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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting - 4th May 2017 Agenda

The meeting will be preceded by the Annual General Meeting of the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum (see separate agenda)

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Discussion about the Beeston Neighbourhood Plan
4. To consider and if thought fit pass the following motion .

To request the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Forum to apply to Leeds City Council to add the area around Stank Hall Barn which

- i) is not currently included in the Beeston and Holbeck Ward of Leeds City Council and
- ii) will be included in the Beeston and Holbeck Ward of Leeds City Council following the ward boundary changes to be implemented in May 2018

to the Beeston Neighbourhood Area

5. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum meeting held on 6th April 2017
6. Police Report
7. Report of the Committee meeting held on 20th April 2017
8. Correspondence
9. Possible Co-options to the Committee
10. Any Other Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 6th April 2017

Attendance;- Christine Thornton (in the chair), Mr. R. Bell, Mr. W.J. Birch, Mrs. J. Birch, Mrs. M. Broadbent, Mr. K. Burton, Mr. A. Cooper, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mr. S. Francis, Councillor A. Gabriel, Mr. C. Hendrick Ward, Mr. K. Hewson, Mr. J. Hook, Miss P. Johnson, Mr. E. Leathem, Mrs. D. McGuigan, Mrs. M. Munro, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mr. S. Sturman, Mrs. S. Waugh (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner) and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the meeting and noted that although Spring has sprung, it is a little cold

2. Apologies for absence were received from Dennis Bottomley, Sandra Burton, Councillor David Congreve, Arthur Kirby and Mark Parry

3. Guest Speakers. Christine Thornton introduced the guest speakers; Inspector Alan Travis of West Yorkshire Police and Mark Burns Williamson OBE, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire

3.1 Insp Alan Travis noted that he is the Police Inspector for the Inner South Leeds Partnership working area. There are two sergeants , a number of civilian members of staff , eleven ward managers (police constables) . There should also be 25 PCSOs .These cover Beeston and Holbeck, Hunslet and the Middleton Park ward. Alan Travis said that he has been a police officer for 17 years, 15 of which have been spent in Leeds. He has been an inspector since August 2016 . He is new to South Leeds but learning . He is passionate about the area, which, he noted, brings challenges . He acknowledged that the last 12 to 18 months has been the most challenging of his career. There have been huge challenges in relation to finances and staffing . He noted that his force should have 25 PCSOs but actually has 12 or 13 . This is no one's fault but a consequence of finances and a backlog in recruitment. This has led to a reduced visibility on the street. Contact points, such as the Forum have been damaged . Insp Travis apologised for the lack of police representation at some meetings of the Forum. He added that we are coming through a dark hole thanks to Mark Burns Williamson's funding promise . He is currently recruiting PCs and PCSOs . There are currently 18 PCSOs and the number should be back to 25 within three to four months. 10 of these PCSOs will be in Beeston and Holbeck. There will be more visibility, more yellow jackets , and the PCSOs should be able to attend more meetings such as this one

Insp. Travis referred to the police's priorities. He noted that there have been lots of complaints about drug dealing in Leeds, particularly in the inner areas. This presents a challenge as a police service. The police requires intelligence to tackle drug dealers . Tackling drug dealers is a long term plan involving surveillance, intelligence, and magistrates warrants . Insp Travis noted that the police want to publish good results. He urged members of the public to keep contacting the police if they see drug dealing. Insp Travis then referred to Anti Social Behaviour. . . The actions of the police depend on what is going on. He noted that there are issues in Cross Flatts Park about which the police are working with local councillors and Friends of Cross Flatts Park. There have been bin fires . CCTV from Leeds watch , financed by Leeds City Council is going up there .

Insp Travis acknowledged that burglaries are an issue. There is nothing worse than having people break in and steal property. There is an issue in Beeston; an increase in the number of burglary dwellings at the start of the year. Following arrests and prison sentences , the crime figures are declining but burglary is still a focus. Additionally, there have been lots of complaints about speeding but this is hard to tackle as it is not possible to put a speed camera on all streets . The police is working with the casualty reduction department to target the worst areas. The police are using automated number plate recognition to identify people driving recklessly, with the aim of stopping them from using roads.

