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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting 4th June 2015

Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Guest Speakers- James Bailey , General Manager, White Rose Centre
4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 14th May 2015
5. Police Report
6. The Beeston Neighbourhood Plan
7. Report of the Committee meeting held on 21st May 2015
8. Correspondence
9. Beeston Village Community Centre
10. The Beeston Festival
11. Any Other Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 14th May 2015

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair) , Mr. J . Adamson , M. Adamson, Mr G. Almass PC Beadling (West Yorkshire Police) , Mr. R. Bell, Mr. W.J. Birch , Mrs J. Birch, Mrs.D. Brooke, Mrs. C. Brummitt, Mr. S. Casserley , Mrs . R. Casserley, Mr. A. Cooper, Mrs. B. Draper, Mr. J. Fenton, Councillor A. Gabriel, Mr. C. Hendrick-Ward , P. Heron, Mr. K. Hewson, Mr. J. Hook, S. Hussain, Miss P. Johnson, Mr. P. Lewis, Mrs. L. Lewis, Mrs. D. McGuigan, Mr. A. McGrath, Mrs. E. McLennan , Mrs. M. McLennan, Mr. J. Morton, Mrs. M. Munro, Miss E. Newton, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mrs. F. Orr, Mr. M. Parry, Rev. L. Pearson, PC Salmon, (West Yorkshire Police) , Mr. S. Sturman , Mr. F. Swift Mr. G. Turton, Mr. G. Wainwright and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the meeting and noted that the weather is like the middle of winter! She congratulated Councillor Adam Ogilvie on his re election to Leeds City Council the previous Thursday. She also stated that she would like a brief, informal meeting with members of the Committee at the conclusion of the meeting.
2. The attendance sheet- Robert Winfield pointed out that the attendance sheet, which was being passed around the meeting, had been redesigned so that individuals who wish to join the

Neighbourhood Forum can simply tick the right hand most column on the form. This removes the need for two separate forms. Christine Thornton referred to the confusion which had occurred at the previous meeting as a result of two sheets being in circulation.

3. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Congreve, John Cunningham , Mary Dinsdale, Arthur Kirby and John Peckham . It was noted that Councillor David Congreve's term of office as Lord Mayor of Leeds would end before the next meeting of the Forum

4. Guest Speakers- Christine Thornton introduced the guest speakers; Jeremy Morton and Lucy Potter of South Leeds Life

4.1 Jeremy Morton thanked the Forum for its invitation, and said that he would give a general overview of South Leeds Life , and the newspaper produced by the organisation. Lucy Potter would speak about her experience of being a community reporter. Jeremy Morton noted that the newspaper had been produced on a monthly basis for the past six months, whilst the South Leeds Life blog has been online for 4 ½ years. The two together provide a community news website and paper for the LS10 and LS11 postal districts. Jeremy Morton referred to a problem with the mainstream media which covers a far larger area, but misses the detail. The paper and the blog are each written by volunteers living in the area. The blog attracts 30000 views per month and 3000 articles have been published, including 800 last year. A quarter of these are one off articles. There is a special page which members of the public can use to write and post through an article. There are eight regular writers all of whom are volunteers involved to various degrees.

Jeremy Morton said that the aims of the blog are to inform, to educate and to entertain. He noted that this is identical to the aims of the BBC, although he noted that the blog is not the BBC! . As part of the remit to inform, the blog aims to promote activities and opportunities. He noted that we often hear that there is nothing for the old, the young and the unemployed. In fact, there is a very active community. In terms of news, he referred to the trolleybus scheme, which he noted is somewhat controversial. The proposed route will run from Holt Park to Stourton via Hunslet and Belle Isle. Whereas it is not possible to move for protesters in the north of Leeds, things are relatively quiet in South Leeds, but increasingly residents are unhappy. Jeremy Morton noted that this is a major project and asked where is the debate. The South Leeds Life Blog talked people through the planning process and the inquiry. It has also encouraged participation, with the aim of getting people to join in. The blog also publishes stories about local residents participating. The blog is keen to enable debate. Those involved with South Leeds Life had built a good platform for the whole area for people to use. Jeremy Morton noted that this is not his blog but everybody's blog.

