

Notes (not minutes) of VCRA General Meeting 23/3/2017

At the start of the meeting a minute silence was held in the memory of Mary Ramgoolam who had been an active member of VCRA and had passed away this year.

The minutes of 2016 meeting were agreed.

1. CPZ survey: A good response had been received by VCRA's survey. The majority of those who had replied were in favour of a parking zone. 49 responses had been received, out of which 12 had said they did not want the zone, 5 were non-committal and the rest in favour. A council officer was present at the meeting and explained how the process would work going forward. The council would have to first carry out its own survey. Concerns were raised about community organisations and churches parking, issues with parking on the residential streets by the Volvo business, and how long some people spent trying to find a parking space when they returned home. The Council would begin the process for getting the zone now, it would take one year, if successful inevitably there would be costs for parking for residents. This will include residents permits and visitors permits.

Related issues were discussed around road closures, that the 20mph speed limit was not enforced.

A show of hands indicated a continued overwhelming majority wanted the CPZ.

2 Building/Planning:

There was a general discussion about plans for building – both private and council – in the general area. There were concerns that once permission was given for a type of extension to a property for domestic residence, it could be changed to another type of property, such as a house of multiple occupation for renting out. There seemed to be little checking on whether the application, as granted, was in fact being implemented as opposed to something else.

A Council official who attended to answer on this issue indicated that planning laws had changed to make it easier to build for housing purposes, and once an application had been approved it was possible to make retrospective applications for permission to change use.

The fact that the area had a mixed type of housing, but that some of it was old housing that had existing characteristics that should be protected was raised.

The Council officer indicated that any planning permissions were posted and could be objected to. VCRA members indicated that the process was largely hidden and one needed to have time and knowledge of how to get through the various systems in order to lodge a proper objection.

It was agreed there were also issues about maintenance of highway verges.

3 Rubbish/litter

General issues raised about Veolia not collecting when they should. Also the end of Vartry Rd near Stamford Hill where there was no room for bins, and a large number of residents. As a result bins that were there were constantly overflowing, unsightly, in the way of people

walking by and smelly. Either Veolia should empty more often or find a solution for people who lived in the properties affected so that they could dispose of their rubbish properly.

It was noted that many residents left their bins out on the pavement all the time even though they had a front garden. The houses without a front garden had no choice, however if people could put their bins in their front gardens it would allow people to use the pavement without having to brush against bins or have to step out onto the road.

Street cleaning was supposed to be once a week.

Residents were reminded to contact Veolia for any missed or problem rubbish collections.

The problem of dumping rubbish was discussed. It is a particular problem in certain areas such as corners of roads off Vartry Road. If you report it to Veolia they were good at picking it up. It was difficult to enforce this because it was usually done in the night when no one was around and in any event challenging someone doing this could be dangerous. So it was hard to find the perpetrators. If they were found they were fined.

Paighton Park was often full of litter and the parks department never seemed to come and clear. This often led to safety issues, as the litter could include unsanitary things or dangerous ones such as knives. The Councillors present agreed to take all these issues back to the council.