**Baldock Town Talk 31stOctober 2022**

Present:

* Cllr Alistair Willoughby (NHC) [alistair.willoughby@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:alistair.willoughby@north-herts.gov.uk)
* Cllr Michael Muir (NHC & County Councillor) [Michael.muir@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.muir@north-herts.gov.uk)
* Cllr Steve Jarvis (NHC & County Councillor) [steve.jarvis@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:steve.jarvis@north-herts.gov.uk)
* Cllr Michael Weeks (NHC) [Michael.weeks@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.weeks@north-herts.gov.uk)
* Cllr Tom Tyson (NHC) [tom.tyson@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:tom.tyson@north-herts.gov.uk)
* Cllr Juan Cowell (NHC) [juan.cowell@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:juan.cowell@north-herts.gov.uk)
* Ashley Hawkins (NHC Community Engagement Officer) [Ashley.hawkins@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Ashley.hawkins@north-herts.gov.uk)
* **MOA = Member of Audience**

Steve Jarvis opened the Town Talk meeting at 6.30pm and welcomed the MOAs.

The first section of the Town Talk was set aside for a presentation on the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan which was presented by Edward Leigh, Senior Transport Policy Officer. Edward presented details on the consultation and answered questions from the floor and encouraged members of the public to make their comments online.

The second part of the meeting focussed on Templars which is currently being used by Haven Group as a Homeless Shelter. This issue was also discussed at the June Town Talk. There were approximately 60residents from Baldock in attendance, with many opposed to its current usage as a homeless shelter.

Various members of the public spoke about the residents at Templars complaining of them begging on the streets, doing drug deals in public, drinking and being abusive. It was also mentioned that a recent stabbing in Stevenage was apparently by a resident living in Templars.

A MOA asked if the Planning meeting was still planned for the 17th November. The MOA was advised that the date had slipped as the Planning Officer was still waiting for a report from the Police. The Police had been contacted on several occasions but has still not made a representation. The meeting might be held in December or may be delayed until January 2023.

The Lord Lister in Hitchin had its Planning meeting delayed until they had received the Police Report. Once received the meeting was held and the Planning Committee passed it.

A MOA asked if The George was also being used as a homeless shelter. The MOA was advised that the flats above The George are rented it to businesspeople and that the application for downstairs was for 2 flats which would be for private rental.

A MOA asked who had given consent for Templars to be used as a homeless shelter. The MOA was advised this was authorised under Temporary Housing by North Herts Housing Team and this was agreed during the Pandemic. In terms of the people being homed at Templars, there is a vetting process wit County and District Councils and then an interview process with Haven. A few have been evicted.

A MOA asked if it was true that a new building was being built in Letchworth which would eventually house those currently in Templars. The MOA was advised that this was the plan but that the building was about 3 years away.