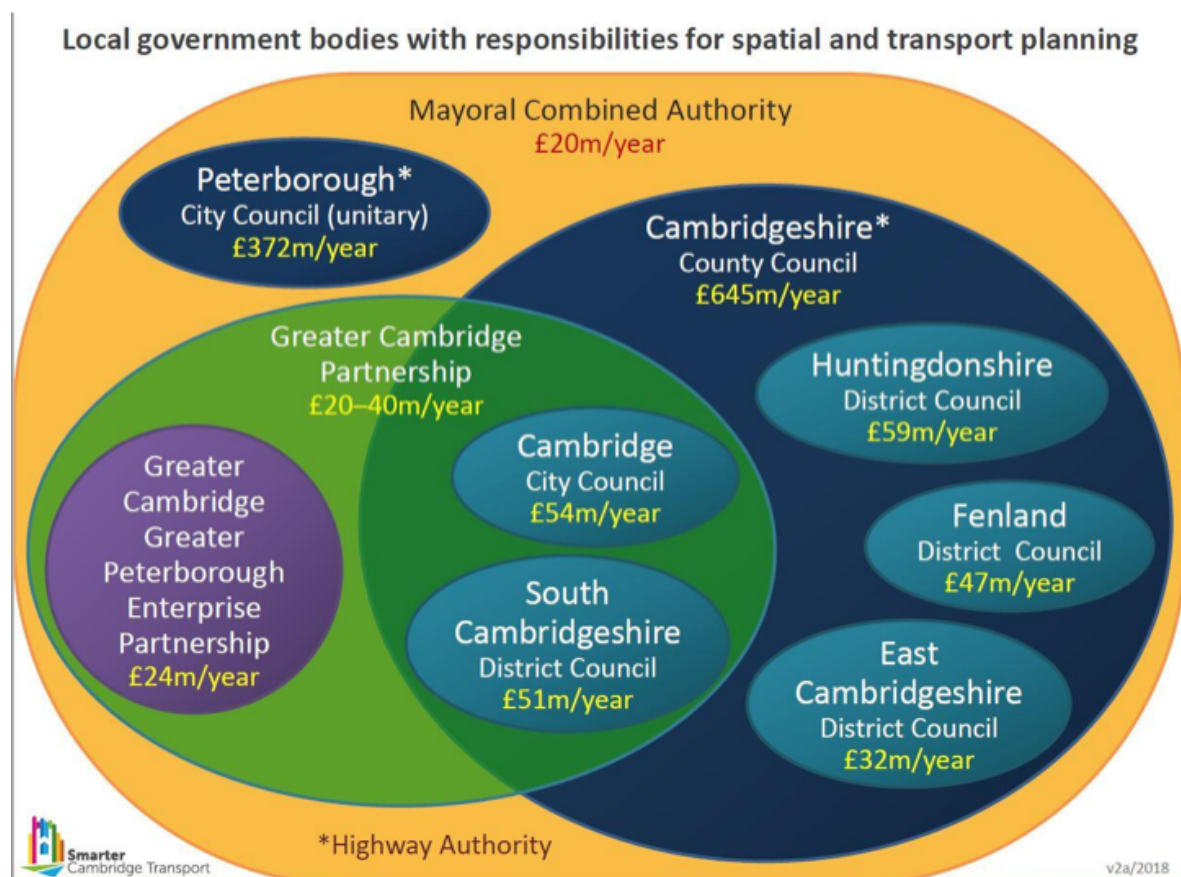
Hilary Goy resigned in the course of the year.

9. Public Meetings

(now to be held as online meetings)

- 19/05 County Council 10.30am
- 26/05 County Highways & Infrast. Committee
- 28/05 City Council 11.00am
- 03/06 Combined Authority Board 10.30
- 04/06 GCP Joint Assembly 14.00
- 09/06 Joint Area Committee CJAC 16.30
- 11/06 North Area Committee 18.30
- 16/06 County Highways & Infrast. Committee
- 25/06 GCP Executive Board 16.00
- 30/06 County Constitution & Ethics Committee

Michael Page also shared a slide explaining which local government bodies have responsibility for spatial and transport planning. Whilst the budget figures are out of date, it is a useful graphic:



10. Any other business

Jim Smith and Rachel Aucott were invited to tell the meeting about their research into the history of the area and the building of the estate. They expressed thanks to the many local people who had shared their deeds and other documents, and encouraged others to participate. All their findings can be found at <https://hpehistory.wordpress.com/> though the site is work in progress!

Nicky Webb reported that there were now 240 contacts on the HPERA email list, with significant new members signing up since the pandemic began. She encouraged anyone who does not currently receive email newsletters to subscribe, as printed newsletters are produced only rarely and communicating by email is quicker and more economical and greener too.

The only remaining business was to announce the winner of the prize draw for a bottle of Woodchester Valley English wine, kindly donated by our local wine bar, Grape Britannia. Nicky Webb pulled a name from a hat and Judith Rattenbury was announced as the winner.

11. Close of AGM

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.