

	SOHO WARD MEETING 24 OCTOBER 2017 AT 7PM AT THE SUMMERFIELD CENTRE, WINSON GREEN ROAD B18 4EJ	
	ACTION NOTES	
In Attendance	<p>Councillors Sybil Spence (Chair), Chaman Lal & Sharon Thompson</p> <p>Also in attendance:- Councillor Marje Bridle, Assistant Leader Sergeant Angie Warren-Smith, West Midland Police Watch Commander Steve Astbury, West Midlands Fire Service Pete Hobbs, Service Head Private Rented Services & Tenant Engagement Gurrinder Nijjar, Private Rented Section And 21 residents also attended the meeting</p>	
Apologies	Pat Whyte, Paul Turner	
Agenda Item		Action
1.	<u>Notice of Recording</u>	Noted
2.	<u>Petitions</u>	None submitted
3.	<p><u>Police Update</u> Sergeant Warren-Smith gave the following update:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Over the past months the team had been called to assist with other duties but were now back in the ward undertaking neighbourhood duties – There had been a reduction month on month in burglaries – Reports around Broughton Road regarding drug dealing – issue had reduced through work undertaken – Robberies had increased around Soho Road and following some work, arrests had been made and there had been a huge reduction in crimes – There had been a successful World Café event where issues had been addressed and the ways in which the community could take part discussed. <p>In response to concerns raised regarding gangs of people in the bandstand in Summerfield Park selling drugs at all times of the day and night, the Sergeant undertook to refer the issue to Sergeant Lawless. She added that the Park was patrolled but would flag up the concerns to the team. A Public Space Protection Order was being considered and it was hoped to receive funding through the Active Citizens Fund to develop projects in the Park to encourage use and discourage criminal activity.</p> <p>A local resident referred to the number of robberies taking place around City Road, around the new builds and expressed concern about drug dealing openly occurring in Claremont Road during</p>	
		Police

	<p>the day. This had been brought to the attention of the police but no action taken.</p> <p>Drug dealing, anti-social behavior reported taking place in the alleyway to the rear of the Afro Caribbean Millennium Centre around an abandoned car. Sergeant Warren-Smith undertook to report to the team and patrol the area.</p> <p>Councillor Thompson advised she had contacted the Police & Crime Commissioner to arrange a meeting in connection with crime in the ward and the impact on the community and would report back to the next meeting on the outcome.</p>	Councillor Thompson
4.	<p><u>Fire Service Update</u></p> <p>Watch Commander Steve Astbury gave the following update;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in arson rubbish fires – 25 incidents, aligned to the bin strike and summer holidays as the numbers were now reducing. - Increase in arson car fires – collaboration with police led to arrests - Abandoned cars – these were reported by WMFS when spotted. Possibility of looking at a mechanism for residents to link with WMFS to report. - Preventative work – Safe & Well Checks, work with WMAS and people who have had falls - Community Fire Station – everyone welcome to visit or the watch could attend community events. <p>In response to concerns regarding the amount of dumped rubbish, abandoned vehicles and rubbish in alleyways blocking means of escape the meeting was advised that the onus was on the property owner but the Fire Service was willing to work with residents and other partners in the area. Resident's ideas and solutions to the problems described were needed. Councillor Thompson said that action was being taken but it was not obvious currently as there were ongoing operations. Residents were encouraged to report issues to help build a picture.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Preparation of Consultation for Private Landlord Licensing Scheme</u></p> <p>Pete Hobbs explained the proposal for a private landlord licensing scheme to extend the current scheme which only covered houses of 3 or more stories shared by 5 or more people. The Stockland Green and Soho wards had been chosen as areas with high concentrations of private rented accommodation and a consultation exercise would be undertaken in those areas and residents were encouraged to submit their comments. It was hoped to arrange some events in Soho but the best way of contacting tenants/residents needed to be addressed. If it was agreed for the scheme to go ahead all privately rented properties would have to have a licence and pay a fee. The consultation would be done through Be Heard or a form could be completed</p>	

