

Friends of High Town (FoHT): Minutes: 14.10.14

1. Attendees

Leslie/Lesley (High Town Methodist Church), Lyn Bliss, Peter Brooks, Russell Cartwright, Saida el Moujahid, Chris Grabham, Kimberley Greig, PCSO Mohammed Hasif, Ryad Khodabocus, David Landau, Cllr Andy Malcolm, Fiona Morton, Joan Samuel, Cllr Roxanna Whittaker, Lisa Wright, Dan Warwick, Jeremy Williams

2. Apologies

Simon Barrow, Annie Bygrave, Sue Lake, Marie-Louise Lowcock, Pete Savage, Linda Farrell.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Have been sent out today. DL apologised for the delay owing to ML having family problem which prevented her from completing them. Please forward any comments/amendments to DL

4. High Town Team Meeting – DL, CW & AM

High Town Gateway project – Caroline Wallace talked more about the plans for the gateway, clarified the proposed location (in the area between the small takeaway shop and Station house but angled to face up High Town Road).

The artists involved in the actual creation of the gateway are: Jonathan Barnbrook (<http://www.barnbrook.net>) and Francis Martin, a local artist craftsman, and experienced ironworker

CW clarified that the items that will be features in the pillars are hat blocks and that the ironwork is likely to be painted green (possibly bottle or sage) w/ gold trim. She said it is difficult to avoid pastiche whilst reflecting the historical character of the area but hopes that the design as finally realised will be something that we can love. Public consultation was done at the High Town Festival as well as by having the plans on display in the old NoOAH shop for several weeks, allowing input from local people.

The model will be displayed in the window at High Hats, please come in and have a look

JS expressed that her concern had been at them creating a new gateway for an area which is undergoing a great deal of change might give the Gateway an odd appearance with future development, CW reassured that LBC are focussing on the area as a conservation area (input from the HTT) so it is likely that the basic elements of the victorian style will remain.

LB expressed concern that it didn't go across the street but CW reminded us of the limits of the project budget and the logistics/safety issues raised by various LBC departments.

DL asked what scope there was for using the font elsewhere in High Town – CW will ask Barnbrook (and mentioned Barnbrook's plan for a Luton font)

FM asked to be reminded what was happening to 'The Blocker's Seaside' (aka bronze hats on sticks) – they need to hold off whilst the development work is being carried out and til LBC know what is happening there but AM reassured us that it is still on the 'To Do' list of the HTT

Next steps – CW will see what planning say (LBC depts staff positive but the committee can be an unknown quantity)

Welbeck Square design cost increase

The plans have been revisited to bring the costs nearer to the £20,000, instead of the possible £60,000 discussed at the meeting last month.

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- **MOVE THE BINS BACK TO CREATE MORE SPACE ON THE SITE**
continue the grey tegula paving from the pavement to go down the sides of Welbeck Square
pre-cast concrete edging to be a divider between the red sets and the grey tegula
bright white concrete planters (cheaper than the ones in the original proposal)
- **WOODEN BENCHES**

Trees – SB's advice on edible fruiting trees fed in to Volker Highways

A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would be put in place to prevent people parking in the area, this will take at least 3-4 months to begin as there is a backlog of highways decisions.

ACTION: DL WILL EMAIL OUT PICTURES FOR COMMENT/OBJECTIONS/APPROVAL.

High Town Christmas event

Steve Whiting (of The Knockouts band and Clod Magazine) is organising their annual craft fair at the Scandinavia Café on Sunday 30th November.

This is being developed into a larger High Town event, and will include

Christmas carollers on the street, followed by carols in the Bricklayer's Arms pub, High Town Road

Irish Pipe band will come through at 12:30pm

Santa's Grotto – Marjorie's Café, High Town Road

Regular soul, funk and reggae DJ event – The Freeholder, High Town Road

Studio opening – Greenbank Music Village, Cobden Street

6. HIGH TOWN FESTIVAL MEETING: DL

A ROAD CLOSURE IS BEING APPLIED AND THE FEE WAIVED. THIS WAS GREETED BY A MAJORITY CHEER. WE DON'T ANTICIPATE ANY PROBLEMS BUT WE MUST WAIT AND SEE.

The following organisations or acts are confirmed:

- **SING LUTON**
Capoeira
Forte Voices
- **KONNI DEPPE (LOCAL JAZZ SINGER), THE KNOCKOUTS**
Cantores & LYJO (Luton Youth Jazz Orchestra) have expressed an interest
Machacha & Sam (musicians)
The school has confirmed that it will be involved.

7. HIGHWAYS – TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES - DL

PB AND DL HAVE RECEIVED A REPLY FROM LBC HIGHWAYS ABOUT TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES AT OLD BEDFORD ROAD/NORTH STREET JUNCTION, WHICH THE GROUP HAD AGREED WAS DANGEROUS FOR PEDESTRIANS.

Highways will be waiting to take action until the new financial year (as per previous minutes) (so April)

The Highways team have added the following roads to their list of roads to be surveyed:

- CLARENDON ROAD, DUDLEY STREET, HIGH TOWN ROAD
- FREDERICK STREET PASSAGE & MUSSON'S PATH – IS CURRENTLY STILL 30 MPH AND IT'S PLANNED TO REDUCE IT SO STATUTORY CONSULTATION DUE TO START.
- WENLOCK STREET – HAS BEEN SURVEYED ALREADY AND GENERALLY THE 20 MPH LIMIT IS OBSERVED SO THEY WILL BE ADDING NO FURTHER SIGNAGE.

