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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting - 4th April 2013

Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Guest Speaker, Dennis Holmes, Leeds City Council
4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Forum held on Thursday 7th March 2013
5. Correspondence
6. Elland Road Park and Ride Scheme
7. Report of Committee meeting held on 21st March 2013
8. To consider and if thought fit pass a resolution to ratify the co-option of Mr Noor Zaman to the Committee.
9. Other Co-options to the Committee
10. Any Other Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 7th March 2013

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), Mr. J. Adamson, Mr. R. Adamson, Mr. R. Almond, Sgt. J. Arrowsuch (West Yorkshire Police), Mr. R. Bell, Mr. D. Bottomley, Mrs. D. Brooke, Mr. K. Burton, Mrs. S. Burton, Mrs. M. Cook, Mr. I. Daniels, Mrs. M. Dinsdale, Mr. J. Fenton, Councillor A. Gabriel, Mrs. S. Gawthorpe, PCSO S. Goulding (West Yorkshire Police), Mrs. M. Hobson, Mr. J. Hodgson, Mr. J. Hook, Mr. A. Kirby, D. Kitchen, Mr. G. Lee, Mrs. M. Mason, A. Mc Grath, Mr. J. Morton, Miss. E. Newton, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mr. M. Parry, Mr. I Pickup, Mr. A. Pointon, PCSO J. Rooks (West Yorkshire Police), C. Stevens, Mr. F. Swift, I.R. Turner, Mr. G. Turton, P. Whitehead, Mr. R.J.W. Winfield and Mr. N. Zaman

When the minutes of this meeting were considered for approval, it was noted that details of those tendering apologies (Bill Birch, Councillor David Congreve, Pauline Johnson and John Peckham) had been omitted from the minutes.

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the meeting and noted that the intended guest speakers had not yet arrived. Insp. Paul Akerman of West Yorkshire Police and Mark Burns-Williamson, the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire arrived immediately after Christine Thornton's remarks.

2. Guest Speakers.

2.1 Mark Burns-Williamson thanked the Forum for its invitation and noted that he is the new Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Yorkshire Police Authority. He noted that the role has replaced the West Yorkshire Police Authority, of which he was the Chairman prior to his seeking election to the position which he now holds. He noted that the election, which had taken place in November, had attracted a turnout of only 14%. He is aware of a lot of scepticism about the office, but he will try and do his best to represent the area. Part of his role is to help West Yorkshire Police to get the best police service we can. Since being elected, he has visited all the police divisions. He is visiting every neighbourhood policing team. He noted that before attending the meeting, he has been with Insp. Paul Akerman at Holbeck Police Station, speaking to Chief Superintendent Paul Money and other police staff. He noted that prior to his election as the Police and Crime Commissioner, he had been a councillor in Castleford for 15 years. He stood down from this role in January, shortly after his election as the Police and Crime Commissioner. He said that he can bring a lot of experience and knowledge of

police workings.

Mark Burns-Williamson said that the big issues are funding cuts. A budget of £400 million will be losing £100 million over the next four years. This demonstrates the loss of funding. There are 2000 fewer officers and staff than in 2010. This represents a big challenge for the police service. Mark Burns-Williamson added that part of his own role is to ensure that the Chief Constable delivers the most effective police service from the resources available. He noted that Mark Gilmore will be the new Chief Constable of West Yorkshire, and that he had conducted the interviews which had led to his appointment. He noted that he was the Assistant Chief Constable for West Yorkshire two years ago, and is now the Deputy Chief Constable of Northumbria Police. He is originally from Northern Ireland (brought up on Shankhill Road) and has worked for the Metropolitan Police so that he has a range of different experiences. Mark Burns-Williamson noted the good attendance at the present meeting and said that he was pleased to see a lot of people at the meeting. He noted that colleagues from the local Neighbourhood Policing Team were present at the meeting, and he hoped to see differences since the Neighbourhood Policing Teams were introduced. He emphasised, as he had said during his election campaign, that one priority is to protect Neighbourhood Policing Teams. He noted that Police Sergeants and PCSOs provide a blueprint for policing in West Yorkshire. He said that staff need to know what is going on in Beeston and local issues. He added that this is not just a policing issue; it is important to work with Councils, Voluntary Groups, Neighbourhood Watch, the Fire Service and the Health Service. The police cannot do things on their own, but can only police effectively with community cooperation.

