



## Minutes of Friends of High Town Tuesday 14th November 2017

**Attendees** David Landau (Chair), Fiona Morton (Treasurer), Kevin Poulton (Media & Marketing), Chris Grabham, David Alexander, Nick Berg, Russell Cartwright, Ian Beveridge, Sam Willis, Jeremy Williams, Pete Savage, Karen & David Brown, (Asim Warraich (PCSO) for part of the meeting)

**1.) Apologies** Lyn Bliss (Secretary), Kim Greig, John Wright, Dave & Karen Brown, Cllr Maahwish Mirza, Cllr Andy Malcolm, James Hardiman, Maureen Allen, John French.

**2.) Minutes of the last meeting** Amendment Ian's Surname, with removal of erroneous Mac

### **3) Other building works/planning applications**

a) 19 – 21 Burr St, Nothing Back

b) 236 High Town Rd, Had feedback that the property is on LBC Planning Enforcements RADAR

c) 80 High Town Rd, Building work continues, The work to number 78 (hairdressers), has been completed, no new information received, High Town Team to monitor (Action HT Team)

### **4) Conservation Area**

a) Russell has written to LBC, is awaiting a response.

Conversation took place regarding a invitee consultation that is taking place on the 18<sup>th</sup> November, due to the short notice, many that wished to attend, were uncertain if they would make it. Chris confirmed he would be attending, and agreed to represent the group. He was asked to determine feasibility of extending the area protected to include Havelock, and if such an extension would dilute the enforcement efforts even further. **(Action CG)**

b) Change of procedure to notify of a change within an application (even minor) within a conservation area. Chris agreed to also raise this issue at the consultation **(Action CG)**

### **5) People's Park**

a) David raised the issue of further damage to bins within the park, and damage to trees occurring, and damage to some of the newly installed benches, so now 2 unfilled hole. Still no answer received on the cost of a bin. **(Action DL, AM).**

b) Toilet facilities –received feedback that it was estimated to cost £10k to £20k to bring the toilets back into a working condition. The concern regards ongoing costs, if this money was spent, and the lack of ability to prevent further vandalism meant LBC felt this wasn't a viable option. The only future seems to be for some group to come forward with a viable business plan as discussed at previous meetings. A discussion around the consequences of closure leading to increased public urination again took place.

Ian Beveridge entered

d) Railing at front of Peoples Park (Old Bedford Rd). It was noted the railing had been removed prior to the Fireworks Show (speculated for Health & Safety reasons), and was now being replaced with metal sections. Concern was raised at the speed of the installation with a note that it left the park vulnerable to a travellers encampment. **(Action DL)**



## 6.) Parking Kingston Rd / Ridgeway

John French & Kevin Poulton had written to the Round Green Councillors concerning yellow lines in Richmond Hill, and were awaiting a response. Kevin informed the group that feedback had been given by LBC Highways via Cllr Andy Malcolm to the HTIAG, that informal consultation on one way systems being implemented in Kingston and Ridgeway were positive, and they would look to progress to formal consultation. (see November HTIAG Minutes for full details). Action remains with HTIAG.

## 7) New Items

a) New planning applications.

i) Green Bank, David informed the group that the notice was posted after the last meeting, but the window to respond had expired before this meeting. In summary application to build a set of 4 2 Bed terraced house had been submitted, the plans look like the design are in line with properties in the area and would be faced with the grey brick from demolition of the hall. The owner was open to offers that would match the potential income stream of the development, and was in dialogue with St Matthews School. The main objections from the group could be summarised as being houses located so closely to the school, and that the needs of the school should be considered. An objection to the development was made on an individual basis by David. As the windows for objection had passed no further action was possible from the group.

Asim entered the meeting.

Enquired if anything the group wished to raise that was a police matter. He was informed of the earlier conservation around vandalism in the park. He related that a previous rough sleeper in the park had been assisted to find the right agencies to assist.

The property between 77-81 Reginald Street was raised as suspected drug dealing.

