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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting - 3rd November 2016

Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 6th October 2016
4. Police Report
5. The Beeston Neighbourhood Plan
6. Report of the Committee meetings held on 15th September 2016 and 20th October 2016
7. Correspondence
8. Any Other Business

Members are reminded that the Annual General Meeting of the Beeston Community Forum will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 1st December at Beeston Village Community Centre . Officers and members of the Committee wishing to remain in office will be required to seek re election . Officers and members of the Committee must be residents of Beeston (as defined by the constitution of the Beeston Community Forum) . Anyone who is interested in seeking election to the Committee is more than welcome to speak to any committee member

Beeston Community Forum Minutes 6 October 2016

(Secretary's note . I am very grateful to Mark Parry for taking the minutes in my absence , at the Annual General Meeting of West Yorkshire Conservatives . I have taken the liberty of adding the name of Adam Cooper , who e mailed me with apologies for absence at 7pm on the evening of the meeting , to those presenting apologies for absence. Robert Winfield)

Present: J. Hook, C.H.Ward, Eddie Leatham, Mark Parry, Pauline Johnson, John Cunningham, Maureen Broadbent, Diane McGuigan, John Peckham, R. Casserley, R.Casserley, Sean Sturman, Bill Birch, David Congreve, Adam Ogilvie, Sandra Burton, Ken Burton, Dennis Bottomley, Jeremy Morton, Christine Thornton.

Apologies: Robert Winfield, Arthur Kirby, Angela Gabriel , Adam Cooper and Myra Munro who we wish well after her recent health set back.

Speakers: Andrew Hall and Simon Booker, council officers from Leeds City Council, addressed us on "section 106" funding.

Andrew began by encouraging us to take part in two council consultations on the future of transport in Leeds and the South Bank development in the City Centre.

He explained that highways, public transport and green spaces are some of the issues that can be funded through "section 106" money. This is funding provided by developers of new projects through a voluntary agreement. However, Cllr David Congreve pointed out that planning permission is usually only granted after such an agreement has been finalised. Some of the highways funding for our area has been used in connection with the new Police Station. Much of the Public Transport funding was used for the Elland Road Park and Ride project allowing the site to be used for football parking when matches were played. Cllr David Congreve pointed out that there was an agreement that all green spaces money is used on existing parks.

An extension to the Park and Ride is to open on 10 October providing 400 more parking spaces and nearer Christmas toilet facilities will be provided. Andrew apologised for the late night construction noise and said it could have been planned better.

Bill Birch said the local community had not been consulted about how the section 106 money was to be spent. In his experience as a developer, he had been involved in community consultations. He felt that the Council had used the money for their "pet" projects which were not for the benefit of Beeston. Andrew's response to this was that the ward councillors had been involved in the decision making but took Bill's point about the lack of consultation. Cllr Adam Ogilvie said some of the money was to be spent on facilities for the young.

Some of the money can be used to mitigate parking issues and the new residents parking scheme will be introduced soon with all residents affected getting an application pack before it starts. Bill Birch was in favour of more parking space at Elland Road but Eddie Leatham said alternatives to the car were needed. A further Park and Ride is being considered off the M1 and it was suggested that a new shuttle bus service could be introduced from this new site accommodating those fans travelling in from outside the City. Andrew was interested in that suggestion and will consider it.

Bill Birch complained about the siting of the Elland Road Park and Ride as it was so close to the City Centre. Andrew said much work was done to find the optimum site. The Elland Road Site provides an attractively short journey to the City only requiring a few buses to operate. Bill asked what studies were done about the pollution caused by traffic using the site. Andrew said, once the site has been fully developed, a further air quality survey will take place. Bill suggested a new rail line could be built using an unused viaduct for part of the way, into Elland Road. This would service the Park and Ride users as well as football supporters. Andrew said such a scheme would be costly and unlikely to be financially viable. John Hook suggested a tram such as the one in Rochdale and Andrew said he would take the point back. Christine Thornton asked for a pollution survey when the football traffic leaves Elland Road. Andrew said he would discuss this with his colleagues but pointed out that other traffic issues involve more regular traffic at a greater overall volume.