Teams need to listen to the community. He noted that he had been talking to officers at the Police Station, and had also knocked on doors, resulting in one to one conversations on the doorstep to find out about issues. He said that you cannot beat face to face conversation.

Mark Burns-Williamson added that he had been busy since his election with the appointment of the Chief Constable (the last Chief Constable having resigned in September 2012). He noted that the Chief Constable designate, Mark Gilmore does not take up his position until next month as he is currently working out a period of notice. It is also his responsibility to set a budget. He puts proposals to the Police and Crime Panel which scrutinises his decisions. The Panel has accepted proposals to recruit an additional 44 officers. Most of these will go into Neighbourhood Policing Teams in order to maintain numbers. This is not a large number, but he noted that the police is able to start recruiting after a freeze on recruitment until last year. This recruitment had occurred only on the basis of raising the police council tax precept; the funds are being spent on the recruitment of additional police officers.

Mark Burns-Williamson added that he is required to produce a Police and Crime plan for five years. He is working through this and is taking part in consultations, involving round table meetings in each of the five districts of West Yorkshire, and discussions with community groups and voluntary groups. There has also been a large survey (listening to you First), which can be completed online or on paper. 2000 responses had been received. There has also been consultation with the police. All the responses will be collated and put in the plan, which will be launched on 26th March. There would be a local version for each district. For example, the priorities in the Leeds District would be recognised, whilst it is recognised that the challenges in other districts, such as Calderdale has different challenges. Mark Burns-Williamson noted that the timing is unfortunate. He noted that his own election had occurred in November. It was not ideal to have to do all the tasks which he had just described in a matter of weeks. However, he has done a lot of work in a short time. All this will be completed by the end of March, after which he will be out and about visiting groups and talking to the public. He noted that the current week has been busy as he has been taking a lot about the 'Bradford Batman'. He also noted that there has been a serious issue in relation to child sex exploitation (there have been two arrests and convictions the previous day, with a 17 year sentence). He also noted that he had visited Bradford three weeks ago to visit the Safeguarding Unit at Eccleshill Station. This involves collaboration with the local council, the NHS, Barnardos and the Voluntary Sector to provide a service for vulnerable girls. Anyone committing crime would be tackled and put before the courts.

Mark Burns-Williamson then referred to the recent court case involving Leeds United FC. This involves a much bigger issue than West Yorkshire and Leeds United FC, but is concerned with the costs of policing football matches in England and Wales. He noted that many people like to attend matches but wish to do so knowing that it is safe and that they will not be attacked or abused. He noted that the judgement is in the favour of the club at a time when there are budget cuts. He is not sure whether the balance is right and said that he would be taking this to the Home Office to look at the law with a view to changing the relevant legislation. This is a complex judgement which acknowledges that the issue needs to be looked at nationally. However, the policing of West Yorkshire will not be affected by the judgement. He noted that the money paid by L UFC to meet policing costs has been paid over the last three years. Mark Burns-Williamson added that the police would have got a commonsense and a fair agreement for the police and the football club.

2.2 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Amongst issues raised were the court case

involving policing on match days relating to Leeds United FC, the policing of parking on double yellow lines and dangerous parking, notably on Cross Flatts Grove, police visits to victims of crime, the policing of football matches in particular, the recent match involving Milwall FC, the recent cordoning off of Cross Flatts Park, the consumption of alcohol and licensing laws, and the involvement of the police in objecting to new applications to sell alcohol and drug dealing,

3. Christine Thornton noted that it was clear that Stewart Robinson, of International Fun Fairs, who had been invited to attend the meeting as a guest speaker, would not be attending the meeting. She noted that International Fun Fairs had recently donated £500 to the Forum. She asked members of the audience whether they are aware of any problems resulting from the recent Valentine Fair, which had been organised by International Fun Fairs. No such problems were raised.

4. Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 7th February 2013. John Hodgson said that Robert Winfield had done a good job in drafting the minutes but noted that the person who had started the debate about weddings, funerals and dead bodies was David Congreve. He added that there was no mention of the discussion about hot kitchens and noted that many people who know about these matters said that there was no hot food at the Ice Pak building. Subject to this issue, the minutes were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matters Arising.

