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## BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

### Beeston Forum General Meeting - 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015

#### Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Guest Speakers,
  - i) Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, Member of Parliament for Leeds Central
  - ii) Simon Booker, Senior Engineer, Traffic Engineering , Leeds City Council
4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015
5. Police Report
6. The Beeston Neighbourhood Plan
7. Report of the Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015
8. Correspondence
9. Aspiring Communities planning application for former Ice Pak premises (this will include the determination of the representative to speak on behalf of the Forum at the Plans Panel Meeting)
10. Any Other Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), Mr. R. Bell, Mr. W.J. Birch, Mrs J. Birch, Mr. D.C. Bottomley, M. Broadbent, Mrs. D. Brooke, Mr. K. Burton, Mrs S. Burton, Mr. S. Casserley, Mrs. R. Casserley, Mr. A. Cooper, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mr. J. Fenton, Mr. S. Francis, Councillor A. Gabriel, Mrs. S. Gawthorpe, PCSO S. Goulding (West Yorkshire Police) , Mr. S. Gulbahar, Mr. J. Hook, Miss. P. Johnson, Mr. A. Kirby, Mr. E. Leathem, Mr. P. Lewis, Mrs L. Lewis, Mr. A. Mahmood, A. McGrath, Mrs. D. McGuigan, Mr. J. Morton, Mrs. M. Munro, Miss. E. Newton, Mrs. F. Orr, PCSO J. Rooks (West Yorkshire Police) , Mr. S. Sturman, Mr. G. Turton, Mrs.D. Whitehead, Mr. R.J.W. Winfield, and Mr. N. Zaman

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks . Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the meeting
2. Apologies for absence were received from Gohar Almass, Councillor David Congreve, Mary Dinsdale, Colin Hendrick Ward, Mark Parry, John Peckham, Councillor Adam Ogilvie and Steve Rushworth
3. Guest Speaker- Christine Thornton noted that the guest speaker was to have been Nigel Richardson, Director of Childrens Services, Leeds City Council, but she noted that he would not be appearing as a result of a mixup in his office

#### 4. Police Report-

4.1 PCSO Steff Goulding noted that no member of the police force was present at the last two Forum meetings. She noted that the minutes of the last meeting include a reference to the arrest of the rape suspect. She noted that the suspect has been extradited to the UK, charged and is awaiting trial. She observed that she knows as much as the public knows. The suspect is no longer a risk to society. The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor.

4.2 Richard Bell noted that we normally get crime statistics. PCSO Goulding acknowledged that she had not brought crime statistics to the meeting as she did not know where we were at, as no police had attended recent meetings.

4.3 Christine Thornton noted that there is a problem with quad bikes in the area. She noted that she had accosted six Asians in Atha Street. She had had enough. The people to whom she spoke to responded by videoing her on their mobile phone. PCSO Rooks noted that a few bikes had been seized. PCSO Goulding added that there are a number of proactive off road bikers. If they see a quad bike, they will take it. PCSO Rooks noted that a quad bike owner had been prosecuted for not insuring the bike. Christine Thornton noted that she had tried twice to report the incident involving the quad bikes twice using the 101 telephone line. She was hanging on for ages, gave up, and went to Elland Road police station to report this over the counter. PCSO Goulding acknowledged that she had received complaints about the 101 service.

4.4 A member of the audience asked whether anything had been done about taxis parking in Oakhurst Mount with their engines running early in the morning. She had been told that the police would go to see them. PCSO Rooks asked which taxi firms are involved. It was noted that a few firms are involved and drivers stand outside their cars with the engines running, smoking cigarettes. PCSO Goulding said that she would chase this matter up and acknowledged that communications had fallen down as a result of staff movements. She added that she will find out whose responsibility it is to attend forum meetings; whether it is the PCSOs, or the problem solving team. She noted that the Forum meetings are advertised as PACT (Police and Community Together) meetings. However, Christine Thornton felt that the meetings should not be advertised as PACT meetings, as they are meetings of the Forum. Robert Winfield pointed out that Forum meetings have been advertised as PACT meetings in the opast; he was unaware as to whether they are still advertised as PACT meetings.

