

Minutes of the Eighteenth Annual General Meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held at 7.30p.m on Thursday 1st December 2016 at Beeston Village Community Centre

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair except when presiding over elections), Mr. R. Bell, Mr. D.C. Bottomley, Mr. K. Burton, Mrs. S. Burton, Councillor D. Congreve, Mr. A. Cooper, Mr. J. Cunningham, Councillor A. Gabriel, Councillor S. Golton, Mr. C. Hendrick Ward, Mr. K. Hewson, Ms. E. Holden, Mr. J. Hook, Miss. P. Johnson, Mr. E. Leathem, Mr. J. Morton, Mr. M. Parry, Mr. J. Peckham, Rev L. Pearson, PC Varley (West Yorkshire Police) , Mr. M. White and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks – Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the eighteenth Annual General Meeting of the Beeston Community Forum. She noted that it does not seem two minutes since those who were involved eighteen years ago were sitting in Beeston Manor where the Forum first got going
2. Apologies for absence were received from Bill Birch, Jean Birch, Maureen Broadbent , Steve Francis, Arthur Kirby , Diane McGuigan and Councillor Adam Ogilvie. Additionally, it was noted that the Lord Mayor's Office had apologised for the inability of the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Gerry Harper to be present at the meeting.
3. Address by the Leader of Leeds City Council, Councillor Judith Blake. It was agreed that Councillor Blake would speak first , as she needed to attend another engagement .

Councillor Judith Blake said that she was pleased to be at the meeting. She noted that Councillor David Congreve had shown her the minutes of his address to last year's Forum AGM, which she described as a history lesson. She noted that there is a historic ditch separating Beeston from Middleton , which is a part of her ward . She was delighted to be in the presence of her favourite other ward councillors . Judith Blake said 'thank you' to the Forum for its work and noted that the Forum is very active and makes a real contribution . It is a good addition to the local community which is so important. She added that it is most important that local politicians have a close relationship with communities. She said that this is valuable to us .

Judith Blake said that if we had been speculating a year ago as to what the year would bring , no one would have predicted such a seismic year . She noted that the Prime Minister resigned, that George Osborne (who had been in Leeds earlier in the day) is now an ex Chancellor, and that there had been the vote for the UK to leave the EU and the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States . We are in a real state of uncertainty and we do not know what the impact of these events will mean across the world. She added that there will be interesting election results in Europe over the weekend. She referred to the Presidential election in Austria and the referendum in Italy which could lead to the downfall of the government. She noted that the recession in 2008 had a massive impact on all of us . Many people in local communities feel disconnected from Westminster and feel that their views are not being listened to. This is a wake up call for politicians to step up .

Judith Blake noted that councillors are in the middle of setting the Leeds City Council Budget for next year . She had hoped that the recent Autumn statement would provide a glimmer of hope and more money, but she is sad to say that this is not the case . She noted that Leeds City Council needs to cut £100 million from the budget which she described as tough. The number of council jobs had been reduced by 2500 and this can be felt in the provision of services . Leeds City Council has managed to do this with no compulsory redundancies which she described as an extraordinary achievement . She noted that a number of jobs urgently need doing in communities . Judith Blake noted that every time you turn on the television you see queues of ambulances together with patients waiting on trollies in Accident and Emergency . She added that too many frail elderly people are being sent to Accident and Emergency then entering hospitals , due to the lack of social care funding . People are stuck in hospital when they should be in care in the community

Judith Blake said that all four Party leaders in the Local Government Association joined together to

write to Theresa May saying that there is a crisis . Judith Blake added that we have to be questioning what we will do every night . We do not just need money in the NHS but supporting social care in communities. People want to stay in their homes as long as they can. She noted that people are battling at a national level to help the most vulnerable in communities . In terms of children's social care , Leeds is bucking the trend as a result of early investment to help families . Children are out of the care system and the right support is there . This saves Leeds City Council millions of pounds. Judith Blake said that we need everyone lobbying the government to get them to understand . More money in social care makes a difference .

Judith Blake then referred to the big debate on transport in Leeds She said that whether you thought the NGT system (trolleybus) is right, the government had insisted on a bus based scheme, then rejected the scheme which had been put forward, just as the last government had rejected the supertram . However, the government has given Leeds £173.5 million dedicated to improving transport. Leeds City Council put the issue out to consultation and 8000 responses had been received. This consultation had taken place at the same time as a transport consultation in the whole of West Yorkshire. More responses had been received for the Leeds consultation than for the West Yorkshire consultation. The response to the consultation process will be made public next week. The vast majority of people in Leeds depend on bus services . Judith Blake noted that she had heard heartbreaking stories of job losses due to buses failing to turn up. Buses are really important but the council does not have enough control as services are deregulated , but they are getting bus companies to step up to the plate in terms of providing improved services and cleaner buses which go to areas which people want to go to . She noted that there are mixed views about the Elland Road Park and Ride facility , but this had proved that the concept of Park and Ride is popular . The city is now looking at other areas. There are also more railway stations such as Kirkstall Forge and Apperley Bridge, just outside the City of Leeds. She noted that Leeds City Council is required to spend the funds given by the government by the end of this Parliament . She noted that there is huge investment looking at tram systems.

