

2023 Friends of Hailey Park Executive Committee AGM

Wednesday 5th July 2023 @ 19:00

The Railway Pub Marquee.

MINUTES

Committee Present: Penny Bowers, Russell Todd, Paul Rock, Anita Smith, Sarah James

Members of the Public Present:

Siàn Davies, Celia Rees, Ian Roberts, Steph Wilkins, Angela Weekes, Dan Hobbs, Ian Vincent, Gill Griffin,

Committee Apologies: Kate Prosser, Lindy Clifton, Angela Perrett, Siobhan Coria.

Minutes of 2022 AGM were approved at this meeting.

Minute Taker for 2023 AGM is Anita Smith.

Matters Arising:

2023 Position Paper on Democratic and Constitutionally Compliant Decision Making and Communication Processes within FoHP Committee.

Information on this deferred to "Information for New Committee Members" section below.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairperson Report:

We meet and I present my Chair's report in the strange 'purgatory' of waiting for a decision on last week's Judicial Review (JR) about the sewage pumping station.

To say it has been a stressful few months would be an understatement. Many people have lived – continue to live – with the case 24/7. Our community has showed terrific character and strength in the face of adversity. You are a credit to our community and yourselves. I'll return to the campaign in a moment.

The eminent American sociologist, Alex Norman, with whom I have been fortunate to spend some time in recent months, says that 'conflict occurs as part of the natural cycle of changing expectations and negotiations between people'; that conflict is 'inevitable' in situations like the one our community is facing.

Our committee has not been immune from this and I feel that I have failed as Chair in the last few months to adequately invest in the wellbeing of the committee. If I remain as Chair, I'll do my best to ensure more 'self-care' takes place. The fun factor has been absent far too often. But then, even the toughest of nuts will crack if enough pressure is applied and perhaps it's a symptom of the burnout so many of us are feeling.

However, if Norman is correct, perhaps the presence of conflict demonstrates a changing of expectations. That we are demanding more of ourselves and each other as citizens – let

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alone of our elected representatives – to tackle the issues that we face, whether they are local, or global such as the climate emergency.

For those standing down, I wish to place on record my thanks for their time, effort and energy, in particular Angela whose diligence as secretary has been great help to the committee. I wish you all the very best in the coming weeks and months. I hope you all remain allies and defenders of the park in whatever capacity you deem appropriate.

Most of us will be au fait with the pumping station and there is little point in me going into detail here.

However, consider also:

- the removal of the basketball hoops
- the rumours about moving the kickabout into the 'spare' tennis courts area (let alone a MUGA going there)
- the recent announcement to levy a £39 p/a charge for even the right to use tennis courts (although there has been no public expression of intent to apply this to Hailey Park's courts....yet)
- the plans for redirecting the Taff Trail cycle track through Hailey Park

It is clear to me that Hailey Park is under assault from inappropriate and excessive development that will permanently change the character of the park and is being proposed wholly undemocratically. I said in my report at last year's AGM that these issues have exposed how unfit for purpose our democratic processes are in Cardiff. No amount of bleating about the 'pioneering' and 'world-beating' nature of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act will change my mind.

I place on record my gratitude and admiration to the residents' association for their efforts and tenacity. No matter what the result, and even if it doesn't feel like it now, the Llandaff North and

Gabalfa community will be stronger for the experience.

Rest assured, there are other community organisations across the city who have been paying close attention to what has been going on and are braced and galvanised for the experience we have gone through.

As a committee we have been busting a gut to develop activities and events for the likes of National Play Day, National Sporting Heritage Day, Mental Health Awareness Day, and going into schools. In May we 'fired the starting pistol' on our plans to celebrate the centenary of Hailey Park opening in 1926 thanks to the benevolence of Claude P. Hailey.

Oh, for a penny for Claude's thoughts today.

