

Beeston Community Forum

Annual Report for the year 2015-6

The Seventeenth Annual General Meeting - 3rd December 2015

This was addressed by Councillor David Congreve, a former Lord Mayor representing the Lord Mayor of Leeds and Councillor Angela Gabriel , on behalf of the Beeston and Holbeck Ward Councillors.

The following officers and committee members were elected :-

Chair	Christine Thornton
Vice Chair	Arthur Kirby
Secretary	Robert Winfield
Treasurer	Robert Winfield
Other Committee members	Richard Bell Bill Birch Adam Cooper Steve Francis Ken Hewson Noor Zaman

The Committee was joined for the first time by Ken Hewson . Richard Bell relinquished the position of Vice Chair. Robert Winfield was re elected as Treasurer , but agreed to step down after Christine Thornton expressed the opinion that no person should hold two officer positions. Colin Hendrick Ward expressed an interest in taking on the position of Treasurer. He was elected to the position by the Committee on 17th December and his election was ratified by the Forum on 7th January. Doris Brooke , John Fenton and Greg Turton left the Committee . We thank them for their services to the Forum . The Forum voted to send a letter of thanks to John Fenton (who had served on the Committee since January 2004) and Kathleen Fenton (who served on the Committee between 2002 and 2012) , shortly before they moved away from Beeston . We wish them well for the future.

Meetings

The table below shows the dates of meetings and the details of guest speakers

Date	Details of guest speaker(s)	Topic
7th January 2016	Chris Powell (First Leeds)	Bus services
4th February 2016	Stewart Robinson (International Fun Fairs) .	Valentine Fair at Elland Road . There was also a longer discussion about Neighbourhood Planning
3rd March 2016	Sgt . John Pickard and P.C. Dave Beeley (West Yorkshire Police)	Policing issues
7th April 2016	John Cummins (Groundwork)	The Love Beeston Clean Beeston project
12th May 2016	No guest speaker	Longer discussion about Neighbourhood Planning
2nd June 2016	Richard Corbett MEP- Britain Stronger in Europe Carl Chambers- Business for Britain	The UK's membership of the European Union , in advance of the EU Referendum on 23rd June
7th July 2016	Bobby Virdi - Leeds City Council	Proposed extension of residents parking scheme around Elland Road
4th August 2016	No guest speaker	Longer discussion about Neighbourhood Planning
1st September 2016	Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn MP	General issues

6th October 2016	Andrew Hall and Simon Booker , Leeds City Council	Spending of section 106 funds
3rd November 2016	No guest speaker	Longer discussion about Neighbourhood planning

Committee meetings took place on 17th December , 8th January, 18th February, 10th March, 21st April, 19th May, 16th June , 21st July, 11th August (Special meeting to discuss our representations to the Planning Inspectorate about the Aspiring Communities planning application) , 15th September and 17th November . The meeting scheduled for 20th October was abandoned due to inquoracy

Aspiring Communities Planning Application

The action of Aspiring Communities in appealing to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds of non determination means that the application will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate rather than by Leeds City Council . The committee met on 8th January to determine the text of a statement which we believed that we would be able to read at the Leeds City Council Plans Panel Meeting on 18th February. However , Leeds City Council decided that they would not hear representations for and against the application , at the meeting , which determined that Leeds City Council would oppose the planning application when it is considered by the Planning Inspectorate. Naturally , we took the opportunity to make representations to the Planning Inspectorate . A Special Committee meeting on 11th August discussed the text of our letter. The planning application will be determined by a public inquiry which will be held at Leeds Civic Hall, starting on 28th March 2017 . We look forward to continuing to oppose this planning application , which we believe is neither wanted nor needed by local residents

Beeston Village Community Centre

Plans by Health for All (Leeds) to demolish the present Beeston Village Community Centre and replace this by a new building which is better able to fulfil the functions of a community centre , continued to advance. The Forum expressed strong support for the planning application for the new building . We were delighted to learn that planning permission has been granted . We now await news about the application for National Lottery funding which is necessary for the redevelopment to take place . The Forum will require a temporary venue for its meetings during the redevelopment. We have approached a number of potential venues with detailed criteria setting out our requirements for meetings . It is envisaged that the Committee will make a recommendation for an alternative venue , with the Forum making the final decision. If the National Lottery funding is approved , it is likely that the present building will close in the summer of 2017 with the redevelopment taking one year .