Asim agreed to take this matter on. Kevin suggested that this should also be added to HTIAG Agenda. (Action Asim, HTIAG)

Asim left the meeting.

ii) Flats Corner of Burr St (17 Hitchin Rd)

The group raised a number of objections around population density, type of accommodation being planned. David agreed to develop a response that would be circulated, prior to consideration of submission for a group objection.

b) Ideas for increasing participation. The group suggested Targeting the new developments with FoHT literature. Varying the times of community activities (not Sat morning 10am – 1 pm), working with other community groups, in particular Hope Church, including food in the events, devising activities that were children friendly as part of the activities.

c) Fix it day. Discussion around the date took place in conjunction with Easter school holidays. The original date of the 7<sup>th</sup> fell on the middle Saturday after Easter, a range of opinions were expressed, some felt that before the holidays were ideal, whilst others felt churches would have activities



planned for this date. It was suggested the middle Saturday may suffer for families being away in either week, the 14<sup>th</sup> if available had slight majority of opinion. A call for volunteers to organise the event took place. (Action :- David, Sam & Jeremy, as the working group)

d) High Town has Talent, finalisation of the grant to Near Neighbours will be submitted before the deadline of the 17<sup>th</sup> November **(Action FM, SW)** .

8) Feedback from other groups.

HTAIG Summary

Meeting started with discussion around frustrations being felt on the progress and lack of feedback following the residents meeting organised by Philippa concerning the regeneration project. Then moved onto the process of Temporary Closure notices and permanent eviction, and the premises getting back into use.

David raised two issue with the Police in attendance, 1 was two men in Kingston way, the other was a break-in at Tina's dance studio.

Andy raised a question around a Nuisance Bike that he had already raised with Ops Meteor team on the webchat.

Discussion around the drugs raid on the café just before the Train Station Bridge, and the significant recovery. Police informed us of the pro-active closure of the mechanics garage on Midland s Rd.

Now routinely being copied in on Twitter by Luton Community Police of activity in High Town.

**Kingham Way** ~ Success! White H-bar and yellow lines scheduled to be repainted this month

Particulates, currently under investigation by LBC

**Edward St** ~ Success! Sewage onto Rd from Number 22, has been resolved.  
Fridge in front garden raised.

Drain Clearance scheduled for Spring 18. Number of hotspots were reported as needing immediate attention , passed to contractor who responded positively. Was noted the bottom of Kingston Rd, flooded again in the recent rain, despite assurance this area would be looked at last week. **(Action Cllr AM)**

**Mussons Path**

Success ! 64 A reported build-up of waste. Enforcement has already actioned and its reported this has been dealt with.

No 20 is ongoing issue,

Number of issues raised with enforcement team to investigate.

On 13<sup>th</sup> Nov, combined LBC and Police Teams did a walk around High Town to identify issues.

Looking for ideas on areas for projects for next year, which will have a deeper impact. Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> March planning next event as it is Great British Spring Clean weekend.



9) Notice of an Extraordinary meeting for January 9<sup>th</sup> 2018 was issued.

The motion to consider incorporating Friends of High Town as a “**Charitable Incorporated Organisation**” to remove potential liabilities from any committee members will be the main agenda item.

It is also noted that both Lyn Bliss (Secretary) and Fiona Morton (Treasurer) will take the opportunity to step down, so it will be necessary to appoint replacements.

A call for any other motions to be considered for the agenda was made, with suggestions to be forwarded to the Chair.

#### **10.) AOB & Notices**

KP Informed the group the Autumn Newsletter was scheduled to be distributed during the course of week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> November.

**Edible High Town** will be operating weekly events on a Wednesday, see their website [www.ediblehightown.org](http://www.ediblehightown.org)

2<sup>nd</sup> December ~ Fashion Show live open day at HT Community Sport and Arts Centre

7<sup>th</sup> December LBC Voluntary Sector Coffee Morning around Poverty, Community Growers, Food Shortages.

15<sup>th</sup> Dec deadline Imagine Luton callout for outdoor Arts Commission for the town centre.

Institute of health research looking to talk to families from a South Asian background for focus groups around nursing.

#### **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday, December 12th 7 pm.

An informal get together will take place from 6.00pm.