

Stirchley the Way Forward 17/01/17

Minutes: Chris

Chair: Susan

Present: Su, Seb (BO), Margaret, Councillor Mary Locke, Dave Martin, Rose, Neil, Julie, Kerry, Alison, Lisa, Sue, Susan Karen, Christopher, Chris.

Apologies: Emma Ashton, Wayne Pell, Joy Rawlinson

2. **Minutes** - Approved

3. **Matters arising**

Voids, improvements to the streetscape

Wayne Pell intended to come to discuss the remaining 106 money from TESCO

4. **Advent fair**

Sue: lots of people, especially children came to see Santa in his grotto and disco.

There were also stalls entertainment from Birmingham Rock School, along with DJ Sam and his disco.

We would like to thank Jane from Co-op Hearts and Flowers for judging windows, Phil Banting who took photos and Mick from the British Oak who stood in as Santa.

We hope to do this again.

Window competition

Lisa: First place: Skinny's Ink, 2nd SBP (plastics), 3rd MacGuinnes Opticians.

People's choice: Molly from Loaf's for her Stirchley Street scene made out of gingerbread.

5. **Summer fête**

Proposed to be on **Saturday 27th May in Stirchley Baths**

Susan: we would like to ask for volunteers from all the Stirchley community groups to set up a small planning group to organise the event.

6.

Stirchley Library

Kerry: at the moment we are encouraging all residents to complete the consultation on line form. Dave there is a form for children to fill in too.

Seb: we can put up notices and have forms in the British Oak.

The deadline is the 27th January. The form is online. There is also a Save Stirchley Library

Facebook group which has resources and can be used by residents to communicate.

Saturday 11th February 10:30am a meeting will be held at the Stirchley Community Church – next steps after the publication of the notes from the end of the consultation (on the 9th).

Karen: The city is aiming to future-proof 'library services' rather than 'libraries', although that will have a knock-on effect for the building.

Councillor Mary Locke: My worries is what will happen to the library building, as it took many years for the Baths to reopen after it was shut. There is a historic link between Bournville Village Trust and the library; although there is a covenant on the land apparently it can be used for other purposes.

Karen: from a city council perspective we have to make cuts. There is no alternative.

Mary: It's a sword of Damocles.

Kerry: From Save Stirchley Library perspective we accept that cuts need to be made, but we want to think more imaginatively on how we can make money to keep the building open. For instance, renting out the unused rooms. This is why it's important that we all complete the consultation.

Su: In Walsall they're in consultation for closing all local libraries. National literacy provision

means that all Key Stage 2 pupils must be enrolled in a library. Are there restrictions nationally on how much library services can be cut?

Kerry: Will the library services moving to the Baths have an effect financially? Is there anything else the community can do to support the Baths if so?

Karen: Yes – because there's no budget for community centre's any more which means that the Baths have to be financially self-sufficient. However that's not part of the rationale. More community use of the Baths would be useful.

Kerry: If the library service moves to the Baths won't that take a room out of other use?

Karen: No, because it won't be a dedicated space for the service.

Rose: This is important because it's not just the service itself that is beneficial, but the space of the library. If the service does have to leave the library could some of it be used to create a permanent space? Is there any chance of getting money from the council for repair work since it's been allowed to fall into disrepair due to the council?

Karen: The budget won't be the same, but there will be some money available. Since the exercise is to save money it seems like there'll be less available. On the building the council doesn't do up buildings to let out, so that's not going to happen.

Su: People in the area seem to think that the trolleys will be moved next door – but that's not going to happen and we need to make it clear to everyone that it won't happen.

Rose: This is a great shame – reconfiguring a system that's worked since the Ancient Greeks is going to have a detrimental effect. Literacy is a fundamental right.

Mary Locke: Since 2010 we've had cuts each year. I want to keep the library, but everything else is subject to cuts as well.

Rose: Despite the fact that the cuts are an objective fact we can save the library without

bankrupting the NHS.