We continued to be concerned about the safety of forum members attending meetings, particularly after dark. The Beeston Village Community Centre Users Meeting on 29th February was attended by Martin Dean of Leeds City Council , who was shown aspects of the areas around the Community Centre which have given rise to concerns about the safety of people walking to and from the building .

The Forum continues to be represented on the Users Committee by Robert Winfield, who acts as Secretary to the Committee . The Committee has also been attended by other members of the Forum Committee .

The Beeston Neighbourhood Forum

The Forum continued to support efforts by the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum to rake steps which will lead to the writing of a Neighbourhood Plan for Beeston . The Forum resolved that four meetings , in February, May, August and November would have longer discussions about Neighbourhood Planning. These , regrettably, have proved to be less useful than was hoped. The Neighbourhood Forum had a succession of inquorate meetings as a result of what proved to be an impractically high quorum level of 20. The Neighbourhood Forum AGM, held on 26th May , achieved the quorum only after members

telephoned a number of colleagues asking them to attend. The AGM duly passed a constitutional amendment to reduce the quorum to 10; the following Neighbourhood Forum meeting , on 8th September was nevertheless inquorate . Discussions took place at the Beeston Community Forum meeting on 6th October and at a subsequent meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum Committee , about the future working relationship between the two Forums. It was agreed that a full merger of the two Forums (that is , an arrangement under which the two Forums legally become one organisation) would be impractical. There is however a consensus in favour of the two Forums working so closely together that for most practical purposes they work as though they are one organisation. It is envisaged that there will be joint meetings of the two Forums , and the two Forum Committees. The Annual General Meeting to which this report is presented will consider a constitutional amendment and other resolutions necessary to give effect to these ideas. The AGM will be followed by a brief meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum will consider similar resolutions .

Section 106 Funding

Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, contributions can be sought from developers towards the cost of providing community and social infrastructure, the need for which has arisen as a result of the development taking place . Correspondence with Leeds City Council highlighted the fact that over £800000 has been collected from developers in connection with Planning applications in Beeston . Members of the Forum were concerned that much of this money has been wasted , not spent , or spent on amenities outside Beeston. These concerns led to us inviting speakers from Leeds City Council to discuss and explain this situation . Thus , Andrew Hall and Simon Booker of Leeds City Council attended the October Forum meeting .

Residents Parking Scheme around Elland Road

Members of the Forum expressed concerns about the proposals to extend the area covered by the residents car parking scheme around Elland Road . Members of the Forum expressed fears that the proposals, if implemented, would displace the problem of on street car parking on match days to streets immediately outside the extended area . There were concerns that residents of these streets were not consulted . These concerns led to the appearance of Bobby Viridi of the Leeds City Council Highways Department as a guest speaker at the July Forum meeting

Miscellaneous

- I) The Forum held a stall at the Beeston Festival which took place on Saturday 4th June in Cross Flatts Park.
- II) The Forum's website at www.beestonforum.btck.co.uk continues to be maintained and updated by Robert Winfield
- III) We regret having to use this report to mark the death, on 20th March, of our former committee member Mick Mason . Mick Mason served on the committee between December 2002 and January 2004 and again between December 2004 and December 2012 . He frequently served refreshments to Forum members at the conclusion of meetings . His funeral was attended by a number of past and present committee members

Vote of Thanks

- I) to the Forum members , who served refreshments to Forum members at the conclusion of Forum meetings
- IV) To Myra Munro, who organised the raffle at Forum meetings during the year . Sadly, ill health prevented Myra Munro's attendance at Forum meetings towards the end of the year . We wish her a speedy recovery
- V) To the Beeston and Holbeck Councillors , David Congreve , Angela Gabriel and Adam Ogilvie , for their regular attendance at Forum meetings , and for their donation of £50 in MICE money
- VI) To International Fun Fairs for their donation of £250