5.1 John Hodgson referred to a paragraph quoting Mark Griffin. At that time, no one knew what would happen when Leeds City Council debated the issue of parking permits. Leeds City Council has now decided that people living in a 24/7 residents only parking zone would pay for a parking permit, but that residents of the Wesley and Sunnyview Estates would not pay. It was noted that in the section 106 agreement relating to the new police station, the police will pay for an extra parking zone in this area. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that everywhere in Beeston and Holbeck would be designated so that a parking permit would be required on match days. This means that football supporters will either use car parks or park outside the area. As far as the councillors are aware, residents' car parking will be free. A fee of £30 per year would be charged elsewhere. However, John Hodgson said that he had been told that the fee would be £75 per year. Reference was made to the plans by Aspiring Communities for the former Ice Pak factory. Angela Gabriel noted that Aspiring Communities need to put in a parking plan. She stressed that parking permits were not related to this. Mary Mason referred to a radio interview given by Keith Wakefield, Leader of Leeds City Council, who had stated that owners of cars in homes with no drives would need to pay £50 per annum to park outside the house. Councillor Wakefield had defended this by pointing out that the cost equates to only £1 per week. Angela Gabriel pointed out that the councillors had been present at the Leeds City Council Budget meeting. She said that there would have been press headlines if people were being compelled to pay £50 per year to park outside their own home. She added that what Mary Mason had said is not true. John Fenton said that there could be problems if Leeds United FC are promoted to the Premier League. There would be a loss of car parking spaces. Angela Gabriel pointed out that the deal is that the new police station meets the costs associated with residents'; car parking. She noted that Cottingley will be included in the area covered by residents car parking arrangements. She hoped that fans would travel to matches by other means. Greg Turton said that there would be less parking around Elland Road and referred to the need to protect residents in this area. He felt that it would be appropriate for Leeds City Council to drop proposals for a Park and Ride Scheme at Elland Road.

5.2 A member of the audience wondered whether there had been any developments relating to the Ice Pak factory at Barkly Road. He had heard that vehicles had been entering and leaving the site. Angela Gabriel pointed out that Aspiring Communities own the site and said that this is permitted. Questions were asked as to how Aspiring Communities can carry out work on the site when they have received no planning permission. Angela Gabriel noted that the situation is just like one's own house; no planning permission is required for internal work. There is a demolition order relating to the Ice Pak building, but new buildings must receive planning permission.

6. Report of Committee meeting held on 21st February 2013. Christine Thornton pointed out that the Committee had considered a letter from Tom Riordan, Chief Executive of Leeds City Council, which dealt with a number of issues relating to the Asda and Tesco planning applications, notably the non attendance by Colliers International at the Special Meeting of the Forum on 28th June 2012. The meeting had also discussed Forward Planning and Speakers. Robert Winfield pointed out that details of the guest speakers for the balance of the year are set out in paragraph 10.3 of the minutes of the last Forum meeting. Christine Thornton added that the committee had also discussed the plans by Aspiring Communities for the former Ice Pak factory. It was noted that the grant of £500 to Aspiring Communities had been approved by Councillor Elizabeth Nash (City and Hunslet Ward) and was to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of the prophet Mohammed. Christine Thornton noted that she had been invited to the opening ceremony for the Co-op Pharmacy. She described this as a damp squib and noted that Councillor David Congreve had cut the ribbon to open the building. It was noted that Robert Winfield had received an e mail from the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Ann Castle, informing him that she would not be able to attend any of the Forum meetings before her term of office finishes. It was noted that Ann Castle was unable to attend the Forum AGM, as invited due to the ill health of her father, who died shortly afterwards. It was noted that a meeting of the

Beeston Village Community Centre Users Committee had taken place earlier in the day. Christine Thornton added that the Committee had decided to leave our campaign against the Elland Road Park and Ride scheme in abeyance for the time being, until there are further developments. John Hodgson suggested asking our councillors to keep watch on the situation. Councillor Angela Gsbriel noted that the councillors had been summoned to a meeting on 15th March to update them about the plans. She does not know what will happen. John Hodgson noted that the council is short of funds and that Councillor Richard Lewis had described the situation as a win win situation which will bring in money quickly. He noted that the government had spoken about the level of pollution in the UK and noted that Leeds is well above the average pollution level. Beeston and Holbeck ward is bad for pollution according to an official report. Greg Turton noted that there are 10 or 12 cities above the pollution levels suggested by the EU.

