

	<b>SOHO WARD MEETING</b> <b>30 MARCH 2017 AT 7PM AT THE SUMMERFIELD CENTRE, WINSON</b> <b>GREEN ROAD B18 4EJ</b>	
	<b>ACTION NOTES</b>	
In Attendance	<p>Councillors Sybil Spence (Chair) and Chaman Lal</p> <p>Also in attendance:- Councillor Marje Bridle, Assistant Leader  Steve Edwards &amp; Ronda D'Aguilar, Wates  And 21 residents also attended the meeting</p>	
Apologies		
Agenda Item		<b>Action</b>
1.	<b><u>Notice of Recording</u></b>	Noted
2.	<b><u>Notes of Last Meeting</u></b>	
3.	<b><u>Petitions</u></b>	None submitted
4.	<b><u>Police Update</u></b>	Police unable to attend. Defer to next Meeting
5.	<b><u>Local Innovation Fund</u></b>  <p>Councillor Bridle outlined her role and responsibilities as an Assistant Leader and her commitment to delivering better services at a local level with more influence from local people and local councillors.</p> <p>A local resident while supporting the evolution of devolution said that certain areas did not have the appetite for involvement and therefore he queried what the Assistant Leaders could do to promote that appetite. For example there appeared little pride in the area as the litter and general environment was bad and therefore some pride needed to be instilled and community engagement built.</p> <p>Councillor Bridle felt most people cared about where they lived and that enabling residents to achieve something and build confidence and her job was to ensure that Cabinet Members made services more flexible.</p> <p>It was felt that at a time when the council was in financial difficulties the LIF money could be better spent and it appeared a lot of effort therefore there needed to be clear ways that people could get involved and a strategic approach. Councillor Bridle acknowledged the points raised but said that there now needed</p>	

to be a level of responsibility from residents for their area as the council was unable to support everything. Whilst there needed to be aspirations things needed to start at a local level by organizing into neighbourhoods and developing a plan for that area. There was a general discussion about the litter in the ward and that education was the key. Flats above shops and traders were felt to create particular problems and the transient population which was a feature of the ward was difficult to work with. Councillor Lal explained the legal requirement for businesses to have trade waste contracts and that environmental services worked with businesses to ensure arrangements were in place and enforcement officers did a great deal of work to bring prosecutions against those who did not dispose of waste correctly. Councillor Bridle concluded that it was intended to have an officer in each ward who would work with residents to sort out local issues.

#### Soho First Local Innovation Fund Proposal

Andrew Simons gave a brief overview of Soho First; its origins and plans for the future and then gave the following presentation on their proposals for the LIF;

Thriving Soho – looking at ways to stimulate the local economy by developing a community economic development plan bringing residents, businesses and partners together in the long term. In the shorter term holding a market places event in May in Musgrave Park to promote skills/talents of local people for local people and a further event with partners at Bingley Hall.

Bringing People Together – Carol Henry explained the aim was to give a voice to people who did not have one by providing activities to encourage community involvement. Mental health was a serious issue in the ward and events would be held to offer advice and support.

Environment – Adella Pritchard said that Soho First had been working on the environment before LIF was introduced and therefore had the idea to develop an environmental action plan for the ward and develop local clean ups, street champions, It's your Neighbourhood campaigns and work with schools, residents, partners. It was also hoped to involve businesses and private landlords.

At the invitation of the Chair the meeting showed its support for the proposals

#### Community Hub, Soho House

Apsana Khatun from Legacy West Midlands outlined a proposal to develop Soho House as a community hub to make it more accessible to the local community.

There was some discussion about duplication as Soho First was already developing a proposal for a community hub and it was suggested that the two groups work together.

There was some discussion regarding funding and money being

	used for similar projects but not to help with matters that truly affected the local community such as mental health, drug misuse, gun crime, the elderly and looking at how to educate and help, especially young people to address those issues.	
6.	<p><b><u>Housing Repairs</u></b></p> <p>The Chair advised that she received many complaints in relation to housing repairs and said that a programme of repairs was needed so that residents were aware of when work would be carried out.</p> <p>Steve Edwards said that Wates had no influence over capital repairs eg roofs and windows as the programme was provided by the City Council. Wates did have control over day to day repairs for which there was a specified response time, externally audited. Ronda D'Aguilar said she investigated complaints made directly to Wates and attended HLB meetings and the repair policy was the greatest single issue. There was a failing on appointments currently.</p> <p>It was commented that there was a lack of co-ordination and information for residents. Recent cladding &amp; insulation work had been undertaken in the area and the contractor had turned up some days and not others so there was no link up of work and materials had not arrived on time as a result, the scaffolding had not been removed and parts had not been ordered in time. Steve undertook to take details at the end of the meeting and raise with the City Council.</p> <p>In response to concerns raised regarding work raised with the previous contractor the resident was advised to re-report the matter and it would be inspected within 30 days.</p> <p>In conclusion Wates contractors were thanked for the work undertaken in Kent Street/Lees Street however the way it had been carried out.</p>	
7.	<p><b><u>Matters of Local Concern</u></b></p> <p>i) <b><u>Notified Issue – High Levels of Deprivation in the Ward</u></b></p> <p>John Gale, Chair Lodge Park Residents Association referred to the change in housing in the area as a result of the conversion of new and old properties into bedsits and HMO's which had an effect on the community, deprivation and perception of the area. There was a need for family housing but as the area changed families would be reluctant to put down roots and this again had a knock-on effect on the make-up of the community. There were too many 1/2 bedroom properties in the area which lead the way to buy to let landlords and there were too many hostels which brought other issues into the ward.</p> <p>A landlord registration scheme was needed for Soho, the city council needed to maintain tenancy agreements and planning</p>	

	<p>officers also needed to assist by not allowing any further 1/2 bed properties, hostels and flats. A less negative press about the ward was also needed.</p> <p>Councillor Bridle suggested that the Residents Group organize an action group to meet with the Private Landlord Team, planners and Head of Housing to see if a similar pilot scheme to the one in Stockland Green on the PRS could be undertaken in Soho.</p> <p>John Gale sought a commitment from the Leadership of the city council that there would be more sensitivity shown to Soho and it would not be treated as a 'dumping ground'. He suggested that residents sit on scrutiny committees so that meaningful scrutiny of services could be undertaken and that senior officers be employed on a 2 year rolling programme to ensure they fulfilled their roll.</p> <p>In response to queries regarding a neighbourhood plan Councillor Bridle said this was something that residents needed to draw up with their councillors.</p> <p>Councillor Lal said that the city council had limited powers over private landlords and he shared residents frustrations but felt that the city council needed to offer options for an action plan to residents rather than put the onus on them.</p> <p>ii) <u>Holyhead School</u></p> <p>Ross Trafford, Head Teacher, highlighted the schools priorities and potential partnership work as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To ensure the local community was language rich, especially young people so that they could be active citizens of the future so concentrate on articulation, reading and speaking.</li> <li>– Access to reading material was key</li> <li>– Community focus – different communities coming into school to work with the students</li> <li>– The school would welcome hosting workshops/language skills projects to tie into earlier discussions</li> <li>– National Literacy Trust research was an important tool to progress and it was hoped to pilot work and involve the community</li> <li>– Happy to host performing arts from outside the school and encompass the wider principle</li> <li>– Build employment/skills advice sessions</li> </ul> <p>Mr Trafford said that he wanted to match work to the local need and asked that the school be involved as the proposals referred to earlier in the meeting developed.</p>	
8.	<u>Authority to Chairman and Officers</u>	Agreed

Meeting ended 9.10pm