

Runcorn Town Team Minutes
Monday, 19 January 2016
6pm Hazlehurst Studios, High Street, Runcorn

Attendees

Name	Organisation
Town Team	
Chair -Cllr Pauline Sinnott	HBC Mersey Ward Cllr
Cllr Ron Hignett	HBC Physical Environment Portfolio Holder
Wesley Rourke	Operational Director Economy Enterprise and Property
Graham Wallace	Runcorn Locks Restoration Society
Claire Pitt	Hazlehurst Craft Studio
Maria Tarn	Hazlehurst Craft Studio
Neil McLoughlin	Market Trader
Tony Collacott	Wat Phra Singh UK
Syd Broxton	T H Brown Trust
Halton Borough Council Officers	
Danielle Lightfoot	Graduate Regeneration Officer
Louise Hesketh	

Apologies

Town Team	
Sara Munikwa	Regeneration Manager
Cllr Norman Plumpton-Walsh	HBC Mersey Ward Cllr
Cllr John Gerard	HBC Mersey Ward Cllr
Alison Gleave	Halton Voluntary Action/ Resident
Rev Vicky Schofield	St Michael & All Angels

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Ron Hignett welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that Cllr Norman Plumpton-Walsh (NPW) has stepped down from his position as Chair due to work commitments. RH expressed his thanks on behalf of the Town Team to NPW for all his hard work as Chair.

Action: DL write a letter of thanks to NPW from the Town Team.

2.0 Appointment of Chair

RH explained Cllr Pauline Sinnott (PS) had expressed an interest in taking over the role of Chair of the Town Team. All agreed and voted in PS as Chair.

3.0 Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

4.0 Guest Speaker – Karen Jacobs, HBC Community Development Officer

Unfortunately Karen could not attend the Town Team meeting so potential sources of funding and principles of successful bid writing were not discussed.

5.0 Updates and Feedback

5a Grant Schemes

DL explained that Halton Carers are currently moving into their building and are in the process of collating their evidence to submit their claim for their Commercial Property Renewal Grant. This is the last grant scheme payment that is outstanding. Halton Carers will be holding event soon which will be shared with the group as soon as we know when it is and we will arrange a press release to celebrate the good news story.

Action: HBC Officers to circulate date and press release

5b Town Map

DL explained the map has now gone up in the PIP on Church Street, two cases have been installed at the bus station and the case to replace the sign outside the Co op/Iceland has been ordered. We have contacted the Brindley who are happy for us to put the same in their car park.

Action: HBC Officers to meet Brindley staff on site to decide location and share costs before purchase.

5c Additional budget items

- Telescope and Information boards

DL explained the land issues around siting the telescope on the waterfront have been resolved and the order placed with Heritage Destination Consulting (Ltd).

A proof for the first information board was shared with the group. This contained information on the history of the bridges including a panoramic image of the skyline and facts about the buildings that can be seen through the telescope. All were happy with the first board. DL noted that there had always been two boards planned for accompanying the telescope and it was always envisaged that the second would focus on wildlife. All agreed for this to go ahead.

Actions: LH to send DL some further information on Fiddlers Ferry to be included on the board.

Town Team members to think of anything they would like to include on the wildlife and any help or images they can supply.

DL to meet with Merseylink for help and advice on the wildlife board.

- Arts Programme Update from Claire Pitt

Old Town Bloom 2016 proposal

The main aim for Old Town Bloom 2016 is continued access to art and garden activities within the Old Town, which improves community cohesion and people's overall opinion of the area.

Funding Options that we have applied for/or will apply for:

- Tesco Community Grant Scheme £8- £12,000 in capital funding (raised planters, seating , little free library project etc)
- Area Forum Funding
- Town Team Funding
- Awards for all

Where will this happen?

Depending on funding and other logistics, we are hoping to continue to improve the high street garden, whilst working in other locations to hold various creative sessions.

Initially we mentioned the independent living centre, but during those talks, the newly refurbished carers centre was mentioned as an area that needs some attention and

would benefit a lot of local people. So we have decided to investigate that idea and see what we can come up with.

What will we do?