4.5 It was noted that on Oakhurst Avenue, taxi drivers had parked their vehicles and thrown rubbish in the street. Councillor Angela Gabriel wondered whether members of the public would be able to report incidents such as this on the police's facebook page. PCSO Rooks said that it is possible to report incidents in this way, and added that the facebook page is monitored. PCSO Goulding said that the same applies to twitter. She added that off road bikers cover the whole of Leeds and their deployment is influenced by the reporting of nuisance quad bikes. Eddie Leathem noted that in the past, we had been told that there is a website for reporting crime. PCSO Goulding noted that the West Yorkshire Police website incorporates a live chat facility. Christine Thornton explained that she had tried to use this facility, but it would not allow her to send a message because none of the available options for headings were applicable to the incident which she was seeking to report. She wondered whether this can be changed. PCSO Goulding noted that Sue Ireland deals with IT, including the police's presence on facebook and twitter. She had personally never used these.

4.6 Dennis Bottomley noted that there had been complaints about high powered cars in the Cross Flatts, Marsdens and Daltons area. The cars, which can be heard, make a mockery of the 20 mile per hour speed limit. This has been going on for one year; he wondered whether the police could patrol, or install speed cameras in the area. PCSO Goulding said that it is only possible for police to catch speeding motorists if they are behind them and catch them. However, they can send an e mail to the traffic sergeant. She noted, however, that there are no traffic police in Leeds. Additionally, she understood that speed cameras are the responsibility of Leeds City Council. However, Councillor Angela Gabriel understood that speed cameras are the responsibility of the police, not the council. Christine Thornton noted that the Neighbourhood Forum has a number of task groups. She noted that the environmental task group, which she leads, had met several evenings ago and had decided to contact Acting Inspector Arrowsuch to ask to borrow a speed gun; Councillor Adam Ogilvie was going to contact him. Angela Gabriel noted that Adam Ogilvie has sent an e mail.. Dennis Bottomley noted that Dalton Avenue is the worst street for speeding; he aid that cars were travelling at 80 miles per hour close to Cross Flatts Recreational Club. Adam Cooper noted that he has raised the issue of speeding before. He noted that there is a fantastic brand new police station with cars which are travelling to various areas of Leeds. He suggested that the drivers of the cars could be given information so that with a detour which would prolong their journey by only a minute, they could pass through the area. No extra resources would be required and the drivers of speeding cars would be caught in the act. PCSO Goulding noted that when there is downtime, the police go to areas with problems. Adam Cooper noted that he works for a construction firm. He had been working on a school in Rochdale which had been targeted by travellers. A colleague had been hit by a weapon, whereupon the police had got a police car to sit on a public car park. This stopped the criminal activity. Adam Cooper stressed that this is not the first time he has reported speeding and noted that it is worse than the last time he reported the problem. He feared that someone would be killed. PCSO Goulding noted that the police are strapped for officers; they deal with problems as best they can within limited resources. She would mention this issue to the Traffic Sergeant and Inspector who would deal with the matter. Adam Cooper added that he has tried to keep the police informed but the 101 telephone line and the website do not work. PCSO Goulding noted that many cars are seized on a daily basis for lack of insurance, but this has not been reported to the community.

4.7 Christine Thornton said that the police should have brought crime statistics to the meeting. PCSO Goulding said that she would bring statistics about speeding cars. Adam Cooper referred to a recent accident in which a person had to be cut out of a car on Cross Flatts Avenue. A car had caused two other cars and a wall to be written off. There had been several serious accidents.

4.8 Richard Bell said that the police used to have a number of local priorities. He asked whether the police knew what the current

priorities are. PCSO Goulding said that she is not aware of what the priorities are. Richard Bell suspected that these have been forgotten about. Richard Bell said that the police do nothing about untaxed vehicles and feared that people would think that it is pointless to tax a vehicle as the police would do nothing about it. PCSO Rooks said that this is the responsibility of the DVLA. . Richard Bell said that the DVLA also does nothing about this problem and noted that there is a car which comes into his area which has not been taxed for 12 months.

