



## **Minutes from WLSE25 Town Team (TT) Meeting on 26.11.20**

### **via Zoom**

Those Present: Judith Burden, Patsy Cummings, Clive Fraser, Herbie, Doreen, John Hickman, Rob Little, Henry Lelen, Teresa Lewis, Rachel McKoy, Alice Maestrini, Michelle Normanly, Chris Peskett, Shuba Rao, Paul Scott, Screen 25, Sue Takwani, Nicky Thompson, Susan Wheeler-Kiley, Laura Whittal, Dan Winder, Mary Wolf,

#### **1. Chair's Welcome**

#### **2. Update on Regeneration Project and Current Negotiations (Michelle Normanly)**

- a. Oliver Lewis has the Regeneration Portfolio now.
- b. Section 114 measures have affected the Regeneration Project: (the Good Growth Fund [GGF] and the Heritage Action Zone [HAZ]). External funding was granted on the basis of match funding from the Council. As soon as the announcement was made, funders were contacted, and contractors were told that the project would have to be suspended for a while. The money available without the Council funding was re-assessed. The deadlines for the projects are: March 2023 (GGF) & 2024 (HAZ).
- c. There is the possibility that the GGF grant might be matched with the HAZ grant. Some of the Council's match funding has already been spent. We may be able to draw in more additional funding as the Government is promoting High Streets and Regeneration.
- d. WLSE25 has already begun work on some of their 3 aims. Building a strong community and developing the business community has already been embarked on. The Recovery bid Restore Confidence in the High Street has already started so should go ahead.
- e. Meetings were held with the GLA and Historic England last week. The proposals will go before the GLA and Historic England in the week beginning 7 December. We can still deliver the aims of the Regen. Project if they are prepared to match each other and we will set out how much we can deliver by the deadlines. We are early in their programme and they look favourably on S Norwood so we need to achieve as much as possible within the constraints

- f. SoccaChita
  - i. It is in the final stages of the procurement process and the preferred contractor is in place. The process needs to be completed and there could be an early start next year if approval is given. A Hub Study is underway to see how the Hubs can work together. The report is to be finished and published soon, though it has been held up by Covid-19.
- g. Community Capacity Building.
  - i. A workshop, with a mix of business and community representatives from the 6 groups, went ahead to interview and they are ready to appoint someone to go ahead. A consultant team was to go out to find out what was needed but it would not be as effective done remotely under current regulations, so a person is to be embedded in S Norwood as Business Support. The Job Description is ready and in draft.
- h. Placemaking
  - i. Ready to go but on pause.
- i. The revision of the planning document is out to tender. The HAZ Officer is supporting the parallel Cultural Programme bid. Dan is leading on this. The £10,000 project is for a live streaming Heritage Walk to be delivered before March.

### 3. Q&As

- a. **Q.** Working Groups were set up but the frameworks never came through. What happened? **A.** The Capacity Building Workshop was supposed to address this and provide the framework but was pushed back to the spring. It then coincided with the start of Covid.
- b. **Q.** Under Section 114 essential spending, has the possibility of Council funding been written off or could it be re-instated? **A.** The assumption has to be that it won't come through before the end of the project. The HAZ Project runs for longer so we might be able to access it but cannot rely on it.
- c. **Q.** If the GGF and HAZ money match each other does that mean that the total will be halved from what was originally expected? **A.** The GGF bid was submitted first and got match funding from the Council. The HAZ bid has additional funding from business, and the Stanley Halls has access to separate funding sources. Some of the Council money has already been spent so it would mean the money has not quite been halved. 'Activating Space' is still at the core of both programmes and can be addressed in a number of different ways.
- d. To summarise: At the moment everything is in a state of flux and so all action has been paused. After the week of 7 December things will be clearer.

- e. **Q.** What will happen to the library? Is it due to close? **A.** A loan has been requested by the Council from the Government, to tide it over the next few years. At Cabinet, S Norwood Library was on the list of possible closures. There is the potential for it to be run by the community. The Council is not allowed to make non-essential spending but if a model can be found at no cost - using volunteers, maximising letting spaces – it could be viable. There is confusion over the terms on which the new library building be transferred from the developers to the community. A possible short-term solution could be put in place for the next few years.

#### **4. Changes to the Constitution** (the meeting being quorate)

**a.** Proposals:

- i. that the clause in the Constitution concerning the schedule of the AGM (*Once in each calendar year, an Annual General Meeting shall be held at such time and place as the Executive Group shall determine, being not more than fifteen months after the adoption of this constitution and thereafter the holding of the preceding Annual General Meeting. At least twenty-one clear days' notice shall be given to members of the Group and all delegated bodies. Notice of the meeting will also be announced publicly, and organisations and individuals will be invited to nominate themselves for consideration for inclusion on the Town Team*) be amended to enable the AGM to be delayed because of difficulties caused by Covid-19 and the Lockdowns. *Proposed and seconded. Agreed* nul con.
- ii. that the AGM be deferred until into the New Year because of the difficulties caused by C-19 and the lockdowns. *Proposed and seconded. Agreed* nul con.
- iii. that formal meetings can take place by electronic means. Proposed and seconded. **Agreed** nul con.

#### **5. WLSE25 Funds**

- a. WLSE25 funds, independent of GGF and HAZ grants, stand at £18,953. £200 is ring-fenced for IT development.
- b. £8,000 was spent on replacing the wrap-around Christmas lights with LED motif lights. The decision was made because to continue with the previous lights would attract large costs from SKANSKA. Business in Portland Road made a contribution to the lights which meant the coverage could be extended almost to Dundee Road.
- c. The other expenses for the current year were administrative costs.

#### **6. AOB**

- a. Michelle has accessed a lot of funding and in the current circumstances we need to tailor our plans to fit what money is available. WLSE25

started with a £5,000 grant and grew from there. We should review our holdings and do what can be done with what is available.

- b. **Q.** What is happening to the Bridge Project? **A.** It was funded separately. The contacts we had with Network Rail are no longer working on that project and we have no new contacts as yet. The project is waiting on Network Rail.
- c. **Q.** The Albert Tavern looks closed. Are there any groups who could run it as a Community Pub? **Action: PATSY will look into it.**
- d. **Q.** What is the position for the emergency services regarding the planters in the roads? **A.** They were placed in consultation with the emergency services. The ambulance service is supportive of the reduction of traffic. If the emergency services object to any obstruction of a road they have the power of veto. There is a public consultation in progress at the moment. **PATSY will ensure the link is on the WLSE25 website.** The project is due to last 18 months. Posts were installed because planters have been vandalised but they are not permanent.
- e. **Q.** If there is any funding, can something be done to restore the mosaic under the bridge? **A.** It is part of the larger Bridge Project. A mosaic specialist has been to look at it. It is recognized as Community Asset and hasn't been forgotten.
- f. **Q.** How can we ensure, if we are awarded the revised GGF/HAZ bid after the 7<sup>th</sup>, that we make visible progress? The project has been running for 2 years and it is due to end shortly with not much to be seen. **A.** We had to re-negotiate because we cannot bank on match funding. The money came through in March 2019 and the first year's work has mostly been behind the scenes. The lockdown stalled the communications effort and we need to improve it. There are a lot of elements that were nearly ready to go live and had to be paused. At the moment there is no-one to deliver the programme so we have to re-assure funders we have other measures in place.
  - i. The Town Team should look for projects on which the £18,000 can be spent that will show quick results.
  - ii. Another Town Team Meeting will be arranged after Christmas, before the AGM, when suggestions can be put forward and discussed.