Insp Travis then turned to the recent gang injunctions. He noted that Robert Winfield, as Secretary of the Forum, had written to him to express the concerns of the Forum. In view of this, Insp Travis said that he would take the opportunity to dispel a number of myths . Insp Travis noted that there has been serious criminality in this area from May 2014 involving a relatively small number of individuals. Insp Travis stressed that the police recognise the impact of crimes such as assault, the setting on fire of cars, and the ramming of buildings. In response to this, the police set up a special team headed by a Detective Inspector and including a number of specially trained Detective Constables. This team has worked hard. Every single crime was investigated with a view to arrest and charge. However, the threshold for charging someone suspected of crime is rightly very high. It is necessary to prove beyond reasonable doubt that an accused is guilty. In the case of many offences, it is impossible to reach this threshold, so it is necessary to work with the Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner to solve problems by means including gang injunctions . This is , said Insp Travis , a useful tool not a soft option. A number of people have been served with gang injunctions with stringent conditions. These conditions include a requirement to give the police mobile telephone numbers and vehicle registration numbers, as well as being banned from Beeston and from associating with certain people. Any breach of the injunctions will result in swift action and arrest with custodial sentences where an individual is found guilty of breaching the injunction . Insp Travis acknowledged that this situation could have been communicated better . However, there have been restrictions arising from requirements of confidentiality and court reporting restrictions. The gang injunctions were therefore not made public until after the last meeting of the Forum .

3.2 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Richard Bell referred to the shooting on Middleton Crescent which was a case of attempted murder. He asked whether there have been any charges and whether the weapons involved have been recovered. Insp Travis said that the answer to both the questions is no

3.3 Bill Birch said that when undertaking a noise survey for the Save Our Beeston Campaign a white car carrying four Asian youths pulled up . Two of them claimed to be the people affected by the injunctions and asked 'Have you read the papers?'. He noted that the people were bigging up and having a laugh. Bill Birch said that the police must clamp down and take the smile off their faces. They think they own the streets. Insp Travis said that if they breach the injunctions, they breach the injunctions. However, there is only a small number of eyes and ears. Residents must pass on any information they have . Bill Birch said that he had written an account of what happened which is at home. He could send this to the police. The youths had ridden up and down whilst Bill Birch and his colleagues were carrying out the noise survey. Colin Hendrick Ward asked what car were they driving and what are the telephone numbers of people in the car. How do we keep tabs on people? Insp Travis said that they must submit information about telephone

numbers and car registration numbers . If they are using a different vehicle or a different phone , they can be arrested. Insp Travis confirmed that it is possible to pinpoint telephone conversations to a particular time and area . Christine Thornton noted that the injunctions had given the addresses of the young men in the area and asked whether they are supposed to be living there . Insp Travis said that these addresses had been given to the courts . Christine Thornton noted that there could be relatives living there and that she would not know them if she sees them.

3.4 Adam Cooper noted that last week was the 25th anniversary of a fire in Beeston. He noted that he lived in a flat above a bakery . Someone broke in and set fire to this. Adam Cooper recalled, as a 12 year old boy sitting on the roof in his underpants in the snow. There was a suspicion that this fire was part of a family feud and the wrong shop had been set on fire. These suspicions were heightened by the fact that eight months later the nearby Posh Nosh shop, whose owners were involved in the feud, was set on fire . No one was ever caught but everyone (including the police) knew that lots of drug dealing was taking place. The area is still a hot spot for drug dealing . Adam Cooper recalled that his family had lost everything and the local community had got them out of a hole (for example by replacing clothes) . Adam Cooper noted that as part of the present day family feud , a red Mercedes had been set on fire in Grovehall Parade , 25 yards from his father's house. His father's neighbour had a brick through his window . Adam Cooper noted that the family feud had involved crimes such as attempted murder , kidnap and arson. These are not petty crimes , but the culprits have simply had a slap on the wrist. He wants prison sentences to put the community at rest. He acknowledged that he is emotional because there are so many similarities between the present day family feud and his own experiences 25 years ago. He asked those present to imagine how his father had felt after the car had been set on fire close to his home. Insp Travis said that he shares Adam Cooper's passion. If the police could send the culprits to jail, they must, but they have to operate within the legal system. Adam Cooper noted that the family feud had gone on for two years . When he reported the incident involving the car being set on fire to the police , the police officer to whom he spoke had said that they have ' a finger in every pie' . He noted that the first photo is of a man living three doors up from his father and on the opposite side of the road. Insp Travis said that injunctions are not a slap on the wrist ; those breaking them can be imprisoned . A ban from entering Beeston is a big step , even though those affected have not been convicted of any crime. These are tough tools to control behaviour. They are not an ideal tool as an ideal tool would have been prison. Insp Travis stressed that since the injunctions had been imposed there had been no more shootings, cars being set on fire or properties rammed . The injunctions had thus shown their usefulness. Insp Travis said that police officers share the frustration of the community. They want to get bad people off the street .