4.9 Pauline Johnson said that there has been trouble with a speeding motorcycle with L plates which goes in and out of local streets. PCSO Goulding asked what the colour of the motorbike is. Pauline Johnson said that she is unaware of the colour as she could get only a fleeting flash of the vehicle. PCSO Goulding said that the police would seek to get the registration number of the vehicle and seek to visit its owner. Dennis Bottomley wondered whether that would work. PCSO Goulding said that this would depend on the person.

4.10 Christine Thornton said that we would need to invite Acting Inspector Arrowsuch to a meeting; she noted that Insp. Bowen had attended the Forum on a regular basis. Acting Insp Arrowsuch has not attended a Forum meeting since his promotion. She suggested writing to him to invite him to a meeting.

5. The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015 were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting. Robert Winfield pointed out that the minutes are somewhat longer than usual because he had taken a decision to incorporate the whole of the discussion involving Asda Stores Limited into the meeting. This would ensure that the note of the discussion has the widest possible circulation and would enable the assurances given by Asda to be measured against their subsequent actions.

## 6. Matters Arising

6.1 Bill Birch wondered whether we had heard from Asda Stores Limited in relation to the points discussed at the last meeting., Robert Winfield noted that Asda had sent him copies of the five newsletters which had been circulated to some local residents whilst the building of the new store had been taking place. He added that he had approached Asda with a view to posting the newsletters on the Forum's website (he would not do so until appropriate consent had been received; such consent was still awaited). He recognised , however that this would be of little use to members of the Forum. He had suggested to Asda that they could post copies of the newsletter to anyone who gives Asda their postal address. Robert Winfield said that anyone with no internet access who requires a newsletter could give him their postal address at the conclusion of the meeting. Christine Thornton noted that the supermarket is now open and that there are a lot of wooden chippings on the footpath . it was noted that someone comes to sweep the footpath between 9 am and 10 am. Bill Birch suggested that we could send Asda a copy of the minutes of the last meeting. Robert Winfield, however, pointed out that when a guest speaker appears at the Forum, it is his practice to send the guest speaker a full note of his or her appearance at the Forum, and seek, either confirmation that the note is a fair and accurate record of the discussions involving the speaker, or suggested alterations. This procedure had been followed in relation to the appearance by Asda at the last Forum meeting. Asda had made a number of alterations to the text, most of which involve the correction of typing errors, although there was also one fundamental alteration. Robert Winfield said that he had incorporated the corrected version of the note into the minutes which had just been approved by the meeting. After further discussion, it was resolved that Robert Winfield write to Asda to chase up the outstanding points.

6.2 Steve Francis referred to paragraph 7.1 of the minutes dealing with the academisation of schools. Jeremy Morton said that it is unclear as to whether Beeston Primary School has started the official consultation process. There had , he said, been mixed messages from Chris Lees, the Head Teacher. The official consultation would take place in September. There is a similar situation with Cockburn. Jeremy Morton noted that he had spoken with Chris Lees and Peter Nuttall of Cockburn School. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that she had written to councillors with responsibility for the Education service, notably Lucinda Yeadon. , and also council officers. They knew nothing and had not been informed about the consultation. Greg Turton said that if Beeston Primary School are having a consultation, they should tell us what it will involve and who will be consulted. He said that the terms and conditions of members of staff might be affected by academisation. Pupils and parents should also be consulted. Greg Turton added that academies have mixed records and it is not true to say that academies always lead to success. Rosemary Casserley noted that the Southleigh Residents Association had spoken to Peter Nuttall. She noted that the schools involved are trust schools which are governed by similar rules to those affecting academies. If any parts of the trust are deemed to be failing or stationary, someone from a different area would come in. however, with an academy, this cannot happen. Eddie Leatham said that he had spoken to Hugh Gaitskell School. Staff had been consulted and there may possibly be further consultation with pupils and parents, but not necessarily with the local community. The consultation is about a possible conversion of Cockburn and four local primary schools to an academy in February 2016. The consultation will look at different options for an academy. Richard Bell asked what the advantages of an academy are. Eddie Leatham said that there is an amount of start up money which then drops. Academies are more free to do various things , but he is not convinced about the principle of academies. However, he suspected that if schools do not voluntarily convert to academies, they might be forced to convert later. The government seems determined to enforce academies. This is why academisation takes place. To be forced to convert to an academy might place a school at a disadvantage. Rosemary Casserley noted that Heckmondwike Grammar School is a good school which is also an academy. It had not become an academy because it is failing. Greg Turton noted that Heckmondwike Grammar School is a different case because it had been a grant maintained school. When grant maintained schools had been abolished, there was a natural transition to an academy. This is not an example of a community based school converting into an academy. Eddie Leatham noted that an academy has charitable status, which opens up a number of funding streams. The schools involved are looking at that. Christine Thornton noted that schools are churning out children who cannot read, write or string a sentence together. This had not happened when she had gone to school. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that schools claim to be a part of the community, but are