Karen: Selly Oak library is an example of how library services can be re-imagined – the University may take the building. In certain places (i.e. Witton Lodge) community groups have taken on running libraries after Community Asset Transfers.

Dave: How about asking some of the supermarkets who are moving into the area to fund the library.

Susan: When will we have decision from the council about what will happen after the consultation ends?

Karen: It's for the 2017/18 financial year – so it will be April.

Chris: The loss of the Central Library has precipitated this

Susan: Again - we need to complete the consultation.

Kerry: In order to put forward a strong proposal we would need to create a business plan, but to do that we need to have facts and figures, which we don't have access to, and the turnaround is too short.

Rose: This consultation feels like lip-service.

Neil: Has there been any discussion of bringing the library service into Stirchley School?

Dave: That would require sections of the council talking amongst themselves!

Lidl

Susan: The demolition of PSL Bowling and Fitness First seems like a done deal.

Rose: It could be about getting the best we can out of Lidl.

Mary: I have written to the leader of the council and the chair of planning about the number of supermarkets we're going to get. I got a terse reply from the chair of

planning. I have a meeting with John Clancy next week one-to-one. Over 400 people opposed it. It's not Lidl per se it's the specific plot. I would like to get Lidl and TESCO together and make sure that we have the leisure facilities.

An appeal would be very costly. We could go through the local government ombudsman. There is a 38 degrees petition signed by around 2,000 so far. There has been a demonstration outside the council house with councillor McCarthy. I will be meeting with the managers, but the land is in the process of reverting to Lidl.

Karen: There will be some 106 money (statutory compensation) coming out of Lidl (approx between £20 and £40K) for public realm improvements.

It doesn't help with this case, but if assets get designated as Assets of Community Value there is a six month moratorium on demolition.

Aldi on Magnet site

Susan: Consultation was completed yesterday.

Karen: Planning committee has their meetings on Thursdays.

Susan: We have no idea what Magnet is thinking.

Sue: Wickes is leased, so Magnet is probably leased too and their lease may be running out.

Karen: Are people aware that you can go on the City Council website and see agendas for planning committee.

Neil: What are the concerns people have about Aldi?

It seems that there aren't many concerns apart from maybe the traffic and the effect it will have on John Ward's greengrocer's.

Update on TESCO development

Susan: TESCO still haven't given a firm date, and they're blaming the council for the delays. The new community liaison person (Jessica Walker) has been helpful. She gave details on how to apply for their Bags of Life scheme.

Rose: We are working on a green plan.

Susan: It is important for our group to be kept in the loop so we can work together for the benefit of Stirchley.

Dave: In addition to this project we're working with Friends of Hazelwell Park with Felipe and Yan, looking not only at the High Street.

Su: There's some money coming in soon to work at the back of the bowling behind Bookers, linking the Pineapple Estate with the other side of Stirchley.

7. AOB

106 money from TESCO

The £170k

Former Constituency Office

Wayne Pell has had a verbal quote from engineers. Works needed: less than £3,000, full redecoration £45,000.

Karen: Having been a tenant there it needs a new heating system and the roof being repaired as well as being redecorated. I'm not sure if that quote includes the heating. Because it's surplus to requirements it's up to the Education Services to decide what the best thing to do with it would be. It has restricted usage due to the fact that car parking is limited to 16 spaces and it's accessed through the school.

Mary Locke: I've met with Wayne Pell and he mentioned the idea of renting small spaces out to micro-businesses. I haven't heard from him since.

Susan: I understand that Stirchley Community Group were working on this. Has there been any progress?

Dave: We're waiting for the information we need from Wayne before we can move forwards with this.

Void properties

Neil: What's going on with the abandoned building on the corner of Mary Vale and Pershore Road? There was a discussion who is the owners. Karen said she would look into it.

8. Date and time of next meeting (AGM)

Wednesday 15th March, 7:15pm