



WELCOMES & UPLANDS ROAD ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON TUESDAY 3RD MAY 2022 at 7.30 pm AT KENLEY MEMORIAL HALL

Chairman's Opening Remarks

The first live meeting since 2019 opened at 7.40pm and the few residents in attendance (16) welcomed.

It has been a difficult couple of years due to the Covid restrictions and the ever present possibility of infection. Hopefully everyone has emerged unscathed and is now enjoying a return to normality.

You may have read in the latest Newsletter that the Secretary is stepping back from his duties as full time Secretary as he reaches a milestone birthday with the prospect of getting his golf handicap down and spending more time with his wife, Gay, who has stoically endured his dedication to the mammoth WURA workload. When he joined WURA some 13 years ago none of us foresaw the tsunami that was to envelop us all, having to battle with developers and the Council Planning Committee which has turned the lower part of Welcomes Road into a virtual building site which endures to this day and almost certainly into the next few years. It is mainly thanks to Richard's efforts that we have a system whereby as the recognised 'street authority and managers' developers have not only to pay an appropriate levy for the use of our roads but also must sign a legally binding agreement setting out the protocol for running the construction sites. In some cases this has been problematic with enforcement taking up much Secretarial time. So on behalf of the Committee and I am sure all our residents I thank Richard wholeheartedly for his efforts, recognising that without him we would not be where we are today in respect of the level of funding we have accumulated to eventually resurface all our roads to a high standard whilst trying to safeguard our pleasant surroundings. As a token of our gratitude Richard graciously accepted some theatre tokens and vouchers for dinner for two at the Ritz which it is assumed would include Gay!!!

Our 2 Conservative Councillor candidates, Ola Kolade and Gayle Gander, were expected to join the meeting at about 8.15pm for a Q and A session and did in fact do so.

Apologies for Absence

Peter Runacres, Sally & Geoffrey Banister, Rachel Dickson and Simon Hunter

In attendance

Committee: Colin Brown (Chairman), Richard Russell (Secretary- outgoing), Robin Mc Callum (Hon. Secretary designate), Janice Scully (Treasurer), Michael Lott (Uplands Road Representative), Stuart Prior (Lower WR representative)

2015	2015	2016	2016	2017	2017	2018	2018	2019	2019	2022	2022
13	9	18	14	20	16	27	19	32	26	17	14
Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses

The turnout was back to 2015/16 levels but quorate. A quorum is 10 voting members (paid up). A warm welcome to the new occupants/owners who moved to the area since the last virtual AGM in May 2021. These include the owners and occupiers of the flats at, 32 and 57WR, 17WR, 59WR, 67WR, 68WR, 92WR, 96WR, 151aWR, 4UR, 24UR, 2CR. The flats at 36WR were mostly sold in the previous year.

In the coming year membership is likely to rise to 274 (225 in 2017) from the sale of all the flats at 32, 36, 42 and 57 Welcomes Road and 35 Uplands Road. Membership in excess of 300 is almost certain by year 2027 as there are more planning applications already approved and awaiting construction both in Welcomes Road and Kearton Close.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 14th May 2021 were adopted unanimously as an accurate record. They were belatedly posted on the web site.

Matters Arising

Virtually all the matters raised on the 2021 minutes have been dealt with but if you have any queries please email welcomesanduplandsroads@gmail.com with details.

Chairman's Report 2022

A lot of Committee time has been taken up dealing with developers and their builders particularly in respect of ever increasing numbers of HGV movements and the day to day stress and intrusion on the day to lives of residents in the lower end of Welcomes Road. Last year the Committee commissioned London Surfacing Ltd to resurface Welcomes Road from Hayes Lane to Uplands Road. With about £200k in the bank earning a pittance and tarmac costs rising exponentially at a rate of around 7% per annum it does not take an Einstein to see the need to spend some of the road fund on road resurfacing. By using a 40mm overlay of stone mastic asphalt (SMA) we expect many years of minimal maintenance. It also allows residents to see what the whole road will look like eventually.