saying no to consultation with residents. Even if local residents have no relatives at school, they could have children or grandchildren at the affected schools in, say ten years time. She noted that Cottingley School had converted into an academy when it was failing. The school had recently held an open evening. Christine Thornton suggested that the Forum could ask local schools to hold an open event. Greg Turton noted that the academisation proposals are an important event which affects the whole trust. Anyone reading what has been published about the consultation would not know that it affects the whole trust. He said that there needs to be a statement saying what the schools are applying for, why they are applying for it, and who is being consulted. He noted that parents at a school in Fulford, York, which is an affluent area, had opposed an academy as they feel that an academy would not give a good education. The meeting agreed to a proposal from Councillor Angela Gabriel that we write to the Head Teacher of Cockburn School, as the lead school of the trust.

7. The Neighbourhood Plan. Greg Turton noted that the Neighbourhood Forum Committee had met on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, the fifth meeting of the committee. The Neighbourhood Forum had received a further grant from Locality. The Forum had applied for £5980, but had been awarded only £4980. The reason for the rejection of £1000 is that the relevant aspects would not be dealt with in the six month period of the grant. The Forum had applied for a bank account which would hold sources of funding other than the grant from Locality. Greg Turton noted that the grant from Locality is held by Leeds City Council, on behalf of the Neighbourhood Forum, as there is a requirement for this money to be held by an incorporated body. He noted that there is a problem with Leeds City Council which has held up the payment of the grant. He wondered whether the ward councillors could be of assistance in resolving this. Angela Gabriel said that she would e mail Leeds City Council. There is a need to complete a due diligence form. The Neighbourhood Forum had completed as much of the form as it could but Leeds City Council had not completed the part of the form which it needs to complete considering its status as custodian of the grant

Greg Turton noted that the Neighbourhood Forum had asked for updates and replies in relation to its discussions with Leeds City Council. The Forum has also appointed Shaun Hanson as a consultant, but he could only act when the Locality grant is actually paid.

The Committee had produced a draft of the vision statement which would be considered by the Neighbourhood Forum at its next meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> September. A skills audit of the Neighbourhood Forum Committee has been carried out. A skills form has been produced; this could be passed to members of task groups. Greg Turton added that the Neighbourhood Forum's holding objection to the sale of land on the Parkwood Estate is still in place. He had been told by James Kilroy of Leeds City Council that a planning application for the land had been submitted, but James Kilroy could not give specific details, nor had Greg Turton succeeded in finding anything on the planning portal. He stressed that the Neighbourhood Forum is not opposed to affordable housing, but is concerned about the lack of consultation.

Greg Turton noted that Leeds City Council had agreed to send the Neighbourhood Forum details of all planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area, including house extensions. Ken Hewson had been nominated as the Neighbourhood Forum's contact for this purpose.

