**Federation Of Stoke Residents Association**

Meeting Notes

Date 3rd April 2017

Windsor Room

**Present:** Cllr Randy Conteh, Joanne Tyzzer, Lesley Mountford, Claire McIver, CI Neil Hulme. Jim Gibson, John Salmon, Chris Preece, John Caulkin, Malcolm Glanister, Karen Glanister, Sandra Hackwood, Phil Hackwood, Anne Carter, Ian Brayshaw, Harold Griffiths, Adam Boustead, Christian Boustead, Jane Hammonds, Sarah Hall.

**Apologies:** Linda Davies, Reg Edwards, Jacqueline Smith, Martin Bailey, Charles Pantin, Dennis and Sue Viggars

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| **Raised by** | **Details** | **Action** |
| **Neil Hawkins**  **John Caulkin**  **John Caulkin**  **John Caulkin**  **Cllr Conteh**    **CI Neil Hulme**  **Chris Preece**  **Claire McIver**  **Cllr Conteh**  **Lesley Mountford**  **John Caulkin**  **Chris Preece**  **CI Neil Hulme**  **Malcolm Glanister**  **Chris Preece**  **Joanne Tyzzer**  **John Salmon**  **Cllr Conteh** | **1. Introduction and Apologies**  Jim Gibson conducted the meeting  **2. Presentation by:**  **Cllr Randy Conteh**  Cabinet Member Housing, Communities and Safer City  **Joanne Tyzzer**  Acting Director of Place, Growth and Prosperity  **Lesley Mountford**  Director of Public Health and Adult Social Care  **Claire McIver**  Strategic Manager - Safe and Healthy Communities  Copy of presentation attached.  If you would like Cllr Conteh to attend your RA’s meetings, please email: [Randolph.Conteh@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:Randolph.Conteh@stoke.gov.uk)  **3. Questions from RA’s**  **Newford RA**  In the Smallthorne area of the city we have we have a number of streets with terraced housing; some have rear alleyways that are adopted; most have alleyways that are unadopted. The so called unadopted alleyways are a blight on our city and portray an image of Victorian Britain at its worst - they are overgrown, litter strewn and fly tipping havens.  What is the city councils policy on unadopted alleyways? If we don’t; should we not include these alleyways into a regeneration plan to bring our city into the 21st century?   * *There are around 12 miles of unadopted rear alleyways across the City. Responsibility for them is generally uncertain. It would cost an estimated £3m to clear, surface and light them. Routine maintenance and cleaning would cost between £300k and £600k per year. Adopting them wholesale is not an option from the financial perspective. Most will be covered by the City Council’s fly-tipping service, but not programmed maintenance. Adopting is not however a straight forward process and requires consent of current owners of properties serviced by them.*   **Cllr Conteh**   * If flytipping is reported, the City Council have a pledge to clean and prosecute if evidence is found.   **Eaton Park RA**  Development of the old Berryhill Site. It is several years since the site was closed and the buildings demolished.  Following attempted liaison with Mark James recently we cannot secure any answers as to when the site will be put up for sale or development secured.  What are the plans to start the development of the site before it is targeted by gypsies?   * *The City Council is working with the adjoining landowner to prepare a detailed master plan covering the Berryhill area. The master plan will cover a number of sites and look at issues such as housing, schools, education, open space and transport, all matters currently constraining development. The thinking is at a very early stage and no decisions will be made without engaging with residents and ward Councillors. However it is possible that the former school could be developed sooner rather than later and the Council could bring a scheme forward to develop the site within the next 12 months if this does not adversely impact on larger scale development.*   The City Centre continues to be a haven for beggars and chuggers causing an unacceptable environment for shoppers.  Despite being told a Director of Stoke on Trent City Council has been given direct responsibility for cleaning it up no action has been taken as it is still the same. (02.02.17) and Policing is still none evident.  What action is planned in objective terms to clean it up?   * *£10m, spent on 3 phases of public realm in Tontine Street/Percy Street, Albion Square and from Smithfield to the retail area (Broad Street and Piccadilly). This has vastly improved the physical environment, with a particular impact in Piccadilly where increased footfall has led to 5-6 new café/restaurants opening, leading to a change in the City Centre leisure offer.* * *A further £10m investment in the public realm is in the pipeline, with phase 4 in Crown Bank/Stafford Street and Lidice Way due to start on site w/c 20th March, and other phases in the retail core due to be tackled over the next couple of years. It is anticipated that this investment will have a similar impact on footfall and dwell-time, and therefore lead to a reduction in shop vacancies.* * *The former Crown Bank toilets have already been removed - which was a really bad spot for ASB. New toilet provision will be provided in the vicinity of the Market.* * *One and Two Smithfield, host approx. 1,300 jobs. This has had a hugely positive impact on footfall. The delivery of the next phase of a residential scheme and hotel will have a similar positive impact.* * *Intu’s £20m investment in the Hive (multi-screen cinema and mid-range family restaurants) has attracted different visitors to the City Centre; with footfall up approx. 25% in the Intu Potteries Shopping Centre and average spend per visitor increasing. I understand that 1.5 million visited the Hive in its first year of opening.* * *Unity Walk – the 400,000 sq ft retail/leisure proposal (including hotel, cinema and 617 space car park). If delivered, this has the potential to have a huge impact on footfall and attractiveness of the City Centre.* * *The key thread with all of the above is increased footfall – this needs to continue to grow so that the ASB is less visible and the increased number of visitors deters such behaviour.*   *In response to the City Centre Support issues, the Council currently commissions 2 direct access hostels – 90 Hope Street in Hanley and the Salvation Army based in Stoke and a Rough Sleepers Outreach service that is available from 6am in the morning. The outreach support workers travel the city visiting sites where rough sleepers are known to frequent, such as the city centre and to act on reports of rough sleeping from the council, agencies/organisations and members of the public. The rough sleepers staff will liaise with the Council’s Housing Solutions service and the direct access hostels to help secure accommodation for rough sleepers as a priority and will help them to access other services around improving wellbeing including; substance misuse support, clinical care where appropriate, help with financial issues and access to mental health support. In addition the Council also provides additional support for emergency provision under the Severe Weather Emergency provision (SWEP) arrangements when the temperature falls below zero for 3 consecutive nights.