**Minutes of All Saints & Parkfields Community Forum held on 27th June 2019**

**Facilitated by All Saints Action Network**

*The Local Regeneration Partnership*

**1. Attendance.**

Steve Ulfig Regional Technical Director, Lovell Partnership Ltd

Paul Costiff Associate Development Director, Countryside Properties

Amandeep Purewal Marketing & Communications Manager, Lovell Partnership Ltd

Ravi Phul Service Manager Private Sector Housing, City of Wolverhampton Council

Colin Smart ASAN Director & local resident

Cllr Zee Russell City of Wolverhampton Council

Cllr Sandra Samuels City of Wolverhampton Council

Cllr Bev Momenabadi City of Wolverhampton Council

Anita Small Health & Beyond

Shobha Asar-Paul ASAN Chief Officer (Chair)

Raj Tour ASAN Nursery Manager

Iftikar Karim ASAN Research Manager (minutes)

23 local residents were also present, full attendance list is available from the ASAN Office

**2. Welcomes & Introductions**

The ASAN Chief Officer (SAP) welcomed everybody to the Forum meeting and reminded them that ASAN was an independent charitable organisation that has acted, since 1995, as the local regeneration partnership, bringing together local residents, locally based organisations/agencies and other partners to make All Saints a better place in which to live and work.

SAP went on to highlight forthcoming community events including a summer programme of activities for local children / young people and the annual free All Saints Community Festival.

**3. Working with landlords & tenants to improve private sector housing in Wolverhampton**.

* Ravi Phull (RP) of Wolverhampton Council presented on efforts to improve the quality of private sector housing in Wolverhampton. This included the rent with confidence scheme for tenants and their efforts to clampdown on rogue landlords. Since October 2018 a total of thirty penalties had been issued to private landlords for failing to provide quality housing for rent. This approach seemed to have been working since there were no repeat offenders
* Questions were posed regarding the support provided by the Council to tenants experiencing harassment. This area of provision was being strengthened with additional staff being appointed.

**4. Housing Developments in All Saints**

**Steelhouse Lane / Cable Street (Lovell)**

* Steve Ulfig (SU) of Lovell Homes provide details of their housing development, to be marketed as ‘Saints Quarter,’ which is about to start on the patch of long derelict land bounded by Cable Street and Steelhouse Lane. This will comprise 151 homes, including 70 (46%) which will be affordable social housing. SU recognised the financial support from Homes England and the West Midlands Combined Authority which had enabled the high proportion of social housing.
* They had started on site on 17th June with an initial focus on site clearance. Installing of infrastructure will begin in 7 weeks, with the first 5 show homes to be completed by January 2020. It is anticipated that the programme will be completed in October 2021, requiring a two and a half year build period.
* SU emphasised that that the development would create a number of opportunities for the local community. Including some investment in local community projects, 5 apprenticeships and work experience to enhance people’s employability.
* A number of questions were posed to SU by members of the audience:
* Residents expressed concern that no children’s play area was included within the scheme. This will require children and their parents to cross the busy Steelhouse Lane to use the All Saints Pocket Park and Southside Community Sports Facility. PC responded by stating that the developers had followed Local Authority guidance on provision of opens paces within housing developments and that they will comply with the requirement to install a Pelican Crossing on Steelhouse Lane to enable residents of the new development to access community infrastructure such as schools, Primary Care and recreational facilities.
* SU emphasised that the shape of the development had been influenced by the viability assessment carried out which indicated that there was little scope to invest in the local infrastructure. This had been accepted by the local authority alternatively the site would have remained derelict.
* Residents questioned arrangements of the social housing on the site to prevent ‘ghettoisation’ of the residents living in the affordable housing.
* Cllr Momenabadi emphasised that lack of quality of open space within All Saints was a major issue , particularly in the context of the pitches on the nearby Dixon Street playing fields being closed for groundworks.

**Cable Street (Countryside Properties)**

* Paul Costiff (PC) of Countryside emphasised that his company are building the homes for Sigma Capital Group PLC who will then manage them as private lets, the scheme is branded as ‘Simple Life Homes: James Mill Way.’ A Sigma marketing film was shown indicating the rental offer. PC also apologised on behalf of Sigma who had been unable to send a representative to attend the Forum.
* There will be a total of 164 homes with the first tenants moving in late August with an overall scheme completion by late summer 2020 and the homes fully occupied by Christmas 2020.
* The audience raised a number of matters concerning this scheme:
* A concern was again raised regarding the impact on local infrastructure with 164 families moving into the area and regarding the lack of housing variety on the scheme . SU responded that Sigma had undertaken extensive market research regarding the type of tenants that are likely to take this housing offer. They will comprise younger families with parents carrying our ‘project work’ and they anticipated that the typical let period would be 2.5 years. Further Sigma had specified the homes to be suitable for families with younger children
* PC informed the meeting that the homes would be offered on the open market and that Sigma would accept people on welfare benefits.
* The lack of public open space on the site was again raised as an area for concern, SU replied it had not been feasible to include open space dur to site remediation requirements, how there would be a landscaped strip of land adjoining the Old Mainline Canal.
* PC emphasised that Sigma were keen to develop constructive partnerships within All Saints since they will have a long term presence in the area.
* Cllr Momenabadi stated that the benefit cap may prevent local people from renting home son the site and she will provide details on how to alleviate this at the next Forum.

**Bus Garage Cleveland Road (Jessup Brothers)**

* Iftikar Karim, on behalf of ASAN, informed the meeting that representatives of Jessup and BPN Architects had been invited to this Forum, they had decided not to attend since the scheme was not sufficiently developed.
* Jessup were planning a mixed use scheme on the site consisting of 74 apartments and 18 houses to be offered for sale. In addition they will construct retail space, a training and office area and a day nursery for the YMCA. Planning approval had been given on 15th February 2019.
* The meeting agreed that Jessup and their architects should be invited to the next All Saints Community Forum to discuss their scheme for the former Bus Garage site.

**5. Any Other Business & Concluding Comments**

Members of the community present recognised the efforts underway to bring into use the extensive tracts of derelict land that had blighted All Saints for many years. They also called for the sensitive development of the Royal Hospital site and for the inclusion of high-quality public and community space within it so that it could act as the focal point for the neighbourhood. It was hoped that the blight to the area resulting from the closure of the Hospital in June 1997 could finally be addressed after many years of dashed hopes.

**6. Date of Next Forum**

Local residents and stakeholders present requested ASAN to convene the next Forum in late September or early October 2019. This should include a presentation on the Bus Garage development as well as an update on progress with the key Royal Hospital site.