Jeremy Morton then dealt with the issue of funding. He noted that South Leeds Life produces a 12 page full colour newspaper. He is surprised at how cheap this is to produce. 5000 copies can be produced at a cost of £450, so that the costs are manageable. It is hoped that in the long term, the costs of producing the newspaper will be manageable through the sale of advertising which will hopefully generate sufficient income to sustain the publication. In the meantime, grants have been obtained from organisations such as Community First to encourage training and volunteering. Evans gave money to buy the software to enable the newspaper to be set up. Funding has also been secured from the Yorkshire Voluntary Philanthropist Fund , which supports social enterprise through European Funding. In summary, the newspaper and blog gets advertising income, and runs a friends scheme for organisations and individuals. The Beeston Community Forum is a friend of South Leeds Life. He noted that South Leeds Life is a constituted group which holds an Annual General Meeting and has an elected committee. The organisation is in the process of being turned into a Community Interest Company, which is a social enterprise model.

4.2 Lucy Potter noted that she is a family support worker in Holbeck. She had recently taken a year out to volunteer in the community and met Jeremy Morton. She noted that when she had volunteered in the USA and Brazil, she noted that there is a considerable amount of grassroots community activity. Jeremy Morton encouraged Lucy Potter to volunteer for South Leeds Life. Whilst she was claiming JobSeekers Allowance, she made use of the opportunity to qualify as a community reporter. She noted that this has been a bit of a learning curve but Jeremy Morton helped her in an informal environment, and gave her the facts about journalism and writing, including ways to catch attention, and the differences between print and online journalism. She recalled how she wrote down her thoughts and reported on a rabbit sanctuary in Cottingley. This had made her think about what is local news. She receives knowledge of jumble sales and classified advertisements and turns this on its head. She learns about stories and becomes excited; for example she learned about the Lorry Driver of the Year competition, in which drivers demonstrate their skill in manoeuvring a lorry. She noted that she wants to get into the story and is less keen on opinion and debate. She is interested in positive news stories. She noted that she is involved, as Secretary with the Holbeck Neighbourhood Forum and can write about that. She can gather information from the Forum and use it as evidence in a public document. She noted that she is on a massive learning curve, and has written 30 articles in one year. This provokes things and helps people to get a voice. She noted that a large number of people are interested even though they are not commenting about the articles. Print journalism, she said, gives us a face to face quality. She noted that she works for St. Lukes Care Charity Shop. She also works for the Dewsbury Road Neighbourhood Training Scheme on three days per week. She is able to write about these activities. She is enjoying these activities which encompass the philosophy of South Leeds Life.

4.3 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Amongst issues raised were how people wishing to write for South Leeds Life can become involved, how articles are selected for publication, how South Leeds Life is financed, and whether its accounts are published

5. The minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 2nd April 2015 were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting.

6. Matter arising – John Fenton (who had been unable to be present at the last meeting of the Forum) asked about the location of the area of land the disposal of which the Forum had removed its objection to. Christine Thornton noted that this is the site of demolished maisonettes at Parkwood Road. Bill Birch noted that the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum had decided not to withdraw its objection to the disposal of this area of land and noted that the Beeston Community Forum and the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum were out of step in relation to this issue. He felt that it is important to avoid such a situation in the future, arguing that if Leeds City Council see division between residents organisations, they would be better able to do what they want. He noted that the Neighbourhood Forum's objection is based on the fact that Leeds City Council had not consulted residents about what they would like to happen with the land. Bill Birch noted that he had been unable to be present at the meeting due to a function involving the Church on Maundy Thursday. Christine Thornton observed that we are finding our feet with the Neighbourhood Forum. She stressed that the two forums are separate bodies and noted that the proposal to withdraw the Beeston Community Forum's objection had been raised in the correct way. Bill Birch agreed that the process had been fair. Greg Turton noted that he had written to Leeds City Council's Legal Services Department explaining that the Neighbourhood Forum's objection remains in force, and would be reviewed when consultation at the right level takes place.