It is somewhat ironic that it is developer activity that is generating the income to enable us to use high quality materials like SMA which according to Wikipedia provides 'a deformation-resistant, durable surfacing material, suitable for heavily trafficked roads'. There are concerns that rising costs for developers as well as for potential buyers will dampen the market. The Secretary has produced a spreadsheet that demonstrates that even with the most pessimistic assumptions there is a reasonable chance that sufficient funding will become available to complete the road surfacing programme for both roads. An essential element in the cash flow projection is the payment of the basic road levy by residents and the acceptance of the 10% rise in the levy is necessary to protect WURA from the rising cost of tarmac. The increase is still only equivalent to the price of ½ a pint of beer a week and the levy is substantially less than most other Road Associations charge, one of which not far from here, for example, charges £160 per car per annum up to 2 cars.

Pothole repairs are at a minimum thanks mainly to mild winters. The trench for the UKPN power cable to No 10 Welcomes Road will be resurfaced on Saturday 14th May 2022 when the road will be shut at that end except for pedestrians. We are meeting the site manager for 42 Welcomes Road to discuss the kerbside repair needed outside the gate there.

The road is swept 2 or 3 times a year by the Tandridge District Council contractors as our own Council has refused to do the work even if paid for.

With the resignation of the Secretary there is a need to ensure succession and WURA's survival by recruiting new blood onto the Committee. Richard Kensett who recently moved to Uplands Road kindly agreed to serve but for work and family commitments had to withdraw. In addition there are 2 current members of the Committee who do not see themselves continuing on the Committee much longer. Without a full time Secretary and the lack of interest in joining the Committee the continuation of WURA is in serious doubt. Hence the introduction of a new paragraph in the Constitution being tabled by the Secretary later in this meeting, dealing with the possible dissolution of the Association.

The employment of a management company is likely to be excessively expensive and would require a substantial hike in the road levy to pay for their services.

Hopefully in the course of the next 5 years the current development activity will decrease significantly reducing the workload for WURA.

Given the precarious situation I have already emailed Steve Iles, Director of Public Realm who has Mark Averil, Head of Highways, reporting to him asking a hypothetical question namely, *if WURA disbanded with both roads resurfaced to a high standard would the Council adopt them- unlikely but if you don't ask you don't get!* Hopefully it will not come to this but we have to prepare for every eventuality.

With immediate effect the Committee will concentrate entirely on matters pertaining to road matters and I would ask that residents regularly access the web site www.wura.org.uk and go to 'Latest News' on the home page to keep abreast of road works and so forth. They should also refer to the latest Newsletter back page for useful contacts. It is also recommended that if you have a smart phone you download the 'Love clean streets' app and note that for construction site issues you need to go to <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/noise-pollution-and-air-quality/noise/construction-sites>.

The WURA web site is managed by a resident in Welcomes Road who also has been handling objections to planning applications and appeals to the Planning Inspectorate.

I will immediately assume responsibility for handling email traffic and will from time to time request assistance from Richard in respect of dealing with utility companies and consents to dig, agreements with developers and anything else of importance. Our hardworking Treasurer, Jan Scully, will continue to manage WURA finances and collection of road levies tasks which she has been carrying out very efficiently. The bank signatories are now Colin Brown, Chairman, Robin McCallum, Hon. Secretary and Janice Scully, Treasurer.

Secretary report

Statistics web site visits

WURA web site has been run by Marion McKelvie since 20th September 2019 and will continue to be. Users 1344, Sessions 1669, April to March 2021/2. Average session about 2 minutes. Sessions represent the number of pages hit by a visiting user.

Emails received c1400 via Gmail plus 180 via AOL (from April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

The outgoing Secretary introduced the changes proposed to the Constitution in the *annexed* document. The main changes concern the granting of powers to the Committee to execute any overall medium to long term plan for resurfacing of the two roads managed by the Association accepted in principle at an AGM, the insertion of a new paragraph setting out how to dissolve the Association and power to outsource work on a remunerated basis in line with a budget approved at an AGM.

The adoption of the revised Constitution was proposed by Pat Feeney, 98 Welcomes Road and seconded by Mike Belliere, 134 Welcomes Road without dissent.

In regard to a possible collapse of the Association a member has undertaken to get details of the management contract entered into by the Webb Estate and an indication of the cost. This would enable the Committee to calculate the rise in the rate of road levy required to pay for professional management. (*it was later established that the cost was prohibitive and the Webb Estate is still managed by the residents*)

Treasurers Report for 2019/2020

The 2021/22 accounts have been audited by Gary Lowe and were 'tabled' with these minutes along with the budget for 2022 to 2023.