Judith Blake concluded by saying that Beeston has three of the best councillors in the city. She added 'They are here for you' . She noted that they work in the Community and referred to Beeston In Bloom and pots of jam!

4. Address by Councillor David Congreve; a former Lord Mayor of Leeds

David Congreve noted that he was wearing the medallion given to former Lord Mayors of Leeds. He recalled that last year he noted that his speeches were becoming an annual event, but he said that there may not be many more. He noted that it was good to see Judith Blake at the meeting . She noted that it had been some time since the Leader of Leeds City Council was at the Beeston Community Forum AGM, because the holder of this office is often very busy. In addition, David Congreve noted that it is quite tiring to be in such positions. He noted that he had read the minutes of the 2014 AGM which he had attended as the Lord Mayor . Last Year, he had spoken about the history of the Mayoralty of Leeds and two pieces of silverware which are connected with the mayoralty.

David Congreve recalled that in his working life, he had a role with a neighbouring local authority, which was not always Labour controlled ; indeed , it had been controlled by the Conservatives at one time. He acknowledged that councillors had been a little suspicious but things settled down. He noted that he used to deal with politician , but always tried hard to keep his job and his political activities separate. .David Congreve noted that politicians recognised that he played it with a straight bat . he also added that he played his duties as a Councillor with a straight bat, saying that this is the only way to do it. He added that there are many good honest politicians around. The same applies to all walks of life, including bankers! He added that it is good to be in this role and said that he supports the work done by the Beeston Community Forum. If we do not have such organisations less would get done and politicians would not know what people want. He noted that councillors cannot always give people what they want, but they try and listen and achieve what they can.

Forums bring a voice and help concentrate minds. He noted that when he was the Lord Mayor, he went around the City , and visited voluntary community groups everywhere working to benefit the places where their members live. He noted that in leafy areas of the City, people get involved in fetes and organising things in village halls. He noted that we do not have that in Beeston , but something just as good in the form of Beeston Village Community Centre. He hopes that the area will get a bigger and better community centre. David Congreve concluded his remarks by thanking the Forum for its invitation and saying that it was a privilege to speak on behalf of the Lord Mayor

5. Councillor Stewart Golton, the Leader of the Leeds City Council Liberal Democrat Group , noted that he likes to come to the Beeston Forum. He noted that the Liberal Democrats are not particularly active in Beeston but he added that the Liberal Democrats wish to encourage localism, with as many decisions as possible taken in the community where their effect is felt. Services should be accountable to the community wherever possible. This way of delivering services is more and more important as time goes on. He noted that his own party is in opposition, but that the opposition would support Judith Blake , the Leader of Leeds City Council , when the council takes the ambition of the city forward. He acknowledged that less money is coming in and difficult decisions need to be taken. It is time for citizens to take notice and engage in debate. With regard to Health and Social Care, professional organisations such as the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Nursing are saying that there are big problems. Not everyone is facing this as they should. Stewart Golton said that we should be able to deliver more. The future of community organisations is to bring a balanced market for the elderly population . This is not sustainable and not happening with the money which is there. Now is the time for everyone to take part in this discussion.

6. The Minutes of the seventeenth AGM held on Thursday 3rd December 2015 had been circulated to those present at the meeting . There were no comments about the accuracy of the minutes. It was proposed by Ken Hewson, seconded by John Cunningham and agreed that the minutes be accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting . There were no matters arising

7. The Annual Report- Copies of the draft Annual Report had been circulated to those present at the meeting Christine Thornton noted that the Annual Report is a history of what the Forum has done over the relevant year. She noted that there had been a number of changes in Officer positions. The Annual Report, she noted, incorporates a list of the guest speakers over the year. She noted that the Annual Report deals with issues such as the Aspiring Communities Planning Application , the plans for the redevelopment of Beeston Village Community Centre (she noted that Robert Winfield represents the Forum on the Beeston Village Community Centre Users Committee) , the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum and the spending of Section 106 funds. She added that the Elland Road Park and Ride Scheme had been so successful that there are plans to replicate this in other parts of the City. She noted that the Forum held a stall at the Beeston Festival and that Robert Winfield continues to update the Forum's website. The annual report also marks the death, in March of a former Committee Member, Mick Mason. Christine Thornton added that she would like to thank all those who have served tea and coffee from the kitchen at the conclusion of Forum meetings . She added that Myra Munro, who runs the raffle is currently undergoing treatment for cancer , and is therefore not present at the meeting. She thanked Mark Parry , who has taken over the running of the raffle . She noted that the last Forum meeting had agreed to send flowers to Myra Munro. Christine Thornton had organised this . She thanked our Councillors, David Congreve , Angela Gabriel and Adam Ogilvie for their support for the Forum and regular attendance at Forum meetings. She noted that there is always one, often two and sometimes three of our councillors present at Forum meetings. They had also given MICE money. She noted that the Annual Report thanks Stewart Robinson of International Fun Fairs for its donation; Christine Thornton noted that she had thanked him personally. She added that the Forum had made an application to the Community Committee for a grant to cover running costs and had received £500. The Forum has expenses for room hire, photocopying and insurance. . It was agreed to accept the Annual Report.