7.1 Police Report PC David Beadling noted that there had been a rise in the number of burglary others, eight of which had occurred, mainly affecting sheds. He had brought along a small number of shed alarms. He noted that he would leave his e mail address (david.beadling@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk) so that he can be contacted if any more are needed.

Christine Thornton asked whether these fit on garages. David Beadling said that it can be fitted to a garage; the shed alarm comes with a bracket, and alarms the building, making a loud noise. He added that there had been seven thefts of vehicle registration plates. He noted that he and his colleague had attended the meeting in plain clothes, rather than uniform, in an attempt to catch the culprits. There had been one bicycle theft from Cross Flatts Park. The culprit had been caught and charged. He noted that the overall level of crime is low.

7.2 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Adam Cooper referred to a burnt out car on Grovehall Parade. David Beadling noted that this incident is not linked to other incidents involving burnt out cars which were linked to a family feud. Bill Birch asked whether all the people involved in the burnt out cars linked to the family feud had been arrested. David Beadling noted that there had been a number of arrests, but enquiries were ongoing and the suspects were on bail. There should no longer be any worries about cars being set on fire.

7.3 Richard Bell referred to the thefts of car registration plates, and asked whether this is affecting any type of vehicle. PC Beadling noted no particular type of vehicle is affected. He added that the police had ordered a quantity of anti screw number plates. They will set up a stall and publicise this on their facebook page. Richard Bell asked why people are stealing number plates. PC Salmon noted that these are linked to other offences, notably make offs from petrol stations. PC Beadling said that if such crimes are reported, they will be put on the national police computer.

7.4 A member of the audience noted that many people do not report thefts from garden sheds. PC Beadling noted that the police need to know. The police had arrested a man carrying a bin full of tools which had obviously been stolen on the Sunnyview Estate, but had to release him on bail. It was suggested that thefts from sheds often go unnoticed. PC Beadling noted that there had been a number of instances of clothes being taken from washing lines; the police need to know about these, otherwise they do not have the full picture.

7.5 Doris Brooke noted that items had been stolen from a burial plot behind St. Mary's Church. Flowers are constantly being stolen (not cleared away). It was noted that it is impossible to install a camera at the location as this is apparently illegal. PC Beadling suggested that the PCSOs who patrol the area on bicycles should be asked to go around the church. Adam Cooper pointed out that when he walked around the churchyard recently, having last visited it five or six years ago, he had come out in tears. His wife e mailed Rev Lindsey Pearson about the matter. The graves around the bus stop are in good condition but many graves had been vandalised. He noted that old large gravestones had been pushed to the ground deliberately to prevent them falling on people. Adam Cooper wondered who would vandalise graves. He had taken photos of the situation which, he noted does not involve dangerous large stones. He said that the situation is heartbreaking. It was noted that Lindsey Pearson had said that the graveyard is owned by Leeds City Council, not St Mary's Church, even though the graveyard is adjacent to the church. PC Beadling said that this area would be added to the patrol. Adam Cooper said that the police would be shocked.

7.6 Christine Thornton noted that Insp. Chris Bowen has left the area following a promotion and had been succeeded by former Sergeant (now Acting Inspector) Arrowsuch.

