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LOOK! St Albans **our community voice on design**

Minutes of Look! St Albans 1st reps group meeting held on Monday 13th January 2014 at 7:30 at the Cue Club Upper Dagnall Street Please ensure you purchase a beverage on arrival.

Secretary designate established that there was a quorate in place.

Chairperson designate opened the meeting at 7.40pm and welcomed everyone especially our new members Fiona Couper John Metcalf and James Gregory. She also mentioned since our AGM Richard Hardy had left the council and wanted a vote of thanks noted to Richard who had been a highly valued colleague. However on saying goodbye we could say hello and welcome to John Hoad, Spatial Planning and Design Team Leader at St Albans District Council.

Members present

Donald Munro, Fiona Couper, David Lloyd, Mel Hilbrow, Graeme Eastham, John Metcalf, Alan McCartney, John Hoad, Vanessa Gregory, Chris Debenham, James Gregory

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Councillor Julian Daly, Councillor Beric Read, Anthony Oliver and Tim Leicester

2) Vote to formalise the admin group

Chairperson designate informed the group; that as per our constitution unanimously approved at our AGM; those who had volunteered to taken on extra duties within the reps group needed to be agreed at this first meeting. A member raised a question as to where in the constitution was the phrase 'admin group'. The chairperson designate acknowledged this was her own term, as that is how she saw the roles within this community group, as no one in our charrettes would have a louder voice than anyone else. However she stood corrected and referred to the officers of the reps group from then on.

Chairman designate asked if the group were willing to elect Mel Hilbrow as Deputy Chairperson, Chris Debenham as Treasurer and James Gregory as Secretary. The group agreed to the appointments.

The Deputy Chairperson then asked the group if they were willing to elect Vanessa Gregory as Chairperson. The group agreed the appointment.

3) Formally sign a copy of the adopted constitution

The Chairperson then asked for the adopted constitution to be signed. She requested that although normally only the elected officers would sign she invited all those on the reps group present to sign if they so chose.

4) Arrangements for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) formalisation

The chairperson they asked John Hoad to facilitate the MoU with the council to be signed by the Interim Head of Planning and she would counter sign on behalf of Look! St Albans. John Hoad agreed to facilitate. A member pointed out there was a spelling error also the constitution was no longer draft but adopted and suggested these changes be made. This was agreed and would be actioned by the Chairperson in conjunction with John Hoad.

5) Comments on draft AGM minutes before they are sent out to supporters. *Formal adoption can only take place at next AGM*

A member raised concern over of part funding of charrettes by developers and would it not influence the process. The chairperson along with other colleagues explained that they did not believe that funding would unduly influence. Further elaboration was given to this question. The Chairperson also referred to the answers that were given at the AGM and these were contained in the draft minutes. The subject was also alluded to by our guest speaker Tony Burton.

The draft AGM minutes were then agreed and noted that these could now be sent out to our supporters and posted on our Scribd website. It was also noted they could only be approved at the next AGM.

6) Chairpersons report

The Chairperson said she had received excellent feedback both by email and in the street from our Inaugural AGM. The only concern that had been raised with her twice was on the lack of diversity within the male orientated reps group, which contained only two women. She hoped that with further and hopefully wider engagement with the community a more diverse reps group would naturally follow.

The chairperson said she was due to meet Dr Alina Congreve Principal Lecturer in Sustainable Planning at The University of Hertfordshire soon. Dr Congreve has suggested the meeting to see if Look! had any opportunities for student participation or collaboration with The University in proposed forthcoming events. The chairperson said she thought this was an excellent collaborative opportunity. Members indicated they could not see on the horizon any such opportunities. However two members suggested The University could help with looking at the St Albans parking strategy and other central government directives that could be looked at locally. Also the issues of unified signage throughout the city centre. The reps group formed the

general consensus view that if these issues were pertinent to one of the city centre sites we may look at with developers ; then we could revisit these subjects at a later date.

7) Deputy Chairman's comments

The Deputy Chairman said he foresaw Look! St Albans as being dormant until a developer approached us. We could trickle out information to our supporters as we received it. He also sees the role of the reps group as being a facilitator for the community. He had learnt of possible funding through Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) that had been allocated for vibrant town centres and he could not see how ours could not fit that criteria. Also he would investigate opportunities for funding through the St Albans Chamber of Commerce but he had not for the moment anything specific in mind.