7. Correspondence- Robert Winfield had received a copy of a letter from Bill Birch to the Planning Department about the plans for the Ice Pak building on Barkly Road. Robert Winfield said that he would leave this on the top table for inspection by members of the Forum who wish. Councillor Adam Ogilvie clarified that it is not possible to object to plans where no planning application had been submitted. A member of the audience asked whether a number letters signed as individuals can be placed in the same envelope. Adam Ogilvie suggested that it would be better for such letters to be sent individually. John Hodgson noted that representatives of Aspiring Communities had already visited the Forum. He suggested that it is viable to discuss the plans; he felt that we should not have to wait for the planning application for what he said looks like a done deal. Aspiring Communities are clearly spending a large amount of money. John Hodgson referred to a speech by Keith Wakefield who said that £500000 was being invested in Beeston. He initially thought that this was a reference to the White Rose Centre, but wondered whether it is Aspiring Communities. Christine Thornton noted that until the planning application is submitted, there is very little we can do. She explained that she would be anxious to avoid a significant discussion of the issue, as we would never reach the end of the agenda. John Hodgson suggested keeping this as a live issue. Christine Thornton felt that it will be. John Hodgson wondered whether Aspiring Communities would be invited to a further Forum meeting. Christine Thornton felt that they could not be accommodated within the Forum's schedule of meetings and suspected that Aspiring Communities would hold another meeting when their planning application had been submitted. John Hodgson noted that special meetings of the Forum had been held on other issues, and noted that many people are attending the Forum because of their interest in this issue. Greg Turton noted that Aspiring Communities are not compelled to hold a further meeting. John Hodgson noted that Aspiring Communities did say that they wanted to consult the community. Christine Thornton noted that aspiring Communities had attended meetings of the Forum on two occasions and organised their own meeting. Greg Turton noted that the procedure allows 21 days to lodge objections to planning applications. It was noted that it is up to people to object; a member of the audience asked what the Forum's position would be if a planning application is submitted just after a meeting. Adam Ogilvie noted that he and Angela Gabriel would be writing to local residents as soon as they know more. They noted that there had been criticism of the coverage of previous letters.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Richard Bell noted that people had been canvassing support for a new school. He wondered what it is. Angela Gabriel noted that there are proposals for a free school in the old Halifax building in Leeds City Centre. Richard Bell noted that they are collecting signatures and that he does not know what those collecting signatures are telling people. Angela Gabriel said that they can do that under present legislation, they do not need to tell the council about their intentions. Jeremy Morton said that a group of people looking to establish a Primary Free School on Lady Pit Lane is waiting for a decision. John Hodgson said that he was aware of two complaints about a group of people collecting signatures for a Sikh free school were going about this task in a heavy handed fashion. Christine Thornton said that these might be different things.

8.2 A member of the audience referred to two garages on the junction of Barkly Road and Theodore Street which are repairing cars on the forecourt. This activity had generated a load of dirt from brake dust, with no washing facilities. They are also repairing cars on the carriageway. It was noted that there is a live wire on the pavement and that this needs a letter from the Council and a call from the police. Angela Gabriel noted that those involved have permission to run a business, but not on the carriageway. We need to catch them, and we need information as to the time and the day this is happening so that a case can be built up. The member of the audience raising the issue said that if this is not stopped, it could lead to a serious accident.

8.3 A member of the audience noted that Aspiring Communities has consent to demolish the Ice Pak premises, but not to build. He asked who polices that. He had heard that there is a cement mixer on the site and that building materials are being delivered. Angela Gabriel pointed out that it is possible for internal work to be carried out within planning law. Planning permission is necessary for something new, but no planning permission is required for demolition or internal work, or work within a certain radius of the building. Additionally, must the contractors adhere to certain hours of working or can they work at any time. There had been banging at 8 a.m on a Sunday morning. The member of the audience had telephoned the planning department to make a complaint and was told to keep a record of all incidents.