3.5 Mark Burns Williamson said that he recalled attending this meeting around 18 months ago, and recalled issues such as cars being set on fire being raised from the floor . He was appalled by this, and had then had conversations with the police to express what he had heard, and asks what had been and would be done. He pointed out that the Yorkshire Evening Post article about the family feud noted that other arrests had been made . There is also an ongoing court case so that the gang injunctions are not the only things which have been done. Other cases are being taken to court where criminality is being addressed . Mark Burns Williamson said that he is willing to stand up and say on behalf of the community that he does not tolerate this in Beeston.

3.6 Christine Thornton recalled that at a previous Forum meeting Insp. Arrowsuch had said that witnesses were being intimidated. Insp Travis acknowledged that there are issues with evidence and people being unwilling to stand up in court . Bill Birch asked the guest speakers whether they can say anything about the family feud; in particular, is it about drugs or property . Insp Travis said that the feud is about a family inheritance and cash. Those involved are 'not nice people' . Richard Bell asked whether the amounts of money involved are substantial. Insp Travis said that he could not go into that.

3.7 Steve Francis asked the guest speakers how they feel the police in Leeds are dealing with cybercrime. Insp Travis noted that cybercrime is one of the police's priorities. The police are doing the best to get on top of the game . There is now a West Yorkshire cybercrime team staffed by detectives . A Leeds district team feeds into this. The investigation of cybercrime is complex and resource intensive. They are slightly behind the game but catching up. Steve Francis noted that his solicitors, who are based in Dudley had completed the sale of his home . A six figure sum went from his solicitors to a bank account in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire and out of the account. This was reported to Action Fraud . The solicitors' bank reported the matter to Cambridgeshire Police. Action Fraud then reported the matter to West Yorkshire Police who did not get back on the matter. Steve Francis noted that he had sold his house without an estate agent , so that any information about the sale of his house would have had to come from the community. Cambridgeshire Police had not been in touch. Insp Travis said that he would look into the matter . Steve Francis noted that his e mail account had been hacked. Insp Travis said that the hacker could have obtained the e mail details from his solicitors. Steve Francis said that they would not have known his password, and that the solicitors IT Department had advised him that his e mail had been hacked. Mark Burns Williamson asked when this had happened. Steve Francis said that this had occurred at the end of January. Mark Burns Williamson observed that this is disappointing. Steve Francis noted that the money was reimbursed by his solicitors insurance. Mark Burns Williamson said that he had given funding to establish a West Yorkshire cybercrime team. This cannot deal with all aspects as a huge number of crimes is committed. He added that Action Fraud act as a postbox and send a case back to the relevant force. He said that he would take Steve Francis's details and liaise with him. Insp Travis noted that investigations span different forces . The chances are that the fraudster has defrauded other people. Action Fraud look at reports and try to identify patterns , and send details to the relevant police force. Mark Burns Williamson pointed out that Action Fraud referred a case with which he is familiar to West Yorkshire Police because the first of 150 names on a list of people who were involved comes from West Yorkshire. Why should it fall on West Yorkshire Police to investigate this when it is a UK wide and indeed an international issue. Richard Bell asked whether crimes are dealt with by the force where the crime is committed.

3.8 John Cunningham noted that at a previous Forum meeting the members were given a mobile telephone number on which they can contact the PCSOs . Is that number still in existence? Insp Travis noted that the mobile telephone number which John Cunningham had referred to was only relevant to the managed approach to sex workers. If there is an ongoing crime, people must telephone 999. John Cunningham noted that people had been kicking a bus shelter to pieces .

