

Summary of the WeLoveSE25 AGM on 23rd January 2021

The meeting was advised that the AGM was postponed from July 2020 due to the Covid-19 regulations concerning assembly, social distancing and the change to remote meetings.

The minutes of the previous AGM on 20th July 2019 was approved

The reports from officers included:

- Progress to deliver the regeneration programme had stalled due to the pandemic and the lockdowns. Council officers were redeployed to support the pandemic measures for the residents of Croydon, and this also reduced the amount of regular meetings and progression of actions – many had been affected by shielding, some contracting the virus and some lost loved ones, friends and family.
- WeLoveSE25 contributed to the effort to support the elderly and vulnerable along with the mutual aid groups and many community organisations in the area.
- WeLoveSE25 delivered the local Christmas Lights for 2020 and held a meeting entitled Taking Pride in South Norwood to address the ongoing issues in the area around rubbish and fly tipping, and a public meeting to update the community.
- The WeLoveSE25 accounts were approved for the year ending 30th June 2020, with £15,339 in the bank account at the year end.
- The constitution was amended to include the use of zoom calls for official meetings, the extension of the AGM and the change to the officer terms due to the pandemic.

Updates included:

The Good Growth Fund (GGF) and Heritage Action Zone (HAZ)

- A study took place to work out the GGF capital funding and to identify how the 5 Hubs (CYTO, Socco Cheta, Stanley Halls, Samuel Coleridge Taylor Centre and Old Library) fitted together as part of the plan. The

study is now finished and is ready to be shared with the partners. However, progress had stalled due Covid-19 and lockdowns.

Community Capacity Building

- All Head Recognized, CYTO and Rachel Mckoy officer of WeLoveSE25 formed a panel to appoint the organisation to provide this training.
- Dan Winder from Stanley Halls was successful in securing approximately £10,000 for an HAZ Culture programme for a pilot project to get people back to the High Street. This will be a 3-year project from 2022/23, the timeline was disrupted by Covid-19 and the Council's S114 notice.
- Following the Section 114 notice funding for the GGF and HAZ High Streets (HSHAZ) projects has been reviewed in the light of a cut in the Council's contribution. Agreement has been reached in principle, with the GLA and Historic England (HE). A legal agreement is being drawn up to confirm what can be delivered within the new budget and within revised deadlines. What is needed for High Streets to recover under changing circumstances will be reviewed.

Business Support

Plans will be re-visited and the place making design brief is to be shared with working groups.

Bridge and Underpass

An update on the Underpass will be available on the WLSE25 website.

Network Rail staff who were dealing with the bridge lighting were re-deployed to help with the changes under Covid-19. There were to be discussions with the Mosaic artist and cleaning team in October/ November and the aim is to pick up on these shortly.

Reopening High Street Safely (Love Croydon – Shop Local)

- Restricted funding came from the Government to cover communication to keep safe, hand sanitiser stations, temporary pavement widening etc. All measures had to be in place by 31 March 2020. The money came

through in June but since people can't be encouraged out into the High Streets during lockdowns, an extension is being sought.

- Love Croydon – Shop Local measures will include banners on lampposts, ground stickers, shop-window stickers and will have local branding. Lamppost banners can go up when the Christmas lights come down. Ground stickers can be installed when the ground is dry for a prolonged period.

Business engagement

Four focus groups should be in place by February/March.

Business Support plans will be re-visited and the Place making design brief is to be shared with working groups

The Conservation Area and the Culture Programme

- The Conservation Area is to be refreshed. The HAZ (High Street) was about to appoint an Officer but this had to be paused.
- The HAZ Cultural Programme would need a further meeting to explain the projects in greater detail.
- The core hubs have not been able to meet but have kept in informal contact. They formed a Cultural Consortium, led by Dan, to apply for HAZ Cultural Programme funds. A festival is proposed to be built around Invention.

Bridge and Underpass

- Update on the WeLoveSE25 website
- Network Rail staff who were dealing with the bridge lighting were re-deployed to help with the changes under Covid-19. There were to be discussions with the Mosaic artist and cleaning team in October/November and the aim is to pick up on these shortly.

Stanley Halls Update

- The Charity managing the Stanley Halls (SPI) has completed its change of name and brand to Stanley Arts.
- During the restrictions the Halls have invested in up-grading sound and lighting equipment.
- Funding was raised from the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) and HE for initial and ongoing renovation and conservation work. This will be done section by section over the next 5 years, beginning with the Society Room and the Grand Staircase.

The Q&A is summarised below:

- A request for the banners to include the WeLoveSE25 and PPR logos, but this may not be possible as banners had already been printed.
- People who don't have access to digital media need to be reached.
- Still waiting to hear whether there would be an extension to the deadline for spending the GGF money, in the light of Covid-19. There is no extension for the HAZ money to be spent but the project is over a longer timescale and so there is more leeway. All the participants have lost more or less a year.
- The Council's S114 position was clarified.
- The mosaic was cleaned and repaired some years ago by the school pupils and the school promised to clean it every 6 months. Network Rail promised measures to stop the staining. It is possible to divert the water. A gutter that worked properly would solve the problem.
- The plans for the High Street when the HSHAZ programme has been signed off would be still targeting the vacant properties. Businesses, such as restaurants, that want to open will get support. Local businesses will be encouraged.

- Although the usage of the High Street may change under the current circumstances, WeLoveSE25 will be looking for sustainable businesses. Business support will ask questions about the new, challenging environment.

The Business of the Meeting

Due to the delays as a result of Covid-19, Patsy Cummings would remain as Chair, extending her term for a short time until the next AGM in the Summer of 2021.

Paul Scott was elected Vice Chair, Chris Peskett Treasurer, Judith Burden Minute Clerk, Shuba Rao Web Officer/IT (name to be determined). Post of Secretary remained vacant.

South Norwood Library

Councillor Oliver Lewis gave an update on the proposed library closure and possible alternatives, which was followed by a Q&A.

AOB

Thanks were made from the incoming officers and to the outgoing officers.

The free on-line workshops available on Stanley Arts .org were promoted, and the South Norwood Community Market was thanked for the success of the Christmas Market.