7.7 A member of the audience raised the parking of white vans involved in the construction of the new Asda Store on Oakhurst Drive, in such a way that it is difficult to get around them. One van had been parked right across a footpath. No one seems to bother about this. A member of the audience noted that the parking situation in Parkside Parade is shocking. PC Beadling wondered whether the parking is legal. Questions were raised as to why the vans cannot be parked elsewhere. Adam Cooper pointed out that he works in the construction industry and noted that the parking is dangerous. If there are ten vans

in a line, it is not possible to see whether anyone is coming. He wondered whether the car parking spaces on the nearby industrial estate are occupied, and whether a deal could be struck which would involve the vans parking there. PC Beadling noted that car parking is an issue for the Council. He suggested that the issue might be raised with the foreman of the construction site. Greg Turton noted that car parking is a police issue if it is dangerous. PC Beadle wondered who defines what dangerous is. Greg Turton noted that his wife had mentioned the same issue to him and said that this needs investigation. PC Beadle said that no one had reported this issue to the police. Richard Bell suggested that we write to Asda and ask them to park elsewhere. Councillor Adam Ogilvie said that this is a good suggestion. He added that he would contact the Planning Department to see whether they will speak to Asda. Greg Turton wondered whether the police could decide whether the matter is a police issue or a council issue. Christine Thornton said that the police must see this first. PC Beadling said that he would look at the issue when he is on patrol. John Fenton noted that the postmaster of the Old Lane Post Office had expressed concern about the impact of the situation on his trade. John Fenton added that he takes a number of elderly people in his car to enable them to get their pensions. He said that Asda must be more considerate. A member of the audience noted that he had previously reported cars causing an obstruction on corners and pavements to the police. He had asked PCSOs to put a note on any car which is causing such an obstruction. It is, it was argued normal for cars to block pavements and this seems to have been accepted. The police had argued that this is not reported, but surely if a vehicle is causing an obstruction, the police would be able to see it, and should not wait for a member of the public to report this. Nothing is done as the police say that this is a council matter whilst the council says this is a police matter. It was suggested that when the police see an obstruction, they should put a note on the car windscreen saying that the vehicle is causing an obstruction. PC Salmon said that the police do this already. PC Beadling noted that the police can never stop all cars parking on double yellow lines or on pavements. A member of the audience noted that if the vehicles working on the Asda site parked in the Asda car park, they would be removed. It was noted that Asda's existing store on Old Lane would close on 31st May. A member of the audience noted that he had asked the contractors about the car parking and had been told that it is nothing to do with them. Adam Cooper referred to the closure of a ginnel close to Asda. He said that this must stay open as it is a public right of way. He noted that it had been blocked off temporarily on health and safety grounds, to prevent injury from falling bricks and debris.

7.8 Richard Bell acknowledged that car parking gets on peoples nerves but that it is more important for the police to catch the rapist.

8. Beeston Neighbourhood Forum. Greg Turton noted that the AGM of the Neighbourhood Forum would be taking place on Tuesday 19th My. Non members would be able to sign up on the day. Candidates for membership of the Committee must be proposed and seconded by members of the Neighbourhood Forum. Members would also be able to sign up to any of the seven task groups; the Environment, Community, Retail and Business Development, Heritage, Housing, Opportunities for young people and integration. He noted that some of the task groups are filling up with members better than others. It is intended that the task groups will feed recommendations through to the main committee. Task group members must be members of the Neighbourhood Forum.

Greg Turton noted that the Neighbourhood Forum has appointed a consultant, Shaun Hanson to take the process through the next stage. He has worked with groups seeking to set up Neighbourhood Plans in Holbeck, Seacroft and Garforth. He is an experienced planner recommended by Locality. He would look at whether we have adequate evidence based community engagement. It is envisaged that training sessions would be given on project planning. Greg Turton noted that Mark Parry has undertaken project planning on a regular basis but that Shaun Hanson would give us something more relevant. Greg Turton noted that he and Bill Birch are putting together a grant application. It is possible to apply for £14000, which includes a basic grant of £8000 and £6000 from a 'hardship fund'