3.9 Mark Burns Williamson thanked the Forum for inviting him to the meeting and noted that he had attended Forum meeting before. He noted that he tries to get around West Yorkshire and had been on a visit with the local Neighbourhood Policing Team. Earlier in the day, he had been at a Hunslet Carr meeting. He added that it is useful to spend time going out with teams. He noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner sets the Police Budget , formulates the Police and Crime Plan and holds the police to account. He has frequent meetings with the Chief Constable and the Chief Police Team. He likes to get out to the community to ensure that he is not given a load of spin at the meetings . The Police and Crime plan was published in December. Mark Burns Williamson noted that he had circulated leaflets to the audience . The priorities of the Police and Crime plan are tackling crime and anti social behaviour, supporting vulnerable people, supporting victims and ensuring that the system works. There is also a five year plan which has evolved after consultation with the public, councils and other partners. The intention is to get the police to deliver against this. Mark Burns Williamson added that Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabularies (HMIC) , who are independent inspectors of police had rated West Yorkshire Police as good , despite the fact that the force had lost £140 million from its budget and 2000 police officers and staff since 2010. By contrast, the Humberside and South Yorkshire Police forces had been graded as 'requires improvement' . However, Mark Burns Williamson said that there should be no complacency. One area which had been hit is neighbourhood policing. It is essential to improve recruitment. Mark Burns Williamson pointed out that he had raised the police council tax precept. Surveys had found that 70% of people had said they are willing to pay additional council tax to recruit additional Police Officers and PCSOs. 500 new police officers will be recruited over the next 12 months, whilst 600 officers had been recruited over the last 12 months. This is a net gain of 600 officers due to retirements and people leaving the force .The police service should not be carrying vacancies; there is no reason for this. There will, however always be some vacancies due to promotions including PCSOs who are promoted to Police Constables.

Mark Burns Williamson noted that his newsletter is advertising for independent custody visitors . These ensure that people, who are often vulnerable are treated in a correct way. The recruitment process closes at 23rd April. The recruitment is run through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner but is independent of the police. Mark Burns Williamson added that he is funding a joint multi agency team with Trading Standards. He noted that vulnerable people are targeted by scammers and robbed of their life savings. Mark Burns Williamson noted that he is proud of the fact that as a result of the Proceeds of Crime Act , £1.7 million had been paid to 380 groups in West Yorkshire. Grants of up to £5000 can be awarded . The latest presentation night had taken place in Halifax when 42 projects and groups had received grants. Mark Burns Williamson praised the great work by the police and the courts who seize the assets of criminals

Mark Burns Williamson had recently been interviewed on 'Look North' about human trafficking. He noted that modern day slavery is going on in West Yorkshire and elsewhere. People are being trafficked from the UK and abroad and used as forced labour . There is also sexual exploitation. Mark Burns Williamson noted that he has established his own team and chaired a national network of PCCs about this matter. He noted that the owner of a bed company in Batley had 45 people kept as slaves in a terrace house. Their bank accounts were being controlled and they had been told lies about why they had been brought to the UK. There is a connection with a Polish man with an address in Enfield who was trafficking into West Yorkshire. Sometimes, trafficked people are being led unwittingly by employment agencies. He noted that the police have a modern slavery helpline.

3.10 Adam Cooper asked whether anything is being looked into in connection with the family feud . He noted that two or three of those who are involved own properties and shops. He observed that there are lots of things going on and had raised this 18 months ago. Insp Travis said that this did form a part of the investigation but certain tests are required before assets can be confiscated . The police had not, so far, identified criminal gains from the gang, but if the police can confiscate the property of those involved, they would do so .

3.11 Christine Thornton described ringing the 101 non emergency police number as soul destroying . She noted that she was hanging on when a message had said 'don't hang up; your call is important.' She had hung on for ten minutes when there were people riding on motorbikes in Cross Flatts Park. She hung up and phoned Parkwatch . It was noted that this issue has been raised constantly and cash has been pushed into attempts to improve the service, which nevertheless suffers from peaks in demand. Mark Burns Williamson noted that he recently gave an update about this to the Police and Crime Panel. The situation is a lot better than a few months ago. There have been cuts; a few people have been moved out , but some have also moved back in. Another team is assisting with problem solving . There is a lot of demand on the 101 number, including calls in connection with issues which are not policing matters. Priorities include missing persons and mental health . Mark Burns Williamson noted that he had set up a mental health team. He added that we cannot use the police as a default agency when others should step up. Christine Thornton said that it puts many people off when people are kept on hold. Mark Burns Williamson suggested visiting the West Yorkshire Police website which now has a live chat facility, although he acknowledged that many people still prefer to telephone the police . There is now digital content and mobile phone apps. These reduce demand on phones. Richard Bell noted that if someone phones 101, the call would be categorised. He asked what then happens to that. Is it collated and analysed , with the information being used for targeting. Insp Travis said that an auditable computer system can pick up patterns of calls. Mark Burns Williamson noted that HMIC criticised West Yorkshire Police for crime reporting standards two years ago. The force scored 70% then , but the score is 90% and rising now. Thus, there is an increase in recorded crime , but this is the right thing to do as a bigger picture. Mark Burns Williamson noted that HMIC had recently went into