8. The Financial Report. The Treasurer, Colin Hendrick Ward noted that he had not prepared copies of the Financial Report for circulation amongst the members present at the meeting , but spoke to a copy of the report which had been prepared and approved by Pauline Johnson, the Forum's auditor. He noted that there had been an opening balance of £140.87 on 1st November 2015. There had been income of £960 comprising MICE money, funds from Leeds City Council and proceeds from the raffle and refreshments. There had been expenditure of £605.98 comprising room hire, photocopying , public liability insurance and the hire of a stall at the Beeston Festival. An amount of £16.98 for other cheques drawn had been included in the accounts. Colin Hendrick Ward added that he had deposited a further £36 on the previous day but noted that this is outside the scope of the accounts . He noted that he had spent time with the Forum's auditor, Pauline Johnson who had signed the accounts . Christine Thornton thanked Pauline Johnson for acting as Auditor. Colin Hendrick Ward noted that he had met Pauline Johnson's lovely cat! The Treasurer's Report was agreed .

9. Proposed Amendment to the Constitution . Robert Winfield noted the role of the Beeston Community Forum as the sponsoring body for the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum . Disappointing attendances at meetings of the Neighbourhood Forum had led to discussions, both at committee level and Forum level about appropriate remedial action. There was a widespread consensus that the two Forums should work closely together. Robert Winfield noted that he had presented a paper to the November meeting of the Beeston Community Forum. There was no opposition to the ideas put forward in the paper, which include joint meetings of the two Forums. Robert Winfield noted that subject to the constitutional amendments being passed by the two Forums , the meetings in February, May, August and November would be joint meetings of the two Forums. Robert Winfield noted that in view of the amount of litigation which had occurred in connection with Neighbourhood Plans , it was important to pass a simple constitutional amendment which places beyond doubt that it is permissible to hold joint meetings of the two Forums. Dennis Bottomley wondered who would chair what at such joint meetings. Robert Winfield felt that an approach to this would evolve naturally . The constitutional amendment was proposed by Adam Cooper and seconded by Robert Winfield . The amendment set out below was declared to have been passed , having achieved the necessary two thirds majority

To add a new clause 16 – RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BEESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD 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 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

10 . Elections . Christine Thornton passed the chair of the meeting to Robert Winfield in order to conduct most of the elections. Robert Winfield noted that the committee of the Forum had been dissolved and it was now his responsibility to preside over the election of a new committee which will serve until the next AGM. He would not , however provide over the election of a Secretary , for which position he was seeking re election. This would be presided over by the newly elected

Chairman of the Forum . Robert Winfield pointed out that the committee normally meets monthly, generally two weeks after each Forum meeting. From time to time the Committee does not meet in August, although in recent years a meeting in August has taken place . Any Committee member who is unable to attend meetings will, of course be welcome to present apologies. Robert Winfield called upon any individuals present who wished to seek election to the Committee but had not already been nominated to make themselves known. No one put themselves forward in this fashion. Robert Winfield noted that Arthur Kirby, the outgoing Vice Chairman of the Forum and also the Vice Chairman of the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum had expressed a wish to relinquish both positions due to ill health, but wished to remain a member of both committees. Richard Bell, who had been nominated for election as a Committee member, agreed to be nominated as Vice Chairman. Robert Winfield sought alternative nominations but none were forthcoming . Robert Winfield noted that he is required to put a resolution to the meeting to determine whether each candidate is elected . Candidates for the various positions were nominated as follows:-

Position	Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairman	Christine Thornton	Colin Hendrick Ward	Robert Winfield
Vice Chairman	Richard Bell	Colin Hendrick Ward	Robert Winfield
Secretary	Robert Winfield	Colin Hendrick Ward	Adam Cooper
Treasurer	Colin Hendrick Ward	Robert Winfield	Adam Cooper
Committee Members	Bill Birch	Colin Hendrick Ward	Robert Winfield
	Adam Cooper	Colin Hendrick Ward	Robert Winfield
	Steve Francis	Colin Hendrick Ward	Robert Winfield
	Ken Hewson	Robert Winfield	Colin Hendrick Ward
	Arthur Kirby	John Hook	Robert Winfield

Robert Winfield put resolutions that each of the nominees for Officer and Committee positions, with the exception of himself, be declared elected to their respective positions, to the meeting. Each such resolution was passed and the nominees were declared elected. Robert Winfield then passed the chair to Christine Thornton who put the resolution relating to the election of Robert Winfield as Secretary to the meeting . The resolution was carried and Robert Winfield was declared elected. With regard to the position of Auditor, Pauline Johnson expressed a willingness to continue in this position; her re election as such was agreed. Christine Thornton noted that there are several vacant positions on the committee . Anyone interested could approach herself or Robert Winfield . She said it would be nice to have new and possibly younger blood. Christine Thornton drew attention to the notice for dates of Forum meetings during 2017 to the meeting . She noted that several such meetings are envisaged as joint meetings with the Neighbourhood Forum