



MINUTES
HIGH TOWN IMPROVEMENT ACTION GROUP
MEETING HELD AT 9.00 A.M. ON THURSDAY, 6TH JULY 2017

1. Attendees: Kevin Poulton (Acting as Facilitator)
Maureen Allen (Note taker)
Lyn Bliss (part of meeting)
Kim Greig
Andrew Malcolm, Local Councillor
Catherine Rizzo
Pete Savage
John Wright
Anca ?

2. Kevin Poulton agreed to be the facilitator, and Maureen Allen had agreed to take the notes of the meeting.

3. Agenda additions, order and timing

It was agreed that 22 Edward Street would be the first item to be discussed, following a recent incident, where there had been a serious assault on one of the occupants of the house. The house, which is an HMO, has been causing the residents of the street continual problems. Catherine Rizzo gave an update on the recent incident, and said that she had been woken up at 1.30 a.m. on Sunday, July 2nd, by screaming and shouting at the house and had seen that some people had gained entry via an open window and had proceeded to attack a man in the property. (It was later discovered that he had been attacked with a hammer and a microwave oven). The police had been called, but had not arrived until 8.00 p.m. on Sunday evening. An elderly female resident of the street had confronted one of the group and said she would be calling the police, at which point they had left. CR's husband had entered the house to find one of the occupants covered in blood, and an ambulance had to be called. The man was taken to the L & D hospital, but it had been learned that he had later discharged himself. It was thought that, if the elderly resident had not confronted his attackers, the man might have been murdered. CR mentioned other incidents, such as when one of the residents had decided to drive his moped into the house.

Maureen Allen said that she had written an email to Emma Colclough on this matter, to ask if the council's ASB team could take action. EC had emailed MA to say that incidents could be reported to the council on 01582 510 335, it was also recommended that residents call the police on 101. Andy Malcolm said that he would be contacting the council's private housing department to see if they could ascertain who owned the property, so that the owner could be contacted.

Pete Savage said that it was still possible to contact Luton Police station direct on 01582 401212, rather than dialling 999. It was underlined that it was important to obtain a crime number when reporting incidents.



CR also drew the attention of the meeting to the document ASB in Private Housing, which she recommended that those attending the meeting read. PS said that more information might be obtained from the Selective Licensing Scheme for Landlords. He said he would circulate details on this.

CR wondered if the tenants of the property would be receiving financial help from the council. AM said that the council would not be providing monetary assistance, but that this could be coming from central government.

It was agreed that CR and MA would circulate to each property in the Edward Street the details of who to contact if any further incidents were to occur.

Kim Grieg and John Wright also asked Edward Street residents to report to the council the taxis which were continually parked in Edward Street for long periods of time, the number to call is 01582 548 523. The taxis prevented the residents from parking their cars in the street. It was agreed that this information would be also be included in the details to be circulated by CR and MA.

4. Clean up Day – June 17th

Kevin Poulton said that 15 people had turned up for the clean up day, which had been centred around Frederick Street and Mussons Path, and it had proved to be a good bonding exercise. He remarked that without the refreshments after the litter pick, some of the community spirit might have been lost.

KP said that the litter pickers provided had not been effective in picking up the many cigarette ends which were found. He also said that, on the next occasion, gloves should also be provided for everyone. KG said that she would be happy to provide gloves for the next litter pick.

KP asked if door knocking was thought to be helpful in getting people to join in with the litter pick. KG said that it was effective, as she and JW had had a good response, and one man had come along and provided food for after the litter pick. Also, people complained that they did not know what was going on in the area, and it enabled them to be kept informed. KP said that he would be producing flyers for the event and these could be put through doors, or given to people when door knocking.

5) Clean up Day – July 30th

It was agreed that the full details of the event would be arranged via email between the members of the HTIAG, as the main members of the group who were involved in this had been unable to attend the meeting. KP said it was hoped that those joining in with the litter pick could meet at the Hindu Temple, at 2.00 p.m., on July 30th, and he would be trying to organise this.

The litter pick following on from the one taking place on July 30th, would be on October 7th.

6) Matters Arising from the previous meeting

i) Neighbourhood Watch – people contact details.