Greater Manchester Police (an area of comparable size and challenges to West Yorkshire) and criticised the force for not recording 40000 crimes. Thus comparisons between the two forces are not on a level playing field. A member of the audience noted that she had a good experience with the 101 service, but this was when she had phoned the number at 3 am (after a shed had been broken into) when the lie was, presumably not busy. They said that they would send something out. She did not hear anything else from the police, but did not expect to. The intending thieves had broken the locks but had not stolen anything. She had however received a crime number and her call had been answered within one minute. Mark Burns Williamson noted that the police will not attend every call, but the police are trained to risk assess issues in terms of threats, harms, and risks

4. The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 2nd March 2017 were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

5. Beeston Neighbourhood Forum Report- Robert Winfield noted that he, and Colin Hendrick Ward had attended a useful Neighbourhood Planning function at Hillside, Holbeck on 15th March. He had taken notes of the remarks by speakers at the function, which he will write up and circulate, at least to the members of the Committee. However, as the notes have no official standing (in contrast to formal minutes of a meeting), the writing up of the notes will be treated as non urgent. There are several forthcoming meetings, Firstly, Abbie Miladinovic of Leeds City Council (who had, incidentally apologised for being unable to attend the present meeting) would be attending a further session with members of the Neighbourhood Forum committee at 7.15p.m on Wednesday 12th April. There would be a further meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum Committee on 25th April. The Annual General meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum will take place in conjunction with the next meeting of the Beeston Community Forum at 7.30p.m on Thursday 4th May at Beeston Village Community Centre. All officer and committee positions fall due for re election. In connection with his own position as Chairman, Robert Winfield said that since succeeding Greg Turton as Chairman of the Neighbourhood Forum in unexpected circumstances in November 2015, he had never made any secret of the fact that he did not really have the time to devote to the position. Accordingly, Robert Winfield confirmed that he would be delighted to stand down as chairman if a person with the necessary time and skills expressed an interest in filling the position. In addition, in view of the fact that the two forums are now working together, there is an arguable case for aligning the officer positions of the two forums more closely than they are at present. Robert Winfield would not be opposed in principle to this. Robert Winfield noted that following representations made by the Beeston Community Forum, the Local Government Boundary Commission has decided to place the area around Stank Hall Barn in Beeston and Holbeck Ward. Robert Winfield would make enquiries of Ian Mackay of Leeds City Council as to the steps which need to be taken if the members of the Forum wish to add Stank Hall Barn to the Neighbourhood Area. Although the Neighbourhood Forum did not take a position in relation to the Aspiring Communities Planning Application, a number of committee members were very busy, in other capacities, preparing objections. Now that the Public Inquiry into the planning application has been held, the Neighbourhood Forum should now move forward.

6. Report of Committee meeting held on 9th March. Christine Thornton noted that the meeting had not been quorate but there had been a discussion about the Aspiring Communities public inquiry. There had also been a discussion which had led to the tabling of the motion which appears as Item 9 on the agenda.

7. Resolution concerning planning applications. Christine Thornton proposed the resolution as follows

to authorise the Committee of the Forum to object to any planning application in the Beeston Forum area

I) for food takeaways and

II) ii) involving the conversion of properties into multi occupancy units

Christine Thornton explained that this had been discussed before but never formalised. The resolution would save the committee constantly coming back to the Forum to seek agreement to make objections. Richard Bell proposed an amendment which would require the Committee to report to the Forum whenever it had objected to such a planning application. He said that some members of the Forum might not support an objection and must get the chance to say that. The resolution, as amended, was agreed.

8. Correspondence

8.1 Robert Winfield had received an e mail from Insp Alan Travis responding to our concerns about the police's handling of the family feud. It was noted that all the points in Insp Travis e mail had been dealt with by his remarks to the Forum earlier in the meeting.