Greg Turton then turned to the task groups. He was disappointed that only two task groups were in a position to start ; Housing and Regeneration , led by Bill Birch and the Environment , led by Christine Thornton. The other task groups are short of numbers. Greg Turton said that this is an opportunity of a lifetime. This would be backed up with an article in South Leeds Life. The Neighbourhood Plan would make recommendations for the development of this area for the period of 10-15 years. By designating the Neighbourhood Forum, the Council had undertaken to act as partners with the Neighbourhood Forum. He added that all he is asking members of task groups is to give their views about issues over a few meetings. This is not a lot. The leader of the task group would then make recommendations to the committee. The consultant will guide the Neighbourhood Forum and enable it to translate the aspirations of the community into policies and planning statements. When the Neighbourhood Plan is in place, it must be considered when planning applications are considered. What more guarantee could there be that the wishes and feelings of local residents will be carried out. He urged the members present to join the task groups.

Greg Turton noted that Robert Winfield had set up a facebook group for the Neighbourhood Forum and that he and Gohar Almass would act as Administrators of the group with the responsibility to delete inappropriate posts. It was noted that the next Committee meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum would take place on 24<sup>th</sup> August.

Adam Cooper wondered what task groups are in existence. Greg Turton noted that he leads the Youth Opportunities Group (he noted that he is now a grandfather) . Other groups deal with Retail and Business, the Community (including community facilities), Integration and Community Cohesion. Greg Turton noted that we must move forward as a community regardless of ethnic backgrounds. If people from different ethnic backgrounds tick boxes as to what they want, the results would be 90% similar. He added that the Community task group could consider the redevelopment of Beeston Village Community Centre.

Greg Turton was asked how often people would attend task groups meetings and whether residents could contribute to them by e mail. Greg Turton said that task group meetings are set up by the group leader. He envisages that each group would meet three or four times, then report its findings to the committee, which would decide whether further meetings are required. It was , however argued that many people have little time. Greg Turton referred to the saying 'If you want something done, ask a busy person'. Robert Winfield pointed out that membership of task groups must be members of the Neighbourhood Forum, the minimum age for membership of which is 18. Christine Thornton noted that she had just held the first meeting of the task group which she leads. The meeting lasted an hour and she had provided refreshments.

8. Report of Committee Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015. Christine Thornton noted that there had been a discussion about future guest

speakers. It was noted that the speaker for the September meeting would be Rt. Hon Hilary Benn, MP. The speakers at the October meeting would be John Tubby of Leeds City Council, who would deal with the issue of pollution, Councillor James Lewis of Metro, and Chris Powell of First Leeds. The November meeting would host Councillor Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council. The December meeting would be the AGM.

There had been a suggestion from Dr Mitchell that members of the Clinical Commissioning Group could appear at a future Forum meeting as a guest speaker. There had recently been developments in relation to commissioning. The Committee had also resolved to contact Acting Insp. Arrowsuch to express our concerns about the absence of the police from the last two Forum meetings. There had also been a discussion about the plans for the redevelopment of Beeston Village Community Centre. There had been a discussion about the academisation of local schools. The meeting had also formalised a letter to the Planning Department of Leeds City Council about the Aspiring Communities Planning application. Adam Cooper asked whether we had heard anything from Sue Watson of Leeds United FC, who had approached the Forum about a possible appearance at the Forum to discuss arrangements for the Rugby World Cup matches which will be taking place at Elland Road over the final weekend of September. Robert Winfield noted that he had not received a reply. Dennis Bottomley noted that there had been many staff changes at Leeds United FC recently and wondered whether she is still there. Richard Bell suspected that Sue Watson is a consultant, rather than a direct employee of Leeds United FC.

#### 9. Correspondence:-

9.1 Robert Winfield noted that a letter from Tom Riordan, Chief Executive, Leeds City Council, dealing with Beeston Village Community Centre and Ian Cyhanko of the Leeds City Council Development Department, dealing with the Aspiring Communities Planning Application, would be dealt with in the respective sections of the agenda.

