

**Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society**  
**Registered charity No. 246145**

**Minutes of the Committee Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024**  
**8.00pm at Altrincham Town Hall**

**Present:**

**Committee members:** Judie Collins (Chair), Paulina Lewis (Planning), Richard Hagon (Sec), Robert Redford, Trevor Stone (Treasurer), Leslie Cupitt

**Co-opted Members:** Ian Stuart (Friends of Altrincham Interchange)  
Angela Stone (Town Centre Lead)

**Guests:** None.

**1. Apologies, Declarations of Interest.**

1.1 Apologies: David Eastwood MA, Pauline Terry, Martin Garrett

1.2 Declarations of interest – None

1.3 The minutes of the previous meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were distributed prior to the meeting.

**2. Matters arising from previous minutes not otherwise covered on the agenda:** None

**3. Report from the Chair**

My first day back on Monday. Many thanks to Richard and Paulina for holding the fort.

The AGM went well with helpful conversation with Bruntwood.

Paulina and I attended the Civic Voice AGM in Chester and had a helpful catch up with Ian Harvey.

The new community team at Trafford held a well attended event with interesting presentations from U3A and Dr Kate Jennings who is worried about excess alcohol and pubs not promoting alcohol free. We've discussed this with CAMRA and fancy a mock cocktail event.

Broadheath Partnership met and hopefully have a permanent venue in St Albans Church.

Strategic Planning held a community meeting about Carrington Moss Developments and initial thoughts about not inviting us were abandoned. There are plans for traffic to end up in Altrincham where spending on traffic proposals will be needed.

The Andy Burnham night at Stretford Public Hall was unhelpful in that it mostly didn't have questions about Trafford who hadn't advertised it. Lis Lewis from Trafford Planning was there with her daughter so we had interesting catch up.

Our Carol Concert was abandoned as Altrincham's reputation for poor behaviour by groups and individuals was upheld. Vicar of St Georges happy to continue working with us in 2024.

We have been nominated for a Kings Award for Voluntary Service and many thanks to Richard for coordinating the process. Paulina and I met with the Greater Manchester panel but judging takes a long time so it will be November before we hear anything.

The Altrincham entries for Its Your Neighbourhood for North West in Bloom were all judged outstanding.

The community rooms on Platform 4 at the Interchange will remain empty as the Hub withdrew, but the waiting room is cosy and full of community offerings.

Looking ahead Altair, Interchange and the Hospital still to be sorted. Considerable competition from Peel Holdings who want an Ice Rink at The Trafford Centre.

We need to look at Purdha before the local elections in May and then later the General Election and decide on Hustings.

L&Q continue to be a problem.

We need to decide a way forward for the Society and Richard has some thoughts. I look forward to a good turn out on Tuesday.

#### **4. Planning Update from Paulina**

For current planning applications **see appendix 1.**

Some concerns regarding the height of the proposed storage unit on the corner of George Richard's Way and Davenport Lane. Also proposed alterations to The Warrant House on High Street for which the Design Forum have submitted comments.

5. (a) Town Centre update from Angela **see appendix 2**

(b) Membership and Treasurer's report.

Bank Accounts: Current: £ 1501.79

Deposit A/c: £ 1492.89

HLF A/c: £1.00

**6. Credit Card Payments for Membership & Donations for 2024**  
Starting a 100 Club Draw

No discussion – deferred

**7. Corporate Sponsorship**

Bruntwood – Assura Health Group – McGoff Group – Myerson Solicitors – City Branch

Total Fitness - Waterstones

Some discussion took place regarding this. Angela Stone advised that moving forward we have to be clear about our message i.e. What our aims and goals are as a society. The messages would be different for the Public Promotion as opposed to the Corporate Sponsorship Promotion. She will put some ideas together.

**8. Society Promotion – Advertising in Local Theatre Programmes (Garrick, Club Theatre)**

Changing the website name to A&B Community Voice & remove shield logo

It was thought not necessary to change the website society name, but some wording would be changed to incorporate the 'Community Voice' style message.

Regarding Advertising – this was deferred pending decisions under item 7.

9. To consider a bi-monthly Community Voice News Online information sheet which people can sign up to free of charge, sent direct to their inbox.

Angela Stone advised that we would need to register with the Information Commissioners Office to cover us from a Data Protection point of view. The Secretary said he would sort this out. The launch of this service will be deferred until the outcome of decisions under item 7.

