

# **Minutes of VICTORIA ROAD GROUP MEETING**

## **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2014, 5.30pm at Sam and Ali's (56)**

**Attendance:** Sam Clarke (Chair), Ali Clarke, Jonathan and Sally Bromley, Anna Buchanan (Treasurer), Gordon Buchanan, Paul and Mary Lewis, Andrew Ritchie  
Jonathan took the minutes.

### **1 Apologies**

Received from Barbara Harriss-White, Mick and Philippa O'Connor, Bill and Diana Dutton (who will be away for at least 3 years), Liz Taggart, John and Manda Clarke.

### **2 Minutes of previous meeting (16 June 2014) and matters arising**

The minutes were approved unopposed.

Matters arising were all to be handled in subsequent agenda items.

### **3 Review of summer tea party (13 July 2014)**

It was generally agreed that this had gone well. There was concern at our limited success in reaching out to families with younger children. This was felt to be a long-term issue, but a few specific points were noted:

- Inevitably in the summer some children would be away or enjoying a day out.
- A tea party is not necessarily seen to be a widely-age-inclusive event.
- Perhaps we could set up a play-tent for a future event.

It was noted that there was not an excessive amount of food left over at the end.

Sam asked how we should solicit offers of a garden for next year. It was understood that Mary McKnight might be willing to host it; Paul Lewis agreed to approach her about it

**Action: Paul**

Andrew also provisionally offered his garden for next year's event.

### **4 Safari Supper**

Sam, Ali, Jonathan and Sally had held a planning meeting, and a leaflet had been circulated in July. To date, 17 people had committed to taking part (probably 9 groups); this was seen to be the bare minimum that would be viable, and another effort should be made to encourage others to participate.

Sam agreed to take responsibility for preparing and circulating a reminder, setting a deadline of mid-day on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September for responses so that the same small group could meet again, probably on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>, to complete the final plans.

**Action: Sam**

## 5 Other events in 2014

### 5.1 Carol singing and Christmas party

It was agreed to hold this event on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December. Sam and Ali kindly offered to host the party. The details should be discussed at a future meeting.

**Action: agenda item**

### 5.2 Media Madness (book and media swap)

Paul and Mary offered to host this event on either 1<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> November. Details to be discussed at the next meeting.

**Action: agenda item**

Discussion of this item prompted a review of current finances. Anna noted that we have a total of £419 in cash and the bank account. The only known upcoming cost before the Christmas party was our public liability insurance (approximately £120) which falls due in October. Consequently there is no urgent need to raise further funds.

It was agreed that we have enough future events planned.

## 6 Successor for the Chair

Sam noted that he had been in post as Chair for 15 months and, although he was willing to continue, it was better for the group for no one person to spend too long in this position. The workload was typically 5 or 6 meetings per year, but the Chair also carries a significant part of the responsibility of keeping the group running. After some discussion Paul kindly agreed to take over. Jonathan would be willing to serve from the beginning of 2015 if work commitments permit.

Paul's offer was gratefully accepted unopposed.

## 7 AOB

### 7.1 Cutteslowe Community Centre

Paul noted that the Community Centre found itself in a difficult financial position and asked whether it was appropriate for VRG to support it in some way. In a wide-ranging discussion several specific suggestions were made:

- A single cash injection may be less useful to the Centre than a secure ongoing source of funding.
- VRG could support the Centre by hiring it for events (although it was believed that utilization of the space for such events was already quite high).
- It could be appropriate for VRG or its members to be proactive in spreading awareness of the Centre's work and its current financial difficulties. This awareness raising might be more important to the Centre than the limited fundraising we would be able to accomplish.
- VRG (or individuals) could take a slot at the United Reformed Church's summer Saturday morning coffee event to raise funds for the Centre.

- It would be possible to set up a dedicated fundraising event (perhaps based around a plant sale) in collaboration with the existing 7 Roads Group.
- Ali noted that we are uncomfortable at mixing fundraising with VRG's traditional activities, and this position received general support. If we were to treat this as an exceptional case, we would need to have a clearly thought-out rationale. Sarah Scheele (20 Portland Road) is involved both with 7 Roads Group and Cutteslowe Community Centre, and it could be useful to speak with her about such matters.

Throughout the discussion there was an awareness that VRG is fundamentally aimed at building relationships among neighbours, and we have neither precedent nor appetite for fund-raising or campaigning on behalf of any external body – but there was also concern that Cutteslowe Community Centre serves pressing social needs in an area that is extremely close to ours, and thus is deserving of our attention. The resulting “them and us” challenge is uncomfortable for many of us, and it would be good to consider what we could do without jeopardising VRG's aims.

It was agreed to revisit this issue at the next meeting.

**Action: agenda item**

## ***7.2 Welcome packs***

Manda had asked for information on any incoming new residents so she can provide welcome packs. The meeting identified the following addresses as having recent or upcoming moves: 22, 24, 41, 55, 61, 65, 102.

Manda is to hand over responsibility for welcome packs to Liz Taggart. Sam agreed to follow up, particularly to check whether we are fully up to date with this, and whether the welcome pack itself has been updated as necessary.

**Action: Sam**

## ***7.3 Diary***

Sally asked the meeting to note the Parkinsons UK Christmas concert to be held in St Michael's Church on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

## **8 Date of next meeting**

8.00pm, Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at No.59 (Sally).

## **9 Thanks and adjournment**

Sam was thanked for his services as Chair over the preceding 15 months.

Ali and Sam were thanked for their hospitality.

The meeting adjourned at 7.10pm.