

AGM Meeting Minutes 2019

RAPS AGM

Sunday April 28th 2019 at The Port House, Port Solent

(Refreshments courtesy of Mr Rob Barnett, Marina Life Homes)

Attendance: 49

1. Chair's Welcome

The Chair, John Crooks, welcomed the members and local Councillors John Ferrett, Jo Hooper and Gemma New.

2. Apologies for absence

Penny Mordaunt (MP), Richard and Carole Haigh, Simone Belsey, Chris Gilpin, Helen & David Ewers.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2018 AGM

The Chair asked that the Minutes of last year's AGM, which have been available on the RAPS website for one year, be approved

Proposed: Marian Davies

Seconded: John Tilling

4. Chair's Report

[The full text of the Chair's Report is available below]

5. Treasurer's Report

[Figures for the 2018/19 Financial Year are available below]

Commenting on the figures, Treasurer Angela Britton said that the even healthier balance than last year was being maintained just in case the need arose to challenge issues arising from future developments at Port Solent and to underwrite social events. The accounts had been audited and she asked the meeting to accept them.

Proposed: John Tilling

Seconded: Alison Rundle

6. Membership and the Website

RAPS Webmaster, Chris Clark, reminded the meeting that the website (portsolentresidents.co.uk) has been in existence for six years and serves as the main channel for information between the Committee and the Membership. The website is augmented by RAPS accounts on Twitter, Nextdoor and Facebook (courtesy of Tony Hewitt's Pipe Up Port Solent). A monthly digest, RAPS Bell, is emailed to all members and a printed Newsletter is distributed to all Port Solent households at least once a year. He assumed that this would be ample.

Membership Secretary Malcolm Cronshaw suggested that members with new neighbours should let them know about RAPS and encourage them to join.

In response to a question about the percentage of residents who are RAPS members, Chris Clark said it was currently well over the 10% required to maintain a legitimate association but that the number of households in Port Solent that are on short lets or that are second homes means that the number of members at any time is unlikely to rise substantially and could never be 100%.

7 Election of Auditors

Pat Harvey was duly re-elected.

8 Election of Officers and Committee Members

John Crooks said that due to health reasons and no longer being a Port Solent resident he was standing down as Chair. He asked for more volunteers to join the Committee and suggested that anyone interested could attend a Committee meeting provisionally or approach one of the Committee after the meeting. He read out the list of members standing for election or re-election this year:

Chair Chris Clark
Treasurer Angela Britton
Webmaster Helen Cronshaw
Membership Malcolm Cronshaw
Committee member Tony Hewitt

The meeting supported these nominations, proposed by John Jeffreys and seconded by Tina Boniface.

9 Motorway Noise

Olivia Firth, Chair of the RAPS sub-committee on Motorway Noise read her report.

“As most of you already know, it looks as though the long haul towards getting a Noise Barrier for Port Solent is nearing a successful conclusion. Last November, John Henderson from Highways England wrote to our MP, Penny Mordaunt, officially to advise that Highways England had ‘approved the decision to proceed with the noise barriers’ and that ‘the scheme is now progressing to creating the detailed design for the noise barriers and subject to final sign off of the design, the scheme will be delivered in the 2019/2020 financial year.’

I recently contacted Greg Stone, the Highways England Deputy Route Sponsor, Solent to Midlands, to ask if there were any developments I could report to you at our AGM. He replied that they have completed additional surveys and are designing the barrier. There would be another key meeting on 23 April after which he might have further news. I have not yet heard from him again but as soon as I do, you will be informed in the RAPS newsletter.

So it looks as if the project is on track and we should see the work begin during this financial year. Many thanks are due to everyone who has helped over many years to insist that a noise barrier is necessary and must be built, in particular Phil Dickinson who led the Noise Group for years, our local councillors, who have maintained their interest in this matter and our MP, Penny Mordaunt, who led the final ‘push’ to get the project over the starting line last year.”

The report was applauded. Jean and John Jeffreys said that it was important to ensure that the trees along Port Way are protected when building the barrier as POSOL were not expected to act on their behalf. Alison Rundle said that the trees were not POSOL’s responsibility. Olivia agreed to ask Highways about this.