## 10. AOB

Chair reported that we now know who will be taking over Altrincham Town Hall, although it has not yet been officially announced. As a result it looks very unlikely that Community Use will form part of the new arrangement. On this basis, Chair said we will need a list of the current users of the Town Hall, to back up our argument with Trafford about the lack of available community space in the town.

We will need to keep a close eye on the community artifacts stored at the Town Hall, to make sure these are dealt with appropriately. An inventory has already been prepared.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

**Date and time of next committee meeting – Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
8pm-9pm at Altrincham Town Hall**

## Appendix 1

### PLANNING APPLICATIONS 20 November 2023 – 15 January 2024

20 November 2023

112224/ADV/23 57 George Street, Altrincham WA14 1RJ

Advertisement consent sought for the replacement of 1 internally illuminated projecting sign. 1 internally illuminated fascia sign. 1 internally illuminated ATM surround and decals, new statutory signage and safety manifestation to door and add new window manifestation.

27 November 2023

112065/HHA/23 30 New Street, Altrincham WA14 2QS

Demolition of small external store and wall to the side and erection of single storey rear extension and new fence

11 December 2023

112098/FUL/23 48 New Street, Altrincham WA14 2QS

Demolition of the existing rear outrigger. Erection of new dwelling with associated landscaping and parking. Conversion of the existing shop to habital living accommodation. Erection of a new canopy/link extension. Creation of a new vehicular access and gates to The Narrows. External alterations of include new windows and doors.

11320/FUL/23 Warrant House, High Street, Altrincham WA14 1PZ

Remodelling of the main pedestrian entrance bounding High Street together with associated landscaping, installation of PV panels to the roof and minor modifications.

Note: Comments from the Design Forum

8 January 2024

112408/ADV/23 102 Stamford New Road, Altrincham WA14 1DG

Advertisement consent sought for 4 internally illuminated fascia mounted signs and 2 internally illuminated projecting signs.

15 January 2024

112531/FUL/23 Land Corner of George Richards Way and Davenport Lane, Altrincham WA14 5BT

Demolition of existing store and erection of new household and business storage facility (Use Class B8) with associated access parking, landscaping and new sub-station.

Note: Comments to be submitted, several stories high.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Altrincham Town Centre Update - January 2024**

#### **Compiled by Angela Stone – Our Town Centre Lead**

## **BUSINESS MOVEMENTS**

A lot has happened in the last few months!

Randall's have moved to Regent Rd opposite Phantong in what was Scope

Holland and Barratt have moved into their old unit, H&B old unit is now up for rent.

Poundland (which doesn't seem to have much for £1!) Opened in the old Wilko.

County Galleries is now closed.

Two new openings on Shaw's Road - West Beverley owned by Justin & Diana from California Coffee and The Beacon in the former's PI unit owned by Chris and Will of Batch Bottle Shop.

Sud Pasta on Shaw's Road has reopened as Rigatoni's

Unagi opened at the end of December as a restaurant on Central Way...

Bernie's reopened in September after a crowd-funding initiative as a canteen and bakery

Pranda bar opened in December in the former Sardus unit.

Noria opened in Goose Green at the end of the year in the former Francs unit serving Mediterranean food.

Memories, a new bar has opened in the former Kingfisher unit.

Jojo Aalay has opened in the unit that was Kathmandu.

Damo has opened in the former Scalini unit on Ashley Road.

Altrincham Football Club now have a unit in the Stamford Quarter.

Re-store, an eco friendly shop has opened on Regent Road next to Randall's

The Chinese supermarket is proving popular as is Utility, especially with youngsters. Utility seems to be a cheaper version of Paperchase.

The art gallery on The Downs has closed.

Traders Tiki and Evuna are up for sale. Evuna closed at the end of December.

Just Plonk has closed, they also have a unit in Alderley Edge.

IlCaperno has closed and the lease is up for sale.

Stutter and Twitch have closed and moved to a unit in Hale.

JD Sports has closed and moved to Broadheath.

Suki's the ladies clothing shop in the unit that was Shopmobility has closed sighting poor building maintenance. The unit forms part of The Grafton's.

Work has started in the unit that used to be Contemporary Art Gallery for a door company, Lakes Doors.

Fusion Creative Studio has opened on George St. The unit offers a full recording studio as well as a bar and event space.

A new tenant for the rear block in the Regent Road had been confirmed as a cosmetic surgery (which we knew about)

A new solicitors, Yates Legal is opening on Regent Road where the cartridge shop used to be, they've moved a few doors down.