for non parished areas which qualify on certain criteria. Adam Cooper pointed out that the Save Our Beeston facebook group now has over 1100 members, and that Councillor Adam Ogilvie frequently visits the site. Sean Sturman said that he would be happy to use the facebook group to promote the Neighbourhood Plan. Greg Turton noted that South Leeds Life recently published an article about the Neighbourhood Plan and that the parish magazine would be publishing an article next month. The Neighbourhood plan is also publicised by posters in shop windows and pubs. The posters bear the slogan 'Your Community Needs You' and are based on the famous World War I recruitment poster. The Forum has had its first stab at investigating issues and making recommendations to the Committee. Greg Turton hoped that the Councillors would wish to get involved in the task groups. We would look at how the recommendations can be incorporated into the Beeston Plan. If a recommendation is a policy, it must be adapted to the planning policy. If it is a project, it must be framed in a different way. Greg Turton noted that he has been involved in discussions council officers about the allocation of resources from the Council to the Neighbourhood Plan. He noted that the Council has a statutory commitment to the plan at the examination and the referendum stage. . Bill Birch noted that the fact that the membership of the Save Our Beeston facebook group is over 1000 means that over 1000 people will potentially be involved when the referendum comes. Robert Winfield agreed to take on the responsibility for publicising the Beeston Community Forum and the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum on the Save Our Beeston website. A member of the audience congratulated Councillor Adam Ogilvie on his re election to Leeds City Council and the Conservative Party for winning the General Election . He noted that it is great to see so many people caring about Beeston and expressed the hope that they could all work together

9. Report of Committee meeting held on Thursday 16th April 2015. Christine Thornton noted that as the meeting was inquorate, it could not take any decisions. However, Christine Thornton referred to the Neighbourhood Improvement Board, the meetings of which are now being opened up to the General Public. The next meeting would take place at Beeston Village Community Centre at 10 am on Monday 6th July. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that this is a meeting about Beeston which is run by Leeds City Council. Christine Thornton noted that attenders of the meeting include councillors and officers from the Dewsbury Road One Stop shop . Richard Bell wondered whether such meetings could be held outside working hours so that working people can attend. It was noted that this would not be possible; however Angela Gabriel pointed out that the Community Committee would be meeting at 5.30p.m on 10th June at the police station.

10. Correspondence-

10.1 Robert Winfield recalled that Leeds City Council had sent a copy of a letter to Hilary Benn about the issue of pollution to the Forum. Robert Winfield noted that the letter had attracted strong criticism from the committee, notably in terms of its use of jargon; as a result of which Robert Winfield had been instructed to write to Leeds City Council. John Tubby of Leeds City Council telephoned Robert Winfield to respond to the letter. It was noted that the monitoring of pollution was taking place at three or four locations ; this involves diffusion tubes staying out for one month at a time. In order to get an idea of what is happening , six months readings are required so it is not possible to say that 'the answer is X' immediately after a monitoring exercise as this seeks annual answers . He added that there are other monitors located around the city, supplying information on a long term basis. John Tubby offered to attend a future meeting of the Forum. A discussion ensued about the letter. Adam Cooper wondered when the tubes were installed. Bill Birch recalled that he original letter gave statistics in the form of monthly averages over the ears. He also recalled that the letter explained that they were not yet in a position to give the results from 2013 as they had not yet been ratified. He noted that he is involved in a mining project in Wakefield; this involves the use of atmospheric sensors which give important data about PM10 and PM2.5 particles at five minute intervals. Bill Birch added that averages are less relevant as extreme readings are more likely to lead to damage to health. The meeting agreed to a proposal from Robert Winfield that we request specific answers to the questions

posed in Robert Winfield's original letter. A discussion then took place about the possible invitation to John Tubby. Robert Winfield pointed out that all the Forum meetings for the balance of the year have guest speakers attending but that it might be possible to accommodate a short presentation at some of the meetings, depending on the likely length of the presentations already taking place. It was agreed to invite John Tubby on this basis. Greg Turton noted that the most prominent hazard to health results from PM10s in conjunction with Nitrogen Dioxide. He noted that the UK had been found to be in breach of the law in this respect.

10.2 Bill Birch recalled that the Forum had sent Leeds City Council a Freedom of Information request seeking information about various aspects of the construction of the new Asda store. Robert Winfield explained that he had received a holding response but not a definitive response. Bill Birch noted that a council which fails to respond to a Freedom of Information request within a certain timescale is acting outside the law and he suggested that we remind Leeds City Councillor their obligation to respond, saying that we would refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman if no response is received. Christine Thornton felt that we should check the relevant timescales.