8) Treasurer report and recommendations

The Treasurer said he was hoping to produce a budget for the year but needed colleagues to assist in this by keeping him informed of what events/expenditure could be predicted. He advised us that the current money held in cash is £256.76. He was asked whether he had investigated which banks might give favourable rates for such bodies as Look! St Albans. He said that he had to wait for the officers to be elected, the constitution to be signed together with a copy of the agreed first minutes from our reps group meeting before he and fellow officers could open such an account. He said that he had spoken to a bank yet and wanted to ask other organisations for their advice on which banks offered the best service. One member said that her group had recently set up such a bank account and would discuss this with the Treasurer further outside the meeting.

The chairperson said she had an invoice for \$24.95 US dollars (roughly £15.13) for another year's subscription for our Flickr Website and asked if the reps group wanted to continue with this site. It was agreed that we should.

The Chairperson then made a general comment that colleagues had at various times indicated that once constituted we would need to investigate insurance cover. There was a general consensus that insurance cover would be needed for both public liability and professional indemnity.

9) Secretary's comments

The Secretary agreed he would look into the costs of insurance cover.

10) Discussion on new Look! St Albans logo previously circulated. *Please ensure you have a hard copy to assist the discussion.*

Chairperson asked colleagues to refer the portfolio of suggested new logos that David Ellis had provided, who was not at the meeting. It was acknowledged that David had come up with some excellent ideas and that we send our thanks to him for his artistic flair in these designs.

Consensus was reached that we should keep the new design simple as our brand was already widely known and to keep cost of printing low. Number one on page three was agreed upon.

A member asked that we should check with both David and Angela Koch who had originally helped with the design of our present logo that they were happy to hand over copyright on both designs. The chairperson agreed to ask both David and Angela on behalf of the reps group.

11) Discussion on setting up working groups on.

It was agreed to set up the following working parties and the chairperson asked for volunteers from the reps group. The chairperson asked the secretary to ask our supporters who have many skills and abilities to see if any would like to join these working parties and their contributions would be greatly valued.

Website: Remit to set up and design a website for Look! St Albans. Purpose: to publicise the work of Look! St Albans and to keep our supporters updated on events and activities including reps group meetings agenda's and minutes.

Lead officer Mel Hilbrow, volunteer Vanessa Gregory

Funding: Remit and purpose; to obtain funding to enable Look! St Albans to pursue its aims and objectives. Lead officer Chris Debenham, volunteers James Gregory, and Vanessa Gregory

Publicity/Future events: Remit and purpose to further communicate the work of Look! St Albans in its purpose and aims and to act as Spokesperson, as set out in 5.1 (l) of our constitution. Lead officer Vanessa Gregory, no other volunteers came forward.

12) Any Other Business AOB

Chairperson made a comment to the council's representative John Hoad that she had observed the last Planning Policy Committee on Wednesday 18th December 2013 <http://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50009743/DLP%20PPC%20dec13%20Final.pdf>

in which the timetable for the detailed Local plan had been discussed and said that sometime in the future it would be good if Look! St Albans and the council discussed how Look! might help with regards to community engagement on design.

John Hoad responded that in his personal opinion the Look! St Albans workshop report contained a number of contradictions and the codes were in draft form. A few reps group members agreed with him on this point. He said that should the group wish to form a working party to distil the workshop report into 10/12 key points; he would be happy to be on that working party. Graeme Eastham agreed and offered to serve on that working party as developers looked for clarity.

The chairperson cautioned that members were talking about the community design workshop report January 2013, a key document in our constitution, which had been endorsed at our 20th March 2013 community meeting and was to be used in our

charrettes. She was very concerned that at our first reps group meeting a suggestion to distil their views was being suggested. As the chairperson had grave misgivings she thought it best to volunteer to join the working party.

Some reps group members voiced their support for such a working party as it might make the report easier to understand and print. The name, remit and purpose of the working party was not agreed upon.

Please note since the meeting John Hoad has clarified he sees this as an item for later discussion.

13) Next Meeting

Monday the 24th of February was agreed to be the date of the next reps group meeting to start at 7.30 pm at a venue to be decided upon at a later date. Some members commented that the venue used on this occasion had been noisy and they had found it hard to hear all the discussions.

Meeting ended at 9:45pm

These minutes were approved by those present and signed by the chairman at the 2nd meeting of the representatives' group on Monday 24th February 2014

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Chair Look! St Albans Our Community Voice on Design