If we are successful in achieving the Tesco community grant money, we can make a strong visual impact on the high street garden that will benefit the wider community, by improving the aesthetic of the area providing more seating and other structural changes. A further breakdown of plans/budget for this is available, if you would like to see it.

If we are successful in receiving other funding streams, then we will be able to run sessions and work with the local community. This means that even if we are unsuccessful with the Tesco bid, we can still run a successful project, which can only build on the positive work we have achieved so far.

This will involve small family friendly growing projects, outside art sessions, creating things for outside displays and other various inclusive activities. We would also like to build on our relationships with other organisations, including the local library and have some outside reading sessions, as that was very successful last year.

Timescale: We aim to start in March, sowing some wildflowers and celebrating British Science Week.

What next?

For the past two years the 'Old Town Bloom' project has allowed us to consult with the public and this has led to us forming our own community action plan for the area, with the help of the First Steps programme (part of the community development foundation). This has allowed us to work on some ideas that we would like to develop over the next few months, starting with a community based newsletter, leading onto a more permanent art/garden project for the area. This community action plan will be finished by the end of February and will then be signed off by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Due to all the positive feedback from our plan so far, we have been asked to be a case study and that will mean further publicity and some filming next Wednesday (the 27th), so if anyone on the town team would like to come along and talk about the Old Town Bloom project, regeneration and the local area, we would greatly appreciate that.

ACTION: Anyone who would like to take part in the filming on 27th to get in touch with Claire.

PS noted that it is a beautiful garden and the fact that there has been no vandalism is a real testament to the work of the studio.

CB noted that the number of people who go into the garden is lovely to see and she knows of people who have taken friends who are visiting to see it especially.

There was a discussion around the Japanese Knotweed in the garden. CP explained that it is ongoing and under review/treatment and depending on advice workshops and sessions can be limited in the garden and held at other venues to comply with restrictions due to the knotweed and avoid the risk of spreading it.

WR noted that some publicity should be done around the filming on the 27th and the fact that they have been chosen as one of the top case studies to be focussed on by the team coming up from London. This is a real achievement for the studios and the town and should be celebrated.

WR asked when and where the film would be shown. CP explained that the 'First Steps' programme was a pilot project, it has finished and this is a way of showing what was achieved through the project. The final video will be shared with other groups that were involved in the programme and Hazlehurst will be able to share the film with the public to illustrate the work they are doing and use it as part of funding bids as a demonstration of their achievements. LH noted that it will be really useful for applying for funding and match funding in the future. WR noted that it should help to spread positive news stories for Runcorn in DCLG and raise the profile of Runcorn to be considered for any future projects.

PS asked if we could put this on the website when it is finished-all agreed.

Action: CP to circulate details of filming on 27th January and members of the Town Team to attend if possible to help. PS would try and attend.

5d Runcorn Street Market

NM asked for an update following the last meeting. WR explained that he had written to the market traders with options on the way the market is managed in the future but most traders did not want anything to change. The options included the Council reverting to the previous stall charges but in doing so close the market for the period January-March. The Council would run the market April-Oct, the traders would run it during November and the Council would take over again in December. The savings that would be made would be reinvested into marketing for the traders' benefit. The majority of traders voted against these changes.

NM suggested that it may be because most traders want to work every week and although the weather would likely result in the market being closed anyway the traders would object to not having the option.

NM asked if they could relocate to Grangeway Community Centre. Several members of the Town Team did not like this idea as the town centre market

7.0 Runcorn BID

Wesley gave an update on the BID. There was some discussion around concerns that had been raised in the old town that WR dealt with.

8.0 AOB

The Town Team would like a work review/evaluation to use to show what the team have achieved over the last few years, as a selling document for funding applications and a legacy of the Town Team for the future.

Action: HBC officers to produce.

It was noted that Motor World is due to close soon this is due to administrators being brought in and the closure is part of a wider scheme of closures across the country.

GW asked for a letter of support from the town team for the reopening the locks project.

**Action: PS to send a letter of support as ward councillor.
HBC Officers to look into drafting one from the Town Team.**

9.0 Date of next meeting

To be confirmed.