	<p>by contacting prs@birmingham.gov.uk . Through licensing conditions on properties standards could be enforced, tenancy agreements, management of anti-social behavior, garden behavior etc but evidence of the need for a scheme was required from residents.</p> <p>Residents referred to student accommodation where the content from the house was thrown out into the front garden when students vacated and often building material etc was added to the mess when landlords did renovation work. It was sometimes difficult to know who to report to and a directory of services would be useful. Not all residents had access to a computer therefore it would be useful to leave forms at doctors surgeries, schools etc. The meeting was advised that all comments needed to be included in the consultation and complaints reported to the team. Gurrinder would welcome suggestions about the best ways to consult and any information on community events. Discussions were taking place with Soho First for suggestions.</p> <p>Councillor Lal said he was the lead for this piece of work and asked residents to spread the word so people could contribute. Residents had been requesting such a scheme and therefore it was important that as many people as possible took part.</p>	All
6.	<p><u>Local Innovation Fund</u></p> <p>The following presentations were made by groups on their proposals for Local Innovation Fund.</p> <p>a) <u>Community Health Education</u></p> <p>Ross Trafford, Head Teacher, Holyhead School, advised that having consulted the Student Council regarding the Local Innovation Fund it had suggested an outdoor gym at the school to encourage healthy living for students and also be open to the community. In response to questions the meeting was advised that the gym would have to be open to the community outside school hours due to safeguarding, the community would need to organize into groups as individuals could not use the equipment. The funding being sought was £19 -30,000 but each piece of equipment cost £2,000 so as much or as little could be purchased dependent on the amount awarded. The school had insufficient funding to purchase the equipment and the concept was part of a drive to make Holyhead School part of the community. Alternative funding had been sought but the school had not had any success but it would match fund any funding received. Councillor Lal welcomed the proposal as health & well being was a significant issue in the inner city but sought an assurance that community use would be guaranteed. In response to further questions from the community, Mr. Trafford stated that he had some support from religious organisations who had said they would use the gym for health based programmes but he did not yet have relationships with local charity organisations.</p> <p>There was some concern regarding the benefit to the wider</p>	

	<p>community given the time that the gym would be available and its location and access for residents which would only be of use to those living in the vicinity of the school. Councillor Thompson said that the proposal was about encouraging community partnership and booking groups into the gym to work together, intergenerational work, vulnerable groups etc.</p> <p>b) <u>Soho Market Place</u> Hermin McIntosh outlined the proposal to create a celebratory space on the site of the former Muhammed Ali site. Following consultation about the use of the space it had been decided to organize music, food, arts events that would be open to the communities bordering the site. Kajans was the preferred community partner by the Council to re-develop the site and had partnerships with local businesses/groups to develop the concept. The event would cost £35k. £10k funding had already been awarded from the Lottery, 2 further applications had been made for alternative funding and 2 LIF bids had been submitted. £5.5k would be generated by the stalls. In response to concerns raised by Councillor Lal regarding the condition of the site, the meeting was advised that the Council had committed £50k to clear the site and the LEP had been approached for a contribution under its brownfield site policy. Experienced festival organisers would be involved and the site would be cleared in time</p> <p>Agreement in principal was given to the proposals discussed.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Update from Soho First</u> Andrew Simons gave a brief update on the work being undertaken by Soho First with funding from the Local Innovation Fund. A first event in connection with the economy had been organized in May in Musgrave Park and a further event at Bingley Hall was planned for 1 October. It was planned to hold more events across the ward in the future. An economic plan was being produced for the ward and work with partners on how to improve the local economy was underway. Soho First was keen to work with other partners and opportunities for social enterprise. Adella Prichard advised of the local networking that was taking place, bringing local people together and 14 new contacts had been made. There were plans for a network lunch and a market place. She encouraged residents to get in touch with Soho First and in particular to help promote the local licensing consultation. With regard to environmental projects there were 2 litter picks planned – November 18, Talbot Street – and an environment summit. Resident assistance was sought.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Ward Plan</u> Councillor Marje Bridle spoke about ward plans as an action plan</p>	

	<p>for the Soho ward to identify key issues that required addressing. In view of the future boundary changes those priorities could be tackled by residents in neighbourhoods. Having listened to the discussions during the meeting priorities might include Summerfield Park, the private rented sector, rubbish dumping. The process for this would be to draw up a ward plan via the ward councillors, working with local residents. An action co-ordinator for each ward was still under consideration.</p> <p>The meeting was advised that Soho First had written a plan for its work in the Ward and material that had been produced at the Police World Cafe Event which was far ranging, could easily be fed into a Ward Plan rather than the councillors starting with a blank sheet. Councillor Thompson said that the plans drawn up by various groups could be brought together and the main priorities chosen.</p>	
9.	<u>Authority to Chairman and Officers</u>	Agreed

Meeting ended 9.25pm