8.2 Robert Winfield had received an e mail from Martin Hackett of Leeds City Council about the feasibility of organising a workshop session at a future Forum meeting. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that she had some input into this idea. She noted that in the past, the Inner South Leeds Community Committee had organised workshops. Some had been successful, others not. She suggested that if there is a free point in the Forum's yearly calendar, a Forum meeting could take the form of a workshop. The idea would be to get council officers along and hold a workshop. This would last for 1 ½ hours. The subject could, for example, be highways or transport. The Inner South Leeds Community Committee would facilitate the whole event. There would be one such workshop over the next calendar year. The Forum would nominate two subjects, which need not be decided at the current meeting. All workshops would in future take place at community meetings unless there is a major issue. Angela Gabriel noted that round table discussions can have an in depth discussion. Robert Winfield noted that all Forum meetings during 2017 have arranged guest speakers or are joint meetings with the Neighbourhood Forum. Any workshop, along the lines suggested would therefore need to be in 2017. Robert Winfield also pointed out that it is possible that a local issue, requiring significant discussion could arise at the time of a Forum meeting which had been earmarked for such a workshop. Bill Birch said that if there is a Forum meeting to which council officers have been invited, this could be converted to a workshop. The meeting agreed that the matter should be considered further by the Committee

9 Report of the Public Inquiry into the Aspiring Communities planning application. Christine Thornton noted that the inquiry had taken place on 28 29 and 30 March and consisted of two full day followed by a long half day which included a site visit by the planning inspector, Mr Christopher Preston. The inspector started by introducing the format and, on the first day of the inquiry allowed anyone who wished to make a statement to do so. Such witnesses were then subject to informal cross examination. Christine Thornton noted that she spoke on behalf of the Beeston Community Forum, Bill Birch spoke on behalf the Save Our Beeston Campaign. Colin Hendrick Ward spoke in a personal capacity, whilst the inquiry also heard from Lisa Leonard, the Head Teacher of St Anthony's School and another local resident, Ray Stone. Christine Thornton said that the inquiry was not like being in court, although counsel on each side of the issue made their case and presented witnesses. On the second day of the inquiry, aspiring Communities presented their case and were cross examined by Leeds City Council's barrister. Christine Thornton noted that she was unable to attend the third day of the inquiry as she had a meeting at a school of which she is a governor . However, the inquiry had looked at planning conditions which could be imposed if the /inspector was minded to allow the planning application. The Inspector stressed that this does not imply that he would allow the planning application. Colin Hendrick Ward noted that both sides summed up and that a lot of potential planning conditions had been put forward. It was suggested that Aspiring Communities should not be allowed to hold celebrations of the prophet Mohammed's Birthday on the site. There was also a suggestion that the number of worshippers should be restricted to 250 and that any additional people would be required to be turned away. There was a suggestion that this planning condition might be unenforceable . John Cunningham said that it had been suggested that there should be no activities on the car park and no amplification or noise.

Christine Thornton noted that the Inspector visited the site . He allowed people to accompany him on this visit. The site visit allowed the inspector to look at the site and to get a better view of the plans. Aspiring Communities architect was present at the site visit. The Inspector said that he had also walked around the area on both sides of Cross Flatts Park. Thus, he knew about the location of schools and of existing mosques. It was noted that Sean Sturman and Roy Stone went on the site visit as did the Chief Planning Officer of Leeds City Council. Colin Hendrick Ward noted that Christopher Preston had spoken to some local residents . Christine Thornton noted that a decision about the planning application is expected in eight weeks.

Bill Birch noted that apart from missing one afternoon, he had attended the whole inquiry. He said that he was disappointed with the Leeds City Council case. He noted that the Beeston Forum and the Save Our Beeston campaign had each flagged up the issues of air pollution , traffic and noise; however, Leeds City Council did not major on these issues until the last minute . He noted that Aspiring Communities had sent in a noise report on the day before the inquiry, and said that he had virtually retracted the previous report. Bill Birch said that the whole thing was a mess. He added that Leeds City Council did badly under cross examination. Although Leeds City Council's barrister was good, Aspiring Communities Barrister was more professional . Bill Birch felt that if the planning application is to be determined solely on the basis of what happened at the inquiry, we would not be in a good position. However, the Inspector stressed that the inquiry was just a part of the process. He had a large pile of documents to consider. Bill Birch said that if the decision about the planning application is taken on the basis of the inquiry (15%) and everything else (85%) it would be in the balance. He expressed disappointment in Leeds City Council's defence. Christine Thornton said that she found the inquiry very interesting. Sean Sturman said that the people who spoke at the inquiry should feel proud of themselves. There had been lots of positive feedback. John Cunningham felt that a special mention should be given to Bill Birch

10. Christine Thornton reminded Forum members that there are a number of vacant positions on the Forum Committee.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 Robert Winfield said that he would be happy to e mail a poster advertising future Forum meetings to any member of the Forum who might be able to use a poster.