Kingston Road – is already having a survey done, owing to an earlier complaint

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH RAISED BY THE ROAD SAFETY TEAM – VOLUNTEERS TRAINED BY POLICE TO SURVEY TRAFFIC AND THE POLICE SEND OUT WARNING LETTERS.

Lisa – who has experience of the scheme through her job with Central Beds, did say that there had been difficulties of community conflict (1 confirmed occasion reported) DL to send out information for members to consider

LB proposed that 'Drivers Slow for Pedestrians' should be put on the Havelock Road end of Musson's path. She will follow this up.

8. Community worker – DL & KG

KIM GREIG WHO MANAGES THE 'NEAR NEIGHBOUR' FUND – FROM NIAMIAH – THEY PLAN TO FUND, DEVELOP & EMBED 3 COMMUNITY WORKERS IN THREE COMMUNITIES IN LUTON: HIGH TOWN, DALLOW AND SAINTS/BISCOT

Each worker will be based with host organisations. In High Town, the Methodist Church, Friends of High Town, Hope Church have volunteered along with Heather James from LBC

The purpose of the funding is for community workers to work together with faith and non-faith groups, to bring them together to work on issues. This is a community cohesion measure.

IT will be 1 year part-time, possibly with a 1 to 3 year extension and with a view to building sustainability of the project.

Advertisements to apply to go out locally and nationally and Jan/Feb will be the recruiting date.

JS suggested other local groups which might be good to get on board either at this stage or when the project starts: 7th Day Adventist church, North Street, the Sufi centre on Havelock Road. Other people suggested the mosque on Dudley Street.

9. ON-STREET SEX TRADE MEETING – DL

DL ATTENDED THIS MEETING AND REPORTED THE FOLLOWING:

- POLICE PRESENCE IN THE AREA HAS ACTUALLY HAD A DEMONSTRABLE EFFECT ON CRIME GENERALLY
The group that did the petition the other year said that there had been initial success and it had tailed off - attendees were reminded that this is a 5 year plan
Laura Chalmers (representing SoLUTions) said they will go away and look the following things:
look at levels of reporting (police can only act on crimes they know about)
- WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE TO TAKE TOUGHER MEASURES ON THE WOMEN – I.E. NOT JUST TREAT THE ISSUES BUT ALSO USE

ASBOs ETC, BUT TO ALSO PURSUE THE CLIENTS WITH WARNING LETTERS AND CAUTIONS.

They will also look at the impact on the residents – talk to GP

They are also going to talk to their colleagues in public health re the location of Azalea.

- THEY ARE ALSO GOING TO TALK TO THE TEAM THAT RUN THE CCTV – IS IT APPROPRIATE TO USE IT FOR ENFORCEMENT?
- WE WERE REMINDED TO PHONE IN CRIMES AND IT IS GOING TO BE CLARIFIED **WHO** THE POLICE CONTACT IS

Lisa W. asked whether they were targetting the pimps / criminal networks as if these are ignored the problem just moves or recurs.

RK asked about the issue of drugs – re whether the police were conflating it with the sex-trading issue, rather than being aware that some of the dealing affects the local school children.

ACTION: DL TO BRING UP L & R'S POINTS AT THE NEXT SOLUTIONS MEETING ABOUT THIS.

10. HOUSES OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMOs)

DL sent out information for the group to consider today, as agreed

FOR FOT MEMBERS TO DISCUSS AND TAKE A VOTE ON AT THE NEXT MEETING, SO IT WILL BE ON NEXT MONTH'S AGENDA. PLEASE LOOK THROUGH THIS INFO AND COME ALONG TO THE MEETING TO GIVE YOUR COMMENTS/VOTE.

11. PARK FITNESS EQUIPMENT

DL CONTACTED JANE CONWAY, WHO IS GOING TO COME TO NEXT MONTH'S MEETING TO TALK TO US ABOUT MORE DETAILED PLANS.

12. RAILWAY TAVERN

EXPECTING UPDATE ON CHELSIE CHINNICK-BLAIR'S ATTEMPT TO BUY THE FORMER PUB ON THE CORNER OF MIDLAND ROAD AND HIGH TOWN ROAD. CCB DID NOT ATTEND MEETING, SO NO UPDATE PROVIDED.

Action: ask CCB to present any update when she has it.

12. AOB:

5. Big Tidy Up:

LB SAID KEEP BRITAIN TIDY'S 'BIG TIDY UP' WILL TAKE PLACE ON SUNDAY 19TH AND WOULD FOHT SUPPORT IT. IT WOULD BE BETWEEN 10:30-2.30 – THE MEETING POINT TO BE THE SUNRIDGE AVENUE ENTRANCE (MEETING AT THE TOP). LESLEY OF HIGH TOWN METHODIST CHURCH SAID THAT GIVEN A MORE NOTICE, SHE COULD GET WORD OUT TO THE CHURCH MEMBERS (SHE WILL DO WHAT SHE CAN

Notices & information exchange

COFFEE & CHAT – LEAFLETS PUT OUT – MONDAYS 9AM-12PM AT THE METHODIST CHURCH

DEMENTIA FRIENDS MEETING – JACQUI HARDING FROM LUTON CULTURE WILL BE HOLDING A MEETING ABOUT THIS AT HIGH HATS (AND OTHER MEETINGS)

CHRIS MENTIONED EVENTS AT THE MUSEUM INCLUDING A WWI PLAY ON 7TH 8TH NOV (THAT'S A PLAY ABOUT W.W.I LUTON NOT A PLAY DATING FROM WW1)

DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

ACTION: TUESDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2014 - 7PM