10 Neighbourhood Planning and Country Park

Chris Clark reported on meetings with Jim Dennis about the Country Park and the Committee's submissions to the consultations from Portsmouth City Council in March about West Tipner development and Evidence Studies associated with the Portsmouth Plan. He said that there had been little in either consultation to cause concern and there had been minimal feedback from the members.

About the Country Park, Chris could only reiterate what was in the RAPS Spring Newsletter as Jim Dennis had not yet reported back on the traffic surveys carried out in October last year and over the Easter weekend. Chris said it was pleasing to see Veolia's progress with planting (albeit with smaller saplings than we were told to expect) but that pending handover to the Council and sign-off by the Environment Agency, the park remained a building site requiring permission from Veolia to enter. It was expected to open to the public in the summer of 2020.

Chris invited questions about the Country Park. Several comments were made about traffic volumes along Port Way and the difficulty at times for drivers living on roads that enter onto it. There was some discussion about the proposed bridge link, its purpose and funding. Councillor Ferrett said that the Park and bridge link were part of the City Deal package: the Park was originally planned to be open in 2014; the Deal includes provision for raising investment to fund infrastructure, such as the bridge, but little investment has been forthcoming.

Chris returned to the consultation exercises. He had eavesdropped on conversations at the exhibition about West Tipner held at Port Solent in March and believed that residents were largely supportive of the development and the prospect of improvements to the look of the area and increased employment opportunities. This was therefore the basis for our submission.

Among the many Evidence Studies the Committee singled out Traffic, Travellers and Housing. The A27 junction with Port Way is singled out as a hot spot: our submission asks the Council to include the Country Park as a development likely to impact further on the junction. We pointed out that there is a risk that the promotion of the main car park at Port Solent as a place for mobile homes to stay overnight before catching ferries is abused by travellers. On housing, Chris summarised the text of our submission:

"RAPS notes that the amount of new homes indicated for building here during the next ten years has been reduced to between 150 and 500, although even a 150-dwelling footprint equates to a development twice the size of The Anchorage, near to which, we are led to believe, it could be sited. The position of Premier is all-important to this: at the drop-in session on March 25th it was claimed that Premier could be interested in such a development at the expense of marina facilities (e.g. winter parking for boats) but any responses from Premier to RAPS questions about their intentions have been denials. A better shared understanding about "who decides who decides" is needed when it comes to land availability at Port Solent. Needless to say, anything that stands to diminish Port Solent's ability to operate as a working marina or its character will be opposed by RAPS. The facility to keep a boat ashore during the winter is a fundamental requirement for a marina."

Chris concluded by saying that none of these agencies can be relied upon to provide running commentaries to RAPS. We are obliged to keep asking questions.

John Wood said that Council indecision and inadequate funding coupled with the vagueness around Port Solent ownership were things that do not change and he said that the Committee had been doing a good job keeping tabs: that is all we can do.

There was some discussion about reinstating a bus route to Port Solent. Councillor Hooper said that many residents had asked her about this and that Port Solent businesses struggled to recruit on account of the lack of public transport. Heather Briggs said she might have to move if this continued. Councillor Ferrett said that all buses were run by private companies subsidised by the Council and that although the Council had recently declared a climate emergency, which meant they supported better public transport, there was no money for new routes.

11 Rainbow Run

Tony Hewitt reported on a number of collaborative initiatives involving local businesses and events that can be useful to raising money for good causes. There had been two charity runs around Port Solent in 2018 and 2019 that had raised £2000 and £1068 respectively for the Rainbow Centre. He had also given support to the charitable aims of Grandads of the Atlantic, whose boat has been based at Port Solent, and the Great South Run. This year he will be seeking to support the Around & Around-Lively Lady training project and the Great South Run again. The meeting applauded.

12 Social Events – Past and Future

John Crooks reminded members that the Committee has funds to support and promote any additional ideas for social events. Heather Briggs said that a Bridge Club could be re-established.

13 Any Other business

Jean Jeffreys thanked the Committee for an expeditious meeting.

Angela Britton asked for a vote of thanks to retiring chair John Crooks and presented him with a gift of champagne and four glasses. In reply, John quoted his mother, “Oh, you shouldn’t have” and suggested to anyone in the audience who might volunteer to join the RAPS Committee that one day they could also be receiving a thank-you gift for years of serving as Chair. He closed the meeting at 12:18