11. Beeston Village Community Centre- Robert Winfield noted that a meeting of the Users Committee would be taking place on Monday 18th May. He noted that the Forum is represented on the committee by himself and Doris Brooke although the meeting would be open to any Forum member. Robert Winfield pointed out that there are two key issues which he hoped will be dealt with at the issue. He noted that an architect commissioned by Health for All (Leeds) which rents the building from Leeds City Council had advised that the building would cease to be viable within a timescale of 1 to 2 years. As a result of this Health for All had drawn up a plan involving the demolition of the present building and its replacement by a new building which is better able to fulfil the functions of a community centre. The implementation of this plan depends on securing funding from the National Lottery. Robert Winfield hoped to hear more about the progress of the application for funding. Robert Winfield added that the Forum had passed a resolution supporting the plans made by Health for All. The second issue is that of the difficult access to the building, particularly during the hours of darkness. Robert Winfield noted that although this will be addressed by any new building, this would be no consolation to anyone who might be injured in the meantime.

12. Any Other Business.

12.1 Christine Thornton noted that the Beeston Festival will be taking place in Cross Flatts Park on Saturday 6th June. The Beeston Community Forum and the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum will jointly have a stall and people are required to man this. It is noted that although the festival officially starts at 12pm, the organisers want stalls to be set up by 11.30 am. The festival closes at 5p.m. Adam Cooper said that he may be able to spend an hour on the stall, whilst Greg Turton would be present for the entire session. Christine Thornton said that she runs a stall for a small charity and she is not therefore able to assist in the manning of the Forum's stall.

12.2 A further discussion took place about the actions of Asda Stores Limited in relation to the new store on Old Lane. Robert Winfield noted that when he was walking to the present meeting, he noticed a sign attached to a lamppost explaining that Asda is seeking a 'minor variation' to licensing conditions at the new store. He noted that the Forum had not been notified about this. Robert Winfield noted that in view of the fact that the Forum had expressed concerns about Asda seeking planning consents and changes to planning conditions without notifying the Forum in advance, and that Asda were well aware of these concerns, he was surprised that Asda had made this application without notifying the Forum. Greg Turton noted that Asda had been circulating leaflets in the area with details of the opening hours of their stores at Howley Park, Morley and Middleton. Christine Thornton said that she would not shop at Asda because of what she perceived as their attitude towards the community. Adam Cooper said that Asda are in breach of planning conditions, as he had not been able

to find evidence that the contractors building the new Asda store had been registered with the Considerate Constructors scheme. He added that the nine illuminated lights on Old Lane are ridiculous. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that she had met with Council Officers about the enforcement of planning conditions. She noted that where enforcement takes place the applicant is expected to rectify the situation within a stated period of time, perhaps 21 days. Angela Gabriel noted that Asda has not been talking to the Councillors. Robert Winfield noted that there had been discussion at the Forum Committee about the granting to Asda of permission to open the new store for a period of 12 hours on Sundays. A number of members of the Committee suspected that an error had been made as they drew attention to examples of smaller stores which are restricted to opening for six hours on Sundays . It was agreed to write to Asda about these concerns with a copy to the Chief Planning Officer. Rosemary Casserley suggested writing separate letters each dealing with one issue, rather than a single letter, as she felt that Asda would be able to avoid responding to certain points. Christine Thornton felt that this would be unduly time consuming

12.3 It was noted that the horses were back on the grassland between Parkwood Road and Dewsbury Road. It was noted that the horses are not left on the grass overnight, and that this matter had been reported to the police who had come out to see the problem. It was agreed to inform Kris Nenedic of Leeds City Council about this issue .

12.4 Pauline Johnson wondered whether there had been any developments in relation to the planning application by Aspiring Communities for the former Ice Pak factory on Barkly Road . Councillor Angela Gabriel said that she is not aware of any developments.