9.2 Robert Winfield had received an e mail from Joanne Burley of Morrison Construction, who had delayed their appearance at the Forum because of a delay in the construction work which they are undertaking on behalf of Yorkshire Water which was the reason for their invitation to the Forum. She said that she had spoken to the Project Manager to discuss the start date for the work. As soon as the start date is confirmed, she would contact us to discuss a date for their appearance at the Forum.

9.3 Robert Winfield has had an exchange of e mails with James Wiggam who confirmed that Tesco still own the site on Old Lane for which they were refused planning permission for a store. They are keen to see the site brought back into an alternative use, would consider all offers for the land and would keep the Forum informed of any developments

9.4 Robert Winfield had received an e mail from Acting Inspector Jon Arrowsuch about the non appearance of the police at the two previous Forum meetings. The committee suggested and Jon Arrowsuch agreed that in future the police could arrive at the Forum meeting at 8p.m, in order to minimise the amount of time during which they are away from front line policing duties.

9.5 Robert Winfield noted that the e mail from Sue Watson of Leeds United FC about arrangements for the Rugby World Cup matches at the end of September had already been dealt with.

9.6 Robert Winfield noted that he had received an e mail from the office of Nigel Richardson saying that he had never been formally invited to the present Forum meeting, at which he was to have been a guest speaker, and that he now had an alternative engagement from which he could not withdraw. Robert Winfield pointed out that he had checked his sent e mails and found that an e mail inviting Nigel Richardson had been sent to him on 20<sup>th</sup> March. The e mail suggested that Nigel Richardson could appear at the Forum meeting in November; however, Robert Winfield pointed out that Councillor Judith Blake, the Leader of Leeds City Council is due to be the guest speaker at this meeting. It was therefore agreed that Nigel Richardson be asked to attend the Forum meeting in January 2016

10. Beeston Village Community Centre. Robert Winfield noted that he had written to Tom Riordan Chief Executive of Leeds City Council, about the safety of people walking to and from Beeston Village Community Centre. He noted that in addition to his letter on behalf of the Forum, he had also written a separate letter on behalf of the Beeston Village Community Centre Users Committee, of which he is also the Secretary. Tom Riordan replied, saying that Robert Winfield is right to say that the council is responsible for the land and footpaths in the vicinity of the Community Centre, and as such he would arrange for our concerns to be further investigated. He noted that not all the footpaths are adopted as public highway, but whilst that would be required to install lighting for Highway purposes, it does not preclude the council from installing extra lighting and /or maintaining the walking surface providing there is sufficient justification for doing so. The responsibility for the footpath currently rests with several departments of the council as it extends across different parcels of land from St Anthony's Drive through to Beeston Park Place. Tom Riordan said that he has therefore tasked the Highways Department with taking a lead on our enquiry to bring all interested parties together to see whether they can bring a 'one stop' solution to our concerns. Trisha Rycroft will be our contact in Highways but she is on leave until 18<sup>th</sup> August. In the meantime Andrew Bellamy will begin to make enquiries of the relevant contacts within the council and keep us informed of progress.

Christine Thornton noted that this represents some progress and noted that she had seen painted letters and arrows on the route to the building. It appeared as though someone had already been to look at the site. Richard Bell noted that the trees had been marked up. Greg Turton noted that when this issue had been discussed at the last meeting of the Beeston Village Community Centre Users Group, it had been suggested that all groups write individual letters. He described the latest development as a success for Robert Winfield. Christine Thornton said that it was a shame that this matter had to go to the Chief Executive as Council Departments had been unable to sort it out.

Christine Thornton noted that Health for All (Leeds), which rents Beeston Village Community Centre from Leeds City Council had

held a number of consultation meetings about the proposed redevelopment of the centre, including one session which had taken place immediately prior to the Forum meeting. She hoped that Forum members have had a look at the plans. Robert Winfield explained that he would comment upon the plans to Health for All (Leeds) in a personal capacity.

