

**St David's Neighbourhood Partnership
Annual General Meeting
21 January 2015 at Exeter Community Centre**

Attendance: as per signing sheet – 85 people attending.

1. Election of Committee

The following were elected as committee for 2015

Christine Fraser, Penny Dodd, Gina Richards, Kelvin Lacy, Stuart Crewes, Belinda Dillon, Hannah Reynolds, Jenny Liggins

2. Chair's Report

CF reported on successes and challenges of 2014 as per newsletter (appended)

3. Treasurer's Report

HR reported that the bank balance stands currently at £4,120. £3,560 of this was committed to invoices for newsletter printing, room hire and refreshments for community meetings, volunteer expenses (telephone and photocopying/printer costs) as well as the lamppost painting project and buying flowers and planters for the RHS neighbourhood competition. Thanks to our City Councillors for grant support for these activities, particularly the grant of £3,000 which had been approved by our County Councillors for community workshops on Veitch (former horticulture specialist) and towards refurbishing our remaining heritage lamp posts with garlanded enamel flowers.

4. Exeter Energy Company

Presentation by Joe Smeed of ECOE.

5. Community Vision 2015 – 2020 and Priorities for 2015

Community group discussions re Vision Statement of 'Balanced Community' Agreed working draft of:

'We want St David's Neighbourhood to be a place where people want to live and work, now and in the future. It should be a 'balanced community, reflecting the needs of the diverse community that lives here. It should be an active and engaged community with housing that meets all needs and design that blends the best of the old with the best of the new. It should be a safe Neighbourhood with low levels of crime, drugs, litter and anti-social behaviour and with strong networks and groups which help the community to thrive'.

Committee to firm up wording from this agreed draft. This was followed by residents identifying their priorities for the year on flipchart at Priority Stations around the meeting room.

The following were the comments on the Priority topic areas:

Drug Dealing

Hot spots for drug dealing when identified need to be targeted for policing. 'Police, if we identify them , please bust them'.

Current activity:

- Bench by Iron Bridge
- Under Iron Bridge
- Community Centre Steps
- Dealers waiting in Dinham Road parking slots
- Richmond Court access area
- Little Silver and Rockside are being used as rat runs for dealing

Legal Highs are still an issue. Now that South St shop has been closed (hooray) need feedback from Fore St shops and residents on impact of legal highs in their area.

Rubbish, Litter and Waste Management

Rubbish bags being put out at wrong time and in wrong place continue to be an issue – e.g. bags at end of Dinham Road, which are damaging bushes and the ongoing problem of rubbish bags and other materials being dumped in alleyway at North Bridge Place. It was felt that ECC needs to enforce – both with resident and with landlord warnings and fines if necessary, to stop this happening. Landlords should be responsible for their tenants to put bins out at correct times, and after collection put them back . Concerns that the annual

timetable for bin collections will in the future be online what happens if you don't have access to a computer? Impression that in general there was less litter, or is that down to the excellent street cleaners.

Council Planning Decisions

St David's vision statement of 2004 -2014 re a balanced community which is not overbalanced by one resident group or another has been ignored by all Councils. Need to update the Vision Statement and make sure that Councils have regard to it as wishes of local people. Too many hostels, planning permissions and licences being granted for hostels without residents, police or even councillors being consulted. Democratic deficit - especially when community is active and has Vision Statement accepted by Director of Planning for consideration when applications are submitted. Why did they they not take account of our Vision Statement? Where is Community Engagement Strategy about how community decisions will be considered, or community consulted before decisions taken by Councils? Poor procedures and planning decision-making re Sports Hall and student accommodation is evidence of lack regard for local people priorities.

Student Conduct (Drunkness, Noise etc)

Freshers week drunkenness and noise identified as issues, although recognized that the issues with noise are not always caused by students. Ongoing concerns re late night student noise and drunkenness in Bury Meadow area. University taking this seriously. Additional University support being planned for next year intake of students for Freshers Week.

Other actions/ideas that could be put in place to build relationships with community e.g. 'Mend It Sessions' – skills swap sessions, with Exeter Community Centre as venue, communicating good news stories re student activity in the community e.g. volunteering, work with SDNP to circulate the University newsletter.

Levy on clubs if open after 12 midnight (as per Southampton).

Encouraged residents to sign up for 'Beyond Conflict – our issue 'Resident Communities Hosting University Students'.

Anti Social Behaviour:

Nuisance, Neighbours, Irresponsible Landlords, Noise

University needs to employ people to patrol St David's Hill during Freshers weeks. Residents have 2 weeks of no sleep.

Wing mirrors smashed in Exe Street, but now a spate in Dinham Crescent

Vomit and excrement on the Iron Bridge

Address the practice of hostels giving their tenants a 'cooling off' period – immediately outside the building – and affecting the neighbourhood with noise and violence – all hours but especially difficult at night.

A resident of the alms houses who is affected by the nightly pilgrimage going past his house is setting up an e-petition to raise a levy on pubs/clubs who serve alcohol after midnight. This levy would help pay for the policing and clean up, but the main purpose being to reduce the profitability – and reduce the number of establishments staying open after hours.

Drug takers can get a 'needle kit' from chemists, a free pack of needles and a sharps box. This encourages them to not share needles. BUT a side effect is that they need to store this pack somewhere, and they have many more needles to dispose of. The St David's churchyard remains ongoingly affected from being used as a storage and open disposal area for needles.

Public Realm, Roads Pavements, Lamp Posts, Street Furniture

Needs to be a sign at the junction of Dinham Crescent and Mount Dinham saying 'No access to Bonhay Road and River Exe'. Every week we have cars and pedestrians trying to get to the river.

Need to replace the railings at the corner of Hele Road/St David's Hill where boundary wall collapsed (several comments)

Weeds! If everyone pulled out a seedling beside the pavement each time they go out then we might at least stop the spread of these weeds. What is happening about spraying them?

Richmond Road pavements need resurfacing. Also the road looks very tatty.

Actions

Agreed to seek funding for Vision document and print it full colour, engage people by photo competition and widely disseminate copies to each household and key agencies. Committee to take forward.

Other Issues that Need Addressing urgently

Gulls – Noise of gulls, spreading of rubbish, splitting bags, making mess and being a general nuisance.

Alcohol abuse and street drinking – aren't we supposed to be a 'no street drinking area'?

Meeting closed at 8.45pm