Seems like Shaw's Road and Regent Rd are the place to be!

## **CRIME & STREET SCENE**

There is an increase in shoplifting; the Business Improvement District team (BID) have been actively working with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to increase their visibility. The problem however remains for the retailers. BID is also working on the issue of Chuggers in the town centre. I generally use the line "sorry I don't have time" & they seem to cheerfully accept this.

Buskers are still causing issues for some businesses on George St. We do get some talented buskers & I refer them to the live music venues to see if they can get bookings, there are some that just create "noise" though, so I do see their point.

If I ask them to move they normally do.

I'm joining the first Counter Terrorism course of 2024 on-line later this week

These sessions are useful in helping the Committee consider where we have problems in the Town Centre. We remain concerned about bollards in place (& working) to protect the public from Marauding Terror Attacks (vehicles being used as weapons) as well as any fresh news and advice relating to incidents.

## **PUBLIC REALM WORKS & PARKING**

Public realm work is underway in the Stamford Quarter; this seems to be progressing well though is creating problems of footfall for businesses. Work is due to be completed by the summer.

The new one-way system is not proving popular with businesses. Businesses that use Central Way (George St, Greenwood St and those actually on Central Way) now have to drive round town to get to their locations; this of course includes frequent deliveries to everyone. A Tesco 40ft lorry was seen heading down Regent Rd presumably not realising there was a one-way system in place. Discouraging residents to drive into Altrincham is one thing, but delivery access is essential for everyone.

Once Regent Road Car Park is open the same will apply to town centre visitors wanting to use the car park that they'll have to drive further to access. It is already creating issues for patients at the Health & Wellbeing Centre (H&WBC). Ironic really when we fought to get parking at the H&WBC at considerable extra cost and we also fought for extra spaces at Regent Road to cope with demand for parking. Regent Road will have EV charging facilities.

The knock on effect is that The Downs and Railway St are becoming rat runs and traffic is heavier on outlying roads - Groby Rd and Bentinck Road as people try to work out how to get to where they want to get to.

Some New St residents are still waiting to move into the rear block of apartments behind Regent Rd car park. They have all been allocated apartments.

We still have the Remembrance Garden to discuss for Chapel St. This will also include the "there but not there" statue which got damaged and is now resting inside the Town Hall.

## **HOSPITALITY**

BID gained Purple Flag status.

The Roebuck were awarded Gold for their RHS entry, which was well deserved. Iain and Gareth work hard on this each year.

Christmas trading went well, however January is very quiet which is to be expected. Bars have largely remained, however the restaurant sector are finding trading a struggle.

### Best Bar None

15 venues of 36 have now been assessed & completed. We have a few more working on their applications that need a bit of encouragement, so if they don't make the cut off for 2023/24 they can be added in 2024/25

We also have nominations in for the Best Town Centre and Recognition Award for the National Awards. These will be announced at an event at the House of Lords on the 20<sup>st</sup> February following the conference. Trevor and I will be attending as we are both scheme Assessors and me as Altrincham Co-ordinator.

The Committee has its first post-Christmas meeting next week to plan for 2024.

We now have a fresh supply of Pubwatch posters to distribute – for some reason drinkers find it amusing to remove our posters.

## **Other news**

### **BID**

Have been successful in obtaining a grant for a cargo bike scheme.

## **EVENTS NEWS**

Paint Altrincham Blue took place in November, this is an initiative organised by Tony Collier. "Red4Feb" is taking place in February, raising awareness & money for the British Heart Foundation; this is being co-ordinated by Bridgewater Rotary.

Paint Altrincham Pink will be 4<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> March. Planning started today. This 2 week event involves businesses across Altrincham raising money for Prevent Breast Cancer based at The Nightingale Centre at Wythenshawe.

Manchester Marathon is on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April and is now sponsored by Adidas which we're seeing as a positive step in becoming a major event. The event for runners is now sold out. The route may have to change again to accommodate public realm works in Manchester; we have yet to find out how this will affect Altrincham.

Brit Fest takes place in July at Ashley Hall. The 3 day event is being organised by Edward and Anthony Prophet (who now own the Bowdon Rooms) and is sponsored by Myerson's. There are some big names performing as well as some emerging performers.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD BUSINESS PLAN**

The Working Group has been re-designated by the Council.

The Working Group need to re-convene to look at the existing plan to consider what is working and what isn't as we're now half way through the Plan term. As it took us 7 years to get the first one in place we need to gain traction to ensure continuity!