The total cash reserves (the road fund) held on 31st March 2022 amounted to £137,650 (£153,633). This is after spending approximately £60,000 on the resurfacing of Welcomes Road from Hayes Lane to Uplands Road. By late May 2022 the road fund had risen to £152,954 as members' road levies start to flow in. The developer at 35 Uplands Road is making arrangements to pay £8,250 in respect of 3 more town houses on this site.

Unpaid levies continue to run at about 10% of levy revenue. All overdue road levy debt is chased regularly and any accumulated arrears usually collected on sale of the relative property in terms of Law Society form TA6 which requires owners to declare neighbourhood disputes including debts attaching to the property. Some of the non payers are covenanted to pay a road levy in their title deeds.

The rise in the levy was 10% from April 2022 rather than 20%, the first change for 4 years. Ordinary road levy revenue from members is expected to reach somewhere between £24,000 to £26,000 depending on progress with completing developments. There are construction sites at 10 and 42 Welcomes Road and 9 (Private member) and 35 Uplands Road with a number of other ongoing private projects for which WURA seeks compensation for the extra HGV construction traffic these generate.

The audited accounts for 2021/22 were proposed by Robin McCallum and seconded by Mike Lott and unanimously adopted by the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Gary Lowe for once again auditing the accounts on a pro bono basis and the meeting voted expenditure of approximately £90 to purchase wine for Mr and Mrs Lowe's wine cellar.

Mr Lowe was re-elected unanimously as our auditor

Cash flow projection from 31st March 2022 to March 2026

This is based on 2 scenarios.

1. Optimistic. Income projected of £575,000. Includes all known developments whether completed, in progress or in the pipeline and ordinary road levy
2. Pessimistic. Income of £286,000
3. Expenditure including cost of completing the resurfacing of both roads with an overlay of 40mm SMA producing a surplus of £203,000 in scenario 1 or a deficit of £85,000 in scenario 2. To cover S2 a special road levy of about £300 per household would be required. Every effort will be made to avoid this situation arising in need by modifying the type of re-surfacing used.

Re- election of Committee 2021/22

If any members reading this are unhappy with the current arrangements for the Committee, wish to join the Committee or have any other comments please let the Chairman know.

Election of Committee 2022/23

The following offered themselves for re-election and were unanimously elected by the meeting :-

Chairman: Colin Brown and bank signatory

Secretary: Robin McCallum (Committee Member) offered himself for election as Honorary Secretary, to act as a signatory for legal documents and the bank account (already in place for the latter).

Proposed by Colin Brown Seconded by Stuart Prior

Treasurer: Janice Scully and bank signatory

Committee members:

Mike Lott and Stuart Prior

Resignations:

Richard Russell is standing down as full time Secretary and Committee member wef 3rd May 2022 but will continue to support the Road Committee and the Hon Secretary on a remunerated basis until such time as a full time replacement 'Executive' Secretary is found.

AOB

Mike Lott UR expressed his grave concerns about the future of WURA with no one new coming forward to take over from retiring Committee members who cannot be expected to serve indefinitely. No response to previous pleas for new members or a replacement full time Secretary.

Mark Diviani MHC felt we were at a tipping point in the absence of anyone willing to step up and join the Committee. To save WURA a succession plan is needed asap.

Dosan Vucinic WR would be willing to help distribute new letter addressed to individuals explaining that we are at a tipping point without new Committee members. He also undertook to find out what arrangements had been made at the Webb Estate for outsourcing management and the likely cost to members. *(Since done)*

Junia Cleary WR. There is a problem in that the job of full time Secretary is too onerous for one person and the various tasks need to be allocated more widely.

Mike Belliere WR. Suggested an increase in the remuneration of the Secretarial job might generate some interest in the job.

Mark Diviani MHC. Suggested splitting the work load 'geographically' and agreeing on who should negotiate with developers on behalf of WURA (as the Street Authority/Road Managers) Chairman. These points will be raised and discussed in Committee.

