**Community and Governance Committee Meeting**

**25 January 2024**

**Agenda Item: 7.CG**

**APPENDIX CG139**



**Town Centre Working Group**

**Working Party Minutes**

**Monday 8 January 2023, 2pm at the Town Hall**

Present Cllr Chapman, Glover, Love, Manton

1. **Town Centre Building Audit**

Cllr Chapman provided an update on the last audit.

* 5 items were identified which were not building related:
* Waste Bins blocking the footpath down Great Hales Street opposite the Stags Head Public House.
* Blocked pathway drain adjacent to “Nail Creation”, Shropshire Street.
* Trip hazard on cellar drop in pathway Adjacent to the “Tudor House”
* Potential unapproved demolition of rear outbuildings and Boundary wall “Stags Head” Public House

**Recommendation No.1:** That the above issues be logged on “FIX My Street”, and that the existing “Terms of reference” for this working party be modified to include Highways, pathways and public amenity areas within the Town centre in order to identify and register such issues.

* Two properties were identified for as having good outward appearance:
* Elegance Bridal
* Leek United

**Recommendation No. 2**: The above properties to be awarded a certificate of

recognition for having a good outward appearance.

* 15 new building issues were identified.

**Recommendation No.3:** The 15 properties with new identified issues be sent the first letter asking for remedial action.

* The following 2 issues of the 15 identified issues were regarded as a potentially serious public safety issue.

* Loose/detached roof tiles above footpath on Stafford Street
* Potential loose timber at high level on Cheshire Street above footpath

**Action taken:** The 2 issues were deemed potentially serious enough to take immediate action and have already been reported to Shropshire Council.

* 1 issue involving possible public electrocution due to a loose electrical cable on a redundant street sign on Queen Street Carpark adjacent to the Temptations Boundary wall, which could be reached by children and adults.

**Recommendation No.4:** Issue to be logged on Fix My Street, as a matter of urgency and public safety.

* 1 property was identified as having demolition works carried out possibly without planning/Demolition permission.

**Action taken:** Issue reported to Shropshire Council Planning Enforcement.

* 2 properties were identified as having household drains running into the rainwater drains; one in particular was running into a blocked drain resulting in bath water running down the street.

**Recommendation No.5:** The blocked drain be logged on Fix My Street and that Severn Trent Water be contacted regarding legislation for the disposal of household water; the response to be reported to Committee. To be Actioned by the Chairman.

* 8 previous issues have been resolved by building owners/tenants.

**Recommendation No.6:** Letters of thanks be sent to the owners/tenants.

A discussion took place on the success of inspection and sending letters; some properties have already received two letters pointing out issues with the properties but no remedial work has been carried out. It was identified that this could be due to the tenants not owning the property and not forwarding the letters to the owners. It was agreed that the initiative is worthwhile and should continue.

It was agreed that a 3rd letter be sent to properties where no remedial works have been carried out. The third letter to be the same as the 2nd letter with dates updated as necessary.

**Recommendation No.7:** A 3rd letter be sent to owners/tenants who have not carried out any remedial work.

Members discussed that some of the issues identified in the inspection were not covered by the remit of the group, it was agreed to update Working Groups Terms of Reference and present them to Committee for approval, this point been covered by “Recommendation No. 1” above.

1. **Town Centre Fingerpost Audit**

A recent audit of the town centre fingerposts and noticeboards has been carried out. It was identified that several fingerposts have some directional signs missing and some are out of date.

A second audit to take place in January to recommend replacement directional signs and work to be carried out on the noticeboards. A recommendation report to be presented to Committee in March.

It was discussed that the fingerposts, noticeboards and street furniture are not part of the remit of the group. It was agreed to include the inspection of all street furniture in the updated working group terms of reference.

**Recommendation No. 8:** To approve the updated working group terms of reference. Attached as item 1.

1. **Report to C&G Meeting on 25 January 2024.**

A discussion took place around the ownership of properties, pathways, land etc within the Town, in particular how much time is spent trying to ascertain who owns what.

**Recommendation No 9:** Town Council to open an account with the Land Registry for land/properties searches which may/will involve an annual fee. This account and access be limited to the Town Clerk.

**To Consider**

To consider and agree the recommendations listed above.