27/01/2020

**Baldock Town Talk**

Present:

* Cllr Michael Weeks (chair)
* Cllr Jim McNally (NHDC)
* Cllr Michael Muir(NHDC & County Councillor)
* Cllr Steve Jarvis (NHDC & County Councillor)
* Cllr Tom Tyson (NHDC)
* Claire Morgan (Community Engagement Team Leader)
* Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer)
* **MOA = Member of Audience**

Cllr Weeks welcomed everybody to the meeting.

Ashley Hawkins explained the idea of Town Talk and its current format used in Letchworth and Hitchin. Ashley informed members of the audience that attendee’s names and emails addresses would now be collected so that the outcomes from discussions could be forwarded to them direct rather than having to wait until the next Town Talk. Ashley also informed the group that the notes from Town Talk would now also be posted on the NHDC website as is the case for the Letchworth, Hitchin and Royston Town Talks.

Prior to taking questions from the floor, the Chair and his fellow Councillors provided updates on the issues that were raised at the previous Town Talk in October.

**Street Lighting** – An issue was previously raised asking why the street lights on White Horse Street were not on at night time. Cllr MM said that the issue had been investigated and that the plan (subject to approval by the Highways & Transport Committee) was for the lights to be off from midnight until 6am. Cllr SJ joined the debate and said that it was his understanding that the lights would be dimmed in the evening and remain on until 1am and then turned off until 5am.

**Waste Collection at Hillcrest –** Missed collections was a previous issue raised by a **MOA** at the July 2019 Town Talk. At the October Town Talk the **MOA** said that the service was now running smoothly and bins were being collected and emptied on time. However at the Jan 2020 Town Talk, the same **MOA** said that the service had slipped again with collections being sporadic. Cllr MM suggested that maybe the service was still catching up after the Christmas period. Cllr JM said that he had mentioned the issue to the Portfolio Holder and that the area was now seen as a Hot Spot and would be addressed.

**North Road Zebra Crossing –** The zebra crossing on North Road was installed at the end of 2019. The location of the zebra had been the subject of much discussion at Town Talk during 2019 with both Councillors and members of the public unsure on the best location for the crossing with many thinking it should be located outside The Engine Public House. Cllr MM advised the group that the zebra crossing could not be located outside The Engine Public House on safety grounds. Cllr MM also stated that the crossing was being well used and that the box junction and the crossing was helping to slow down traffic. Cllr JM addressed the audience and stressed again that he didn’t feel the crossing was being well used and was in the wrong location but thanked Cllr MM for getting a crossing for the town.

**MOA** – Regarding the Traffic Lights on the cross roads, would it not be better to have a mini roundabout here instead?

**Cllr MM –** Unfortunately this would not be an option as there is insufficient room for installing a roundabout.

**Questions raised this time.**

**MOA –** A question was asked why only one side of Church Street was being cleaned. (Church side of the street). The resident said he had been living in the area for 3 months and one side was never cleaned and that he had logged the issue with the Council.

**AH** Community Engagement Officer - AH passed the query onto colleagues in Waste and received the following update. The Area Officer for Baldock visited the site on 30th January and reminded the street crew of the need to clean both sides of the road. The Area Officer stated that the road falls within the Zone 1 high intensity area and is required to be cleaned daily. The location would be regularly accessed by the street crew and the Area Officer to ensure it was cleaned properly. The Baldock Area Officer is happy to be contacted if any further issues arise in this area. Contact Giovanna Silverio at Giovanna.Silverio@north-herts.gov.uk

**MOA –**A question was asked about the parking restrictions in Church Street. The resident said that from 5pm on Friday until Sunday night there are no restrictions and it is a free for all and almost impossible for residents to park outside their homes.

**Cllr MW- The Parking Strategy is up for renewal and the emphasis on this would be residents and not commuters.**

**MOA - A question was asked about when the Welcome to Baldock sign on Letchworth Road was being replaced.**

**Cllr MM – This was being replaced using the County Councils 90k locality budget.**

Residents were invited to contact ashley.hawkins@north-herts.gov.uk regarding tonight’s Town Talk.

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