Local Councillors and candidates for local elections on 5th May 2022 Ola Kolade (standing for re-election) and Gayle Gander (new candidate).

A Question and Answer session took place during the meeting at about 20.15 hours

Ola explained that he had replaced Steve O'Connell and was standing for re-election on 5th May. He had written some 25 objections to various planning applications which involved over development of the relative plot. The bankruptcy of the Council was making it very difficult to get anything done.

Kendra were following up on the Kenley Good Growth Fund and the proposed traffic alterations involved. *Kendra are giving the Council some time to carry out their own analysis of the project and hope that the Council will find a way to reinstate many of the key road safety items that have been deleted.*

Ola has met many residents though not had much involvement with WURA but will visit the road to see our problems first hand.

Gayle introduced herself as a regular dog walker on Kenley Airfield and is passionate about preserving Kenley from the so far outrageous overdevelopment of the area. There are pockets of excellence in the Council but for the most part they are unresponsive particularly at executive level. Love Clean Streets for example are highly responsive to reports using their app. At a lower level there is no customer service as exemplified by the reports in the media on the state of some Council flats.

There was much general discussion and the main points that emerged were in no particular order;-

- Ola made a good presentation at recent Kendra AGM
- No one accountable at the Council for mismanagement including poor financial decisions
- Member living in WR now faced with construction sites on both sides of her property with prospect of no control or oversight of construction sites by the Council.
- Too many construction sites in Borough to control properly
- No stop notices ever served on developers or proper protection of trees with TPOs
- As long as Labour in power at the Council there was never any interest in this part of the Borough. Getting a Conservative Mayor is vital (but not assured of course) to our interests
- There was mention of the Council's flawed investment in the Colonnades
- Who is actually investigating the huge financial losses at the Council and prosecuting culprits?
- Are we at the stage of the Council being put in special measures...apparently not.

Emergency funding from central government is being managed by Grant Thornton, Accountants. *Councils have a duty to manage taxpayers' money responsibly and it is right that they are held to account where they are found to have failed to do so. The review team, led by Chris Wood, found "significant failings in the leadership and management" at Croydon Council which had led to failures in identifying, escalating and addressing financial risk. The report highlighted the council's poor track record in managing budgets, poorly managed commercial ventures and low levels of reserves which caused significant issues. (Extract from the report to relative Ministry)*

- As a result of the Council's bankruptcy and the intervention of central government there have been cuts in various services with damaging results for some constituents
- Ola- Hamida Ali is doing her best
- Ola- my top priorities pedestrians and planning
- Ola- housing development for Kenley and Coulsdon way ahead of target..needs to stop now
- Conservative Mayor will amend or remove SPD2
- Mr Khan, London Mayor gave freehand to Croydon Council..no restraint on Council exercised by Central Government.
- *Both the [Public Accounts](#) (PDF) and [Housing, Communities and Local Government](#) Committees have sought greater clarity on how the target of 300,000 housing units a year will be met and why this number was chosen.*
- Inspectorate allowed appeals on 46 and 50 Welcomes Road on basis overriding policy
- Ola ..if Jason Perry elected as Mayor (*duly elected*) he will reverse local plan and amend it
- Lack of planning enforcement officers at Council
- Split Borough between North (L) and South (C) with some swing voters in middle
- Any new Cabinet made up of Ward Cllrs will be drawn from all parties to try to bring the Borough together more than has been the case in the past
- Non performing Mayor can be voted out
- Oversupply of expensive flats across the Borough unlikely to solve housing crisis
- Hedges overhanging road....report to Council not WURA.
- Ola promised to urgently address the issue of creation of a safe and smooth pathway along the edge of Welcomes Road from Zig Zag Road to Kenley Lane using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds particularly in view of the number of construction sites (from which CIL derived) on this stretch of road probably lasting for the next 5 years. This stretch of road will then have suffered 10 years of misery.
- Eventually include Welcomes Road in the Kenley Transport plan for extending the safe pathway the length of Welcomes Road which is a designated footpath using some of the CIL the developers in Welcomes Road have paid to the Council.

Closure of Committee/virtual General Meeting:

The meeting closed at about 21.30 hrs with the Chairman thanking the few who attended the meeting for their attendance and input and also the Committee for their support during the year