



Minutes

Tuesday 11th July 2017

Attendees David Landau (Chair), Lyn Bliss (Secretary), Kevin Poulton (Media & Marketing), David Alexander, Richard Carter, Pete Savage, Kim Greig, John Wright, Rob McClennan, Trica Smyth, Chris Grabham, Viki Salkin, Ointa Virbgiceene, Gabby Pipelli, Cllr Maahwish Mirza (phoned in)

1. **Apologies** Cllr Andy Malcolm, Fiona Morton (Treasurer), Maureen Allen

2. **Minutes of last meeting** Agreed with no amendments

Extra item Richard Lees who was the blues harmonica player in High Town's Got Talent passed away about a month before the Festival so couldn't take part. His death was sudden and unexpected. It was agreed that the next festival should be dedicated to him.

3. **Matters arising**

a) **Treasurer's Annual Report – outstanding from AGM**

FM had given DL a spreadsheet which showed a current balance of £768.44. David extracted some figures showing an income of £45 and expenditure of £28.77, with a starting balance of £752. These figures did not balance and also did not seem to include the money in for the collection for the man who had the TV and Video business that was destroyed by the car accident, nor the amount FoHT donated to make it up to £100. We still need a balance sheet showing balance at start of year, income during year, expenditure during year and balance at end of year.

Action (FM) To produce a balance sheet for last year.

b) **Conservation area**

i) Satellite dishes and illuminated signs – RC has not heard if LBC have started enforcement process on nos. 1, 7, 19, 33 and 41. **(RC)**

ii) 94-96 High Town Rd – change of planning application procedure – no progress, **(DL)**

c) **Other building works / planning applications**

i) Hatton Place – application to convert club to flats / minimum space – There is no national minimum space standard requirement. Every local authority sets its own standard. In Luton for 1 person this is 39 sq m (37sq m if a shower) and for 2 people 55 sq m less if a shower.



DA raised the issue of fire safety in light of the Grenfell Tower fire. The proposed new developments in Midland Rd are close together and could pose a fire threat. There followed a discussion about fire safety. DL had contacted LBC who assured him all Luton's high rise blocks were ok. DL was particularly concerned about the new blocks on corner of Hitchin Rd / Midland Rd, which have obvious cladding and was assured these were next in line for checks. LBC are using rockwool euro class 1 which is not combustible. LBC are not aware of any condensation problems arising. No one is allowed to clad more than 2/3 of their house without planning permission.

LB raised the issue of staircases. Were there blocks in Luton with only one, the same as Grenfell Tower, particularly the new builds but also any other blocks in HT?

Action (Cllr MM) To find out if there is only 1 staircase in any of the recent and ongoing new build in HT and also in existing blocks of several floors eg Point Red, Hatton Place

Fire authority is to carry out an audit of all buildings in the borough. **Email Cllr MM** if you want to query any specific building.

d) Adoption of red phone box opposite station

KP had asked for suggestions of how we could use this and got 35 responses. Some wanted it used as a de-fib but this would be difficult to get agreed as there is already one close by. Others suggested for it to be used as a cafe, apparently lots have been put to this use. KP has someone who would be interested in taking this on as a community interest company. The CIC would be responsible for the interior and FoHT would take responsibility for the exterior. Maybe the building opposite could be persuaded to use some of their land for tables & chairs for the phone box cafe. Others liked the idea of using it for a notice board and pop art. RC wanted BT to repair it and keep its use as a phone box. The meeting decided against this suggestion in favour of pursuing Café concept.

Unfortunately the phone box sits on land belonging to Railway Tavern and not on public land. So the Railway Tavern have first refusal on its use. They may not be happy with it being a cafe so close to their building which is hoped to be a cafe.

Action (DL) to provide KP with Railway Tavern owner contact details.

(KP) to contact Railway Tavern and explain it is their responsibility to maintain it but that FoHT could take over that responsibility.

e) Donation to former TV and Video Repair shop proprietor

DL has arranged a second time and date to hand over cheque. This Fri 6.30. If the proprietor does not show this time FoHT will not pursue this anymore.



f) People's Park

i) Missing benches - 3 were destroyed but only 2 have been replaced. They have a metal frame with recycled plastic seats and no backs. Where the one stood that has not been replaced, all traces have been removed and the holes are filled in. For one of the original benches the uprights are still in place and for the other one is in place and the other has a gaping hole left which could be dangerous. **(DL)**

ii) Toilet facilities – These were closed as cleaners found drug paraphernalia in them. RC had spoken to Jane Conway during the green flag inspection and was told LBC had no budget to reopen them.

Action (Cllr MM) to find out more details on how often and what times there was a problem.