#### 11. Planning application by Aspiring Communities for the former Ice Pak factory, Barkly Road.

11.1 Robert Winfield read an e mail from Ian Cyhanko of the Leeds City Council Development Department about the withdrawal of the planning application from consideration by the plans panel meeting which had taken place earlier in the day. The e mail, which had been received on the afternoon of the day before the Plans Panel meeting explained that the decision had been taken due to representations from the applicant's agent and following advice from Leeds City Council's legal team. He added that there are some elements of the scheme which they want to seek further clarification about. He added that he can only apologise for the lateness of the decision. He added that they are still planning to conduct the site visit.

11.2 A discussion took place. Ash Mahmood, of Aspiring Communities, said that they received the same notification at 4p.m the day before the plans panel meeting. Adam Cooper noted that he had put himself forward to speak at the meeting and had booked time off work in order to do so. He said that the Planning Department had sent different messages to the councillors and to Robert Winfield. He had not been told that the site visit would be going ahead and he had cancelled his day off work due to his current pressure of work, only to discover that the site visit had taken place. He could have attended the site visit, which is public, although members of the public attending the site visit are not permitted to make comments or ask questions. He described the situation as shoddy and noted that it had made him angry. Steve Francis noted that he had gone to the Civic Hall and noted that the Chair of the Plans Panel had said that the consideration of the application would be deferred for a minimum of 6 weeks. Another member of the Forum was annoyed that as a local resident, he had not found out that there would be a site visit. A member of the audience said that Jeremy Morton had been quick to report the withdrawal of the consideration of the application, on South Leeds Life, but had not reported that the site visit, which Jeremy Morton himself had attended, would be taking place. Another member of the audience also asked why there had been no mention that the site visit would be taking place on South Leeds Life. She noted that she lives five doors away from the site, and said that the planning application had blighted the lives of local people. Jeremy Morton noted that he is not responsible for the actions of the Planning Department. He added that he did not consider the site visit relevant. However, a Forum member argued that Jeremy Morton did not want people to attend the site visit. It was also argued that as local residents were aware of the postponement of the consideration of the plans panel meeting, but not that the site visit would still be going ahead, they had missed out all the way. It was suggested that residents of the two streets most affected by the planning application had been inadequately consulted. Mrs Whitehead asked why a number of neighbours had visited the site whilst she had received no invitation. Christine Thornton pointed out that Aspiring Communities had invited local residents to visit the site and that she and Robert Winfield had visited the site following such an invitation.

11.3 Bill Birch regretted that Councillor David Congreve had been unable to attend the present meeting considering his vast experience in plans panels. Bill Birch described what had happened as a gross violation of the planning process. He said that the withdrawal of the application at such short notice was not right. It was also wrong that certain people knew that the site visit would be going ahead whilst other people did not. Bill Birch also pointed out that a post on South Leeds Life quoted an elected member. He noted that in the past, a set of similar circumstances had resulted in a judicial review with the judge ruling that predetermination had occurred. Jeremy Morton disputed Bill Birch's version and said that the South Leeds Life article actually refers to a comment by a council officer addressed to councillors. Bill Birch said that that would be a violation of the planning process too. Mrs Whitehead said that she has nothing against Aspiring Communities and would speak to them. However, a lot of local residents have fought against their planning application. She had been on the Leeds City Council website and had found nothing about the site visit. She had known nothing about the site visit, which she had considered unfair. Christine Thornton noted that she had not known about the site visit. Richard Bell noted that whether by accident or design, there is a perception that people have been excluded. He felt that this must be addressed by Leeds City Council. However, he had been aware that there had been a site visit. Steve Francis suggested that Aspiring Communities should arrange for Forum members to visit the site. Ash Mahmood said that he would put this to the Board of Aspiring Communities. Sean Sturman said that if the Save our Beeston Campaign had been aware that the site visit had been going ahead, it would have been attended by around 200- 300 people. Adam Cooper said that he would have attended the site visit, but had been told that it had been cancelled. Ash Mahmood was unaware that the site visit had been open to the public; he had found this out earlier in the day. Some local residents had been kept in the loop. A member of the audience said that the last time there had been a site visit, local residents had been informed afterwards. Richard Bell noted that local residents had missed an opportunity to demonstrate their opposition to the planning application. He noted that at 12.10pm, people in planning still believed that the application would be going to the plans panel later that day. Leeds City Council had not organised their communications.