MA said that it had been hoped that people who had joined the Neighbourhood Watch scheme, who were based in and around the High Town area, could be emailed and encouraged to attend future HTIAG meetings. The group had received from EC details of where they were based, but no contact details. MA had contacted EC on this point, but EC had not replied to her email. KP said that he would see if more information could be obtained.

ii) Paths Litter Problem – AM said that he had managed to obtain information on collection days for litter bins, and these were Mondays and Thursdays. The council was looking at implementing larger bins, there had been a site meeting, and it was hoped that the larger bins would be in place by the end of the year.

iii) KP confirmed that he had created an email list for the members of the HTIAG.

iv) Man in tent – The man, who had lived in a tent at the High Town entrance to the bridge at Luton station, was still in the area, and he was still begging at the spot where the tent had been. The tent would not be reappearing, as he had been threatened with being banned from Luton if this should happen. When Lyn Bliss had spoken to him, he had said that he had been assigned a case worker by NOAH.

v) TV shop update – AM said that this was an ongoing concern, especially as the council had been planning to redevelop the Square. The fencing was still around the shop, which had been destroyed owing to a fatal car crash, and, when the owners had been asked to move the fencing, they had said that work was due to start there soon. AM would be chasing this up.

vi) Park benches update – AM confirmed that the benches in the park, which had been vandalised, have now been replaced.

vii) Community litter bins in Edward Street – MA confirmed that she had requested the council to put a litter bin/s in Edward Street, but she had not heard anything from them. AM said that if she did not hear in a couple of weeks, she should contact him.

viii) Phone box in Edward Street – AM said that MA had been misinformed by BT, when they had told her that the planning department at the council had objected to its removal. The ASB team at the council had also written to BT to request that the phone box was removed and had also asked the police to write to them. MA would be contacting BT again on this matter. KP said that if MA, or anyone else, wanted to contact the police about any issues, i.e. the drug dealing which was occurring around the phone box, they could contact one of the PCSOs for the area and he offered to send those attending the meeting the names and email addresses of the PCSOs for the High Town area.

ix) Bollards to prevent parking in front of garages – LB said that this was an issue in Frederick Street and there was no update at present. She would be speaking to AM in connection with this.



x) Street cleaning – (MA and AM) – MA said that AM had confirmed that the street cleaners had been told that they had a responsibility to clean the gutters, in addition to cleaning the pavements. MA said that she would monitor this.

xi) Phone box opposite Luton station – KP said that it was possible to adopt an old red BT phone box, but it had been discovered that the phone box was on private land, and the land was owned by the owner of the Railway Tavern. Interest had been expressed in turning the phone box into a café, and a response was awaited from the owners of the land in connection with this.

xii) Phone box in Moulton Rise - PS said that he had been informed by BT that the phone box was due for removal. There was currently no power to the phone box and this should make its removal easy.

7) Gardening Project – new funding

KG said that an application had been made to the Airport Fund, for £5,500, to cover plants and the financing of the community gardeners. The plan would be to extend the areas currently covered in High Town, and, at the moment, things were looking positive.

It had been suggested at the High Town Voice meeting that they put in an application to “Your Say Your Way” for funding to transform the area at the back of the Community Centre into a peaceful area where people could sit. It was wondered if the area could be included in the gardening project plans.

More community days – It was suggested that this might be discussed at the next Friends of High Town meeting.

8) Lack of response from the enforcement team

AM said that, in general, the organisation by the council of the new team had been very successful in dealing with the ever growing problem of fly tipping, etc. in Luton. The officer who had responsibility for the High Town area had recently been on paternity leave, but AM would be contacting him to enquire about a quicker response.

LB had drawn up a list of concerns she had contacted the council about via the online reporting system. Some had been acted upon, but, for others she had not received any response. AM said that the system was not working properly yet, and it was hoped to have a better online solution.

9) AOB

There was no other business.

10) Date of the next meeting

This would be held at the High Town Sports and Arts Centre at 9.00 a.m., on Thursday, August 3rd.



ACTION POINTS

- 1. PS to circulate details about the Selective Licensing Scheme for Landlords**
- 2. CR and MA to circulate details to the residents of Edward Street on who to contact should there be any further incidents.**
- 3. AM to contact the council's private housing department regarding 22 Edward Street**
- 4. KG to provide gloves for the next litter pick to be held on July 30th**
- 5. KP to provide flyers about the next litter pick.**
- 6. HTIAG members to liaise by email about the details concerning the litter pick.**
- 7. KP to see if he can obtain email addresses/contact details for the local members of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.**
- 8. AM to monitor the situation with the site of the TV repair shop**
- 9. MA to contact AM if no response from the council re the request for a litter bin/s in Edward Street.**
- 10. KP to send those attending the meeting the names and email addresses of the PCSOs who work in the High Town area.**
- 11. LB to speak to AM in connection with the bollards needed for Frederick Street.**
- 12. KP to report back on the situation with the adoption of the red phone box, situated outside the Railway Tavern.**
- 13. More community days to be discussed with FoHT.**
- 14. AM to contact the Enforcement Officer for High Town about a quicker response time.**