11.2 Robert Winfield referred , yet again to the forthcoming Leeds City Council ward boundary change under which the area around Stank Hall Barn would come into Beeston and Holbeck Ward. Robert Winfield pointed out that the Forum's constitution , which describes the area served by the Forum is worded in such a way that this area will automatically come into the Beeston Forum area. Although he felt that the inclusion of Stank Hall Barn in the Beeston Forum area would b likely to command the support of Forum members,k he felt uneasy about what is clearly a constitutional amendment coming into force without Forum members being given the chance to vote on the mater., The meeting agreed to a proposal from Robert Winfield that the matter be considered by the Committee.

11.3 Richard Bell asked whether anyone knows what is going on with Ridge Farm . He noted that planning approval for a care home had been granted seven years ago but nothing had happened . More recently , someone had posted on facebook that it is being turned into flats. Councillor Adam Ogilvie said that there had been a planning application for older peoples accommodation. He had asked planning enforcement to look at the site as it is a tip. There are suspicions that a public right of way has been obstructed with a gate.

11.4 Eddie Leatham wondered whether there had been any developments in terms of the future of Beeston Village Community Centre. Robert Winfield noted that it is his understanding that the National Lottery bid for funding for the replacement building would be decided by the end of March. Robert Winfield noted that although it is now April, he had heard nothing. Councillor Adam Ogilvie noted that he had seen Pat McGeever, Director of Health for All (Leeds) , which rents Beeston Village Community Centre from Leeds City Council on the previous Monday. She was expecting a decision any day.

11.5 Ken Burton noted that the branch of the Leeds Building Society on Dewsbury Road will close on 30th June. He noted that there is no financial reason for the closure but the staff working there would be redeployed elsewhere. This was part of a rationalisation ; it was felt that not enough people were using the branch. Myra Munro , who has been a customer of Leeds Building Society since 1974 said that Leeds Building Society is providing no service whatsoever. She added that she is furious When she phoned to complain , she was told that it is only 2.7 miles to Morley . What would the position be if someone cannot catch a bus to Morley? Councillor Adam Ogilvie said that he had e mailed Hilary Benn MP about the mChristine atter. Hilary Benn had been in contact with the Chief Executive of Leeds Building Society when the closure of the Holbeck branch was proposed; he could do the same in relation to this branch . Ken Burton said that following the closure of the branch, the nearest banking facility will be Barclays. It was agreed that the Forum would write to Leeds Building Society to express our concern. There was a suggestion that people are being forced to use online banking .

11.5 Councillor Angela Gabriel referred to the Kirk Beston properties. She noted that the landlord has gone bankrupt, following which the buildings had been sold to a company in Manchester , which has imposed sharp increases in rents. She noted that this matter has nothing to do with Leeds City Council. She said that Housing Options will help tenants get rehoused if needed , or stop any illegal actions. A number of sessions have been held in the Library to offer help and support. Everyone involved should have received a telephone call from the Council. She noted that a single woman in a one bedroom flat had seen her rent increased from £400 to £550. Rent on a three bedroom flat has increased from £550 to £850. Tenants are being required to apply for their own properties. Hilary Benn has complained to the Chief Executive of the company involved. Richard Bell pointed out that a landlord cannot increase rents in order to engineer a situation in which a tenant is evicted for non payment. Angela Gabriel said that this is why Housing Options is getting involved. Imagine people living in a property for 30 years getting a letter saying that they have to re apply for their own property. The council will facilitate rehousing where required , but tenants might have to get private rented accommodation

CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum on Thursday 1st June (or should fewer than 20 Forum members be present, the first meeting at which 20 Forum members are present) will consider and if thought fit pass the following resolution. The resolution shall not be considered to have been passed unless two thirds of the members present and voting vote in favour of the resolution

That the area around Stank Hall Barn which

- I) is not currently included in the Beeston and Holbeck Ward of Leeds City Council and**
- II) will be included in the Beeston and Holbeck Ward of Leeds City Council following the ward boundary changes to be implemented in May 2018**

shall immediately be considered to be a part of Beeston for purposes connected with the constitution of the Beeston Community Forum in addition to the areas specified in clause 5a).3 of the constitution