*  *Sometimes, rough sleepers will not want to engage with support so the outreach team continue to visit and be available to help to ensure that wellbeing is monitored and to encourage engagement and offers of help. Gaining trust is an important part of their role where many rough sleepers dis-engage or refuse support due to previous experiences.*  *In addition to the councils commissioned services, there are night shelter services that currently operate.*  *The Macari Centre opens 7 nights per week currently offering accommodation to around 26 people based on the outskirts of Hanley city centre. Hot meals, a bed and follow on support are offered during the morning. The Macari Trust who operate the centre with support from the YMCA, are currently exploring opportunities to extend the opening hours to be open all day (24/7). They want to extend their offer to include more in-reach services and positive daytime activity.*  *The Stoke Churches Nightshelter also offers a similar service from Friday to Sunday (incl) rotating each night. These are located in Burslem, Sneyd Green and Fenton. The service has been running through the winter period and plans to close at the end of March. Rough Sleepers can be referred here at the weekends and the services have liaised with the outreach service. The Stoke Churches along with the Number 11 Project are looking to also develop daytime activity and have asked the council to support them to help facilitate in-reach support rather than capital funding to take this forward and is planned for Summer 2017.*  ***Additional Information***  *The City Director, David Sidaway, has committed the city council to take concerted action to ensure the city centre in Hanley is an attractive place for people to live, work and play.*  *Staffordshire Police and the Police Crime Commissioner are fully committed to supporting the city council's ambition, as are local businesses.*  *A senior Partnership Board to be attended by David Sidaway and the Deputy Chief Constable is being established to ensure leadership and oversight of actions to address this issue. Political representation will also be invited.*  *A draft action plan is being put together which will form part of a report to the city council and will be taken to the inaugural meeting of the Board for agreement.*  *There are three main streams of work in the action plan:*  *1. Enforcement actions to address anti-social behaviour, backed up by good quality support services for vulnerable people in need;*  *2. Environmental actions designed to reduce 'hotspots' through for example gating allies, use of CCTV, licensing action against premises selling alcohol irresponsibly, physical improvements to the public realm and increased visible policing presence in the city centre. This may also include a proposal to implement a Public Space Protection Order across the city centre and Hanley Park (to reduce the risk of displacement activity);*  *3. Positive promotion of Hanley designed to counteract a negative perception of the city centre, including promotion of cultural life and link to city of culture and daytime presence of volunteers such as street pastors to welcome people to the city centre.*  *A multi-agency planning event is planned in the next few weeks to get wider input, ahead of the first meeting of the Board.*  **4. Comments to Hanley Town Centre**  Voiced his concerns and the new initiative launched as reported by the Sentinel – Police crackdown on beggars, street drinkers and shop lifters in Hanley.  <http://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/staffordshire-police-launch-operation-electron-to-tackle-anti-social-behaviour-in-the-city-centre/story-30243059-detail/story.html>  The committee are working to address the issues that you have raised, there are short and long term fixes in place, but no overnight solution.  The initiative launched on Saturday had been planned for a while and had run in Nov and Dec which reduced asb in the run up to Christmas. Police and Partners are working together to reduce all the issues and understanding of the root causes, ie homeless people and people purporting to be homeless. People come into Hanley to earn money through begging; these are the ones who need to be targeted, not the ones who need genuine help. It is about building up a picture of those who refuse to engage and documenting this is their lifestyle choice and taking the appropriate action.  Could a scheme be implemented to say – do not give to beggars?  There is a scheme in place – Make It Count. This promotes giving monies to services that support vulnerable people. It was launched in December and will be re-advertised.  Long Term Fixes - Support   * Need to get people off of the drugs and alcohol * There are genuine vulnerable people who are homeless who need help * Address the people who cause problems but are not homeless   There are dedicated GP’s and nurses who are helping people to come off drugs and alcohol. Various Services are linking together to help and support those who are homeless and or have drug and alcohol issues. There are people who do not want support or want to engage, but they are still offered support as there may be a time when they change their minds or situation changes.  I would like to see beggars removed from Hanley Town Centre and for people to be able to shop without being hassled.  Is begging an offence?  Begging is an offence, but it is not a straightforward process to prosecute and take to court.  Look at begging from another angle – beggars cannot pay the fine and people tend to give money to beggars because they feel sorry for them. If a by-law was introduces, this may help as people are less inclined to break the law.  The toilets removed at Crown Bank - why weren’t new ones built first?  The toilets were closed in Nov 2015 and were not going to be re-opened.  Stronger Together – everyone has a part to play in resolving and moving forward.  **Final Comments**  The Police, City Council and Partners are working together on enforcement and support for the people causing the issues within Hanley Town Centre; resolving issues at the root; helping to get people off drugs and alcohol and into homes. Also working in partnership to identify those who do not live in the City and are here for the wrong reasons ie begging. Street Pastors are in place and are now present both in the day and at night.  **5. AOB**  Community Food Network to be invited to next meeting as a guest speaker  **6. Date of the Next Meeting**  The date of the next meeting was agreed to be **Monday 8th May** 2017 at 6.30pm. Committee Room B, Ridgway Room.  **The meeting closed at 7.30 pm** | **SH**  **SH** |