11.4 Bill Birch noted that he had been involved in making planning applications for 30 years. He said that for a council to withdraw an application from consideration at such a late stage is highly irregular. He felt that the Forum must know what is going on, and suspected that there had been an exchange between Aspiring Communities planning consultant and planning officers. He suggested that we should write to the Planning Department to say that Beeston Community Forum deplores the decision to defer consideration of the planning application. We are aggrieved at the short notice given to Adam Cooper, the designated representative of the opponents of the planning application, who was told about the deferral of the application at 4p.m on the day before the plans panel meeting. This is not acceptable. It was noted that Adam Cooper had given his mobile phone number to Leeds City Council so that he could be informed of any developments in relation to the Plans Panel meeting.

11.5 Christine Thornton referred to a facebook post from Sean Sturman, saying that Adam Cooper would be representing the Beeston

Forum , as well as the Save our Beeston Campaign at the Plans Panel meeting. Christine Thornton said that a decision such as that should not have been made without reference to the committee. Adam Cooper said that he did inform Robert Winfield of this. Robert Winfield acknowledged that he did have an exchange of facebook messages with Adam Cooper whilst he was on holiday on the Isle of Man. He noted that the enjoyment of his holiday was a higher priority than the affairs of the Beeston Forum. Robert Winfield was certain that he would not , intentionally have given the impression that it was acceptable for Adam Cooper to represent the Beeston Community Forum. However, he acknowledged that if he had unintentionally given such an impression, this was wrong and he would be left with no course of action other than to apologise. Christine Thornton stressed that Save Our Beeston and the Beeston Community Forum are separate organisations and felt that it must be clear cut as to who represents who. Bill Birch said that there is a problem arising from the way in which Leeds City Council allows representations about planning applications. Opponents of an application cannot divide up the 3 minutes allowed to opponents of an application. Dennis Bottomley wondered whether we should elect someone as a standby to go to represent us. Bill Birch felt tht we need to agree a speaker at the next meeting

11.6 Bill Birch suggested that we should ask Leeds City Council , under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act

i) Who took the decision to defer the application and on what basis?

ii) The minutes of the meeting where the decision was taken, and the time , date and attendees at the meeting

iii) Copies of communications between the developer and the planning department, including e mails , letters and recorded telephone calls between 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 and 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015

Bill Birch said that something has gone on that we need to know about.. Steve Francis said that the Chair of the Plans Panel had said that they had rushed to get the site visit in. If they had known about the decision to defer consideration of the planning application for a minimum of six weeks, why the rush?

11.7 Greg Turton said that he would call a special meeting of the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum Committee to discuss the development, which he believed is hampering the work of the Neighbourhood Forum . He noted that the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum is a statutory body registered with the Department of Communities and Local Government under the terms of the Localism Act 2011. The committee meeting would decide what action to take.

11.8 A member of the Forum who had moved to the area 3 to 4 months ago turned up to the site visit as a person at the site visit had his telephone number. She is just as disappointed as Adam Cooper is and explained that we want answers. Robert Winfield explained that the Leeds City Council Planning Department\are not noted for their competence. He referred to the e mail several years ago which wrongly stated that a mill would be demolished to make way for the proposed Tesco store on Old Lane. More recently, when granting planning permission for the new Asda store on Old Lane, they had granted permission for longer Sunday opening hours than were permitted by law.

11.9 The meeting agreed to a proposal from Bill Birch that we write to the Planning Department, along the lines that he suggested seeking an explanation. Christine Thornton felt that the letter could be finalised at the next Committee meeting, taking place ion two weeks time. This was agreed

12. Any Other Business. John Cunningham noted that Old Lane Post Office would close for 2 weeks from 18<sup>th</sup> August , in order to demolish the security screens thus creating an old style open counter. Christine Thornton noted that the postmaster at Old Lane Post Office is retiring. John Cunningham noted that the new postmaster does not welcome the security screen.