Concern was expressed about the Leeds City Centre Package, which will remove traffic from the Centre of Leeds, as this might limit access to the Railway Station. Andrew recognised this issue and pointed out that 75% of the traffic through City Square was travelling through and not to the Centre. The Council is looking to make better use of the roads at the edge of the Centre. With the introduction of HS2 to Leeds Railway Station there will be two entrances, however, this development is a long way off. It was suggested that the Railway Station is moved to Stourton but it was pointed out that this would not be convenient for many users.

Pauline Johnson mentioned that an unofficial Park and Walk had developed where by many cars are being parked in Holbeck from where workers could walk into Leeds. Simon said now that the Holbeck development was complete the Park and Walk would be reviewed. Pauline also suggested more Park and Ride at local railway stations. Andrew said they were looking at new options for this as they needed to stop more cars before reaching the City Centre.

John Peckham referred to the 1968 Buchanan Report which pointed out there is insufficient space for all the roads we would need for everyone to drive into our cities; we have to find alternatives to this. He said there were limited train paths to increase services to cope with further station park and ride projects. He also raised the large number of cancelled buses recently and the delayed Vicar Lane construction which requires a bus diversion. Andrew said rail electrification will help provide more "time paths" for trains. He also said the Vicar Lane delay was because of poor construction methods applied by the developer.

The highway plans for a short stretch of Dewsbury Road were raised. A 20 miles per hour speed limit is to be introduced and the withdrawal of part of the bus lane were amongst other proposals. Andrew said there were particular safety issues on this stretch of road and that the local community had been consulted. He didn't think such a short stretch would delay buses.

Previous Minutes: These were agreed and there were no matters arising.

Police: The Police were not present and had sent apologies for not attending the previous meeting.

Beeston Neighbourhood Plan: Bill Birch said the Committee wanted to get the Plan back on track and have had much support from the Council and hope to be working with the Consultant again soon. The last Forum was inquorate with only 7 present. The Committee want to merge it with the Community Forum. The groups currently have separate bank accounts, but as the Beeston Plan account is now subject to charges, he suggested closing it and just using the Community Forum account. Ken Burton was concerned about the volume of business to be covered at future combined Forum meetings, but Bill said this could be covered say once a quarter when no speaker would be invited.

It was agreed to hold a vote on the merger at the Community Forum first and then the Beeston Plan Forum could vote. Ken Hewson proposed the merger and John Cunningham seconded it. The vote was held and was in favour of the merger with one abstention. A vote will now be put on the merger to the Beeston Plan Forum.

Committee Meeting: The minutes for the previous committee meeting were not available so Christine was unable to report on this.

Correspondence: The Rev. Lindsay Pearson said there was some confusion over the issue of the Church Clock. She simply wanted the Forum to say the Clock is of benefit to Beeston. This was proposed by Bill Birch and everyone was in favour.

Any Other Business

Christine Thornton announced that Beeston in Bloom and the Friends of Cross Flatts Park received a Gold Award in the Britain in Bloom Awards. Well done!

The next meeting of the Friends of Cross Flatts Park is at 19:00 hours on 12 October in the Watsonian Building.

Eddie Leatham said as a Governor of Hugh Gaitskell School that the School was concerned about the close proximity of the proposed new two story Community Centre to the School. They had suggesting moving the site of the new building. A meeting is to be held soon about this with the School and the Centre's Operators Health for All.

Christine Thornton attended the Area Committee on anti-social behaviour. The Police have limited capacity to cope with all the issues. However, the Council's anti-social team said issues could be reported to them as an alternative. Their telephone number is 0113 222 4402.

This paper has been drawn up following the discussions within the Beeston Community Forum and the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum about the two organisations working together .