Our elected representatives and the local authority – corporately speaking, for there are several officers whom we hold in the highest of regard and to whom we are indebted for their hard work, principally our ranger Gareth Stamp – would do well to remember that they do not own Hailey Park, but rather they hold it in trust on behalf of the community. It is to the people that Claude Hailey gifted the park, not the council. I quote from an email I sent to Cllr Burke some months ago:

“[Our] committee has helped bring new ideas and a renewed sense of purpose and spirit [to the park]; and the membership is growing weekly. So it is extremely frustrating that although we have excellent relationships with individual officers, from a corporate perspective the local authority appears to have an increasing disregard for us”

This disregard continues to grow. For our elected member to criticise plans to privatise access to the tennis courts when investigative journalism broke the story, and last week be applauding the move as ‘investment’ is reprehensible. Equally so, is how the council blamed a person on work experience for the erroneous disposal notice in the paper last summer, only to later propose leasing park facilities...that largely resemble that ad after all. I am reminded of the now infamous Home Office tweet about working with ‘truth twisters’...

To finish on a more positive note some highlights of the past few months, in addition to the community’s spirit and fortitude:

- the membership went past 200 in recent weeks. The data is now ship-shape in an electronic format and fully compliant with data protection requirements. I’d like to thank Paul and Angela for their efforts in this task
- the choir’s appearance in the park at one of the mental health days was a joy
- the sponsored walk along the Penrhys Pilgrimage Way. I hadn’t realised we had such a jewel in the crown of south Wales so close to the park
- the planting community orchard in the meadow

Thank you to Ian and Sam at The Railway for their support for the park via sharing posters, update son Facebook, as a venue for meetings, the plant sale, the quiz and curry and more. They are true assets to the community. Also, thanks to the PCSOs for their support. And apologies for anyone I have overlooked. Lastly, may I pay tribute to a huge supporter of Hailey Park, Dr Colin Morgan, who passed away a couple of months ago. He was thorn in the side of the council and other public bodies, and had a forensic eye for detail and research and thought the world of Hailey Park. He’ll be greatly missed.

The pace of change has presented challenges over the past year to the FoHP committee, with a need for discussion space and priority decision making that remains accessible, equitable, quorate and in line with our Constitution.

Adaptations have needed to be made to the FoHP own committee processes as a result and this has brought much learning.

There is no intention for discussion of this at this AGM. Rather that it can be reflected on, discussed, commented on, amended during the following month and agreed before the next committee meeting in August 2023 where it can be ratified.

As a 2023 AGM agenda item this Position Paper and any resulting changes and decisions made from it can be reviewed ahead of the 2024 AGM.

It has to be acknowledged that FoHP Committee is made up solely of Volunteers with other calls on our time, energy and resources so that attending frequent face to face (f2f) meetings with regard to discussion and decision making is not always possible.

This Position Paper proposals have been developed to provide for Checks and Balances with regard to FoHP aims, goals and actions.

This Paper has not looked to review the FoHP Constitution which is a separate discussion from that contained in the Position Paper.

ELECTION OF FoHP COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:

All officers stood down from Committee:

Many thanks were extended to Angela Perrett, Sarah James, Lindy Clifton and

Siobhan Corria for their service over the past year since they are not standing for re-election.

The following were re-elected:

Russell Todd (Chairperson),

Anita Smith (Secretary),

Paul Rock (Treasurer),

Penny Bowers,

Kate Prosser,

Warm welcome to New Elected Member:

Steph Wilkins

AOB

Sarah James FoHP member requested that a committee member is appointed to liaise with Lindy Clifton in relation to existing planning for the play event in August.

Action- Committee Member to be appointed to the Play Event to assist members of FoHP to proceed.

Russell Todd requested volunteers from the membership to assist with gathering annual subscriptions.

Celia Rees, Ian Roberts and Angela Weekes volunteered

Action- leaflet to be designed for volunteers going door to door.

Volunteer needed to design a leaflet.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:

TBC