A suggestion from DL was that FoHT take responsibility for the block and get the building extended to include a cafe. The toilets could be open when the cafe was open and the proprietor could be responsible for the toilets. The changing rooms could be hired out for use.

iii) Tree replacement grant – **(JW)** working on this. There is a new round of funding deadline on 29th September. RC suggested trying YSYW but it was decided that there was insufficient time for this year.

4. New Items

a) New planning applications

i) 142 Midland Rd (ground floor change of use from A3 restaurant) – this is the gap between Point Red and Hatton Place next door to 3 old houses that are in the process of being done up. There is already planning permission for an 8 storey building of flats. There had been A3 permission for a restaurant. They are now requesting change of use for bottom floor to be flats. There are already empty restaurants in HT so the meeting felt it was ok for this to be flats rather than an unused restaurant!

ii) 19-21 Burr Street – outline planning permission for block of flats – this is the old Travis Perkins site. LBC economic improvement team have complained as it is allocated as industrial land. The development company has written to say why it should not conform to HT plan design.

Action (DL) to write to say FoHT feel it should stay as commercial use



5. Feedback from other groups

HT Improvement Action Group (HTIAG)

Edward Street – There had been slow police response to anti-social behaviour. 2 new members from Edward St and there will now be a petition from the residents to LBC and the landlord who is creating the problem.

Clean up day Sunday 30th July 2pm to be organised on line

A number of issues were raised with councillors about items reported to the enforcement team that had not been actioned.

PS now has a cleaning schedule for Moulton Rise – every other Wed.

The phone box in Moulton Rise is scheduled to be removed.

The phone box in Edward Street will not as BT says it is being used, unfortunately it is mainly for drug use.

6. High Town Festival Feedback

Big spaces need linking up. KP suggested a treasure hunt type activity be considered for next year.

29 stalls from community – highest ever

Jack who usually organises the catering vans and metal barriers found little interest this year so only the sausage man came

Asian food stall did a roaring trade and catered for vegetarians

3 children's rides were booked in January but let us down a month before the event

Need better signage to events in York St and Concorde St

Not enough programmes – indication there were more people than last time

Need stricter marshalling - there was none at the beginning nor end

A car stayed parked in Burr St car park during the entire event causing the stage to be erected in a different position and another car stayed parked outside Luca's causing inconvenience

PCSOs were not scheduled to attend – we expected more of them

PCSOs did not have a stall this year

Local shops who put out food stalls last year, were told they must get proper licensing and pay a stall fee this year and none had stalls

The music from the Well and Luca's was far too loud

Health stalls really good

Farm was in a better place and provided lots of enjoyment

Stage was bigger and better with a better sound system and better bands

Councillors had a successful stall and were able to interact with lots of HT residents and had



lots of issues raised and positive feedback.

Thanks were given to Kevin for being the backbone of HT stall where we obtained 50 new people for the email list (unfortunately 5 bounced) and 20 membership renewals.

7. **AOB**

a) **Raised bed in paths estate** Philippa raised concern that a raised bed had been removed and replaced with concrete

Action (HTIAG)

b) **Parked cars for sale in Wenlock St** Concern that car parks that should be for residents only are being used for selling cars

Action (HTIAG)

c) **CCTV monitoring** – there are 60-80 cameras monitored by 2 people, so really only any use if a serious incident has occurred when the police will view the footage. It is cleared in 28 days. At least one camera in the paths estate is not pointing at anything.

Action (HTIAG) should check about how we can alter the views.

d) **Black air pollution** caused by the removal of trees and bushes in paths estate has been very unpleasant and caused lots of dust. The council should replace the trees.

Action (HTIAG) to look into tree replacement on Paths estate.

e) Concern raised over trans fats regarding chicken shop near the school.

Action (RM) to clarify position with CCG

g) **Christmas Festival** DL had approached Caroline from St Matthews Church to see if she could get the churches to do something Christmas themed this year maybe involving the shops.

Action (High Town Voice), KP to raise at next meeting.

h) **YSYW funding** – suggested ideas

i) music for festival

ii) DL suggested Repair Day / Fix it Day – bring things to be fixed – maybe also make it a swap day and a suggestion to include a bring and share community lunch. This idea to be pursued.

Action (DL) to work on grant application.



8. **Notices & information exchange**

a) **Bandstand in Wardown Park** - Work should start in September and take about 12 weeks.

b) **Clean Up Day Sunday 30th July 2pm**

Meet at Hindu Temple in Crescent Rd, Crawley Green Rd end. Small changes suggested to flyer. **(KP)**

c) **Let's Talk** New initiative for councillors to communicate with electorate – Wed 19th July 9am Community Centre

d) **Healthwatch AGM 27th July 3pm Luton Irish Forum.**

Charity that provides an overview of medical bodies and organisation in Luton, helps people who are having or have had problems with medical care. Details are on the website.

9. **Date of next meeting** August 8th 7pm.