It is my view that a full merger of the two forums (under which the two organisations legally become one organisation) would not be feasible for the following reasons :-

Membership :- Under the legislation governing Neighbourhood Forums, the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum is required to have a formal membership structure , under which anyone who lives , works or carries on business in the Beeston Neighbourhood Area is entitled to membership of the Neighbourhood Forum . In contrast the Beeston Community Forum operates an informal membership structure under which all Beeston residents are treated as members

The Elland Road Framework Area - When the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum applied for designation , Leeds City Council insisted on the exclusion of the Elland Road Framework area , which includes a number of prominent amenities and potential amenities , including Elland Road Football ground, from the Beeston Neighbourhood Area which is otherwise identical to the area served by the Beeston Community Forum . A full merger would make it impossible for the Elland Road framework area to fall within the scope of the merged organisation

The Neighbourhood Forum is designated for a period of five years . If there is a full merger , it is entirely possible that the merged organisation will cease to exist after the five year period

The Beeston Community Forum has built up a strong reputation since its establishment in 1999. A merger could risk this .

In addition to the above, there could be unforeseen practical , or even legal problems

It is, however entirely practical for the two organisations to work so closely together they tried many purposes , they function as a single organisation , but they remain legally separate.

Issues to be examined are as follows :-

Could the committees be made identical . At present the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum Committee comprises Robert Winfield , Bill Birch , Arthur Kirby, Christine Thornton, Steve Francis and Ken Hewson. The constitution stipulates a maximum membership of 12 . All members of the Neighbourhood Forum Committee are members of the Community Forum committee which additionally includes Adam Cooper, Noor Zaman, Richard Bell and Colin Hendrick Ward . They cannot be compelled to be members of the Neighbourhood Forum Committee, but could with their agreement and if thought fit be co-opted by the Neighbourhood Forum Committee , subject to ratification by the full forum . Additionally, if the membership of the Community Forum Committee exceeds twelve, they cannot all be members of the Neighbourhood Forum Committee

The Constitutions of the two Forums provide for special meetings of the Forum and the Forum Committee . Obviously , a valid requisition of such a meeting would lead to a meeting taking place. Nevertheless , If there is no call for such meetings from the membership of the two forums , it is highly unlikely that such meetings would take place. All the business of the Neighbourhood Forum would, in practice take place at the monthly meetings of the Beeston Community Forum. With regard to the committees of the two Forums , it is possible that there will be a need for an occasional special meeting , for example to deal with a matter of utmost importance and urgency.

I feel that it would be sensible for joint meetings of the two Forums to take place on February 2nd , May 4th , August 3rd and November 2nd . The meeting on May 4th could be the AGM of the Neighbourhood Forum, or alternatively the members could take the view that there should be a separate AGM. The redevelopment of Beeston Village Community Centre expected in 2017-8 may alter the dates of meetings , although this is unlikely

The constitutions of both forums stipulate a minimum number of meetings per annum . I feel that a constitutional amendment is necessary in order to clarify that joint meetings of the two Forums and Committees are permitted and that such a joint meeting shall be regarded as a meeting of both forums . It is absolutely vital , in view of the status of the Neighbourhood Forum as a statutory body , and the amount of litigation in relation to Neighbourhood Forums , that the constitutional position of joint meetings of the two Forums is placed beyond any shadow of doubt . Accordingly , constitutional amendments are proposed as follows :-

Proposed amendment to both constitutions :-

Nothing in this constitution shall be interpreted as preventing the Beeston Community Forum and the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum (the two Forums) from holding joint meetings

Any such joint meeting shall, for all purposes connected with the constitutions of the two Forums, be considered to be both a meeting of the Beeston Community Forum and a meeting of the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum .

Voting rights in relation to matters relating to either forum shall be confined to members of that Forum

Nothing in this constitution shall be interpreted as preventing the Beeston Community Forum and the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum (the two Forums) from holding joint Committee meetings

Voting rights in relation to matters relating to either forum shall be confirmed to members of the Committee of that Forum

Notice is hereby given that the above amendment will be considered by the AGM of the Beeston Community Forum on Thursday 1st December 2016 and the meeting of the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum which will directly follow the AGM