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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting - 6th June 2013

Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Guest Speakers- Councillor Richard Lewis, Mr Martin Farrington and Mr Andrew Hall, dealing with proposals for a Park and Ride facility at Elland Road
4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Forum held on Thursday 2nd May 2013
5. Police Report
6. Correspondence
7. Report of Committee meeting held on 16th May 2013
8. Beeston Festival Stall
9. Any Other Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 2nd May 2013

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the Chair), Mr. R. Almond, Mr. W.J. Birch, Mr. R. Bell, Mrs. D. Brooke, Mr. K. Burton, Mrs. S. Burton, Councillor D. Congreve, Mrs. M. Cook, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mr. M. Dinsdale, Mr. J. Fenton, M. Hobson, Mr. J. Hodgson, Mr. J. Hook, PCSO K. Johnson (West Yorkshire Police), Miss. P. Johnson, Mrs. D. Kenny, Mr. A. Kirby, R. Kitson, Mr. G.M. Mason, Mrs. M. Mason, K. Mawson, J. Mawson, Miss E. Newton, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mr. M. Parry, Mr. A. Pointon, Mr. F. Swift, Mr. R.J.W. Winfield and Mr. N. Zaman . **When the minutes were considered by the subsequent Forum meeting, John Peckham pointed out that his name was omitted from those attending, despite the fact that he is recorded in the minutes as having made a remark**

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton thanked those present for their attendance
2. Apologies for absence were received from Kathleen Fenton
3. Guest Speakers- Christine Thornton explained that she was unsure as to whether the invited guest speakers would be attending. Robert Winfield pointed out that following a decision of the Committee, he had invited a number of speakers relevant to proposals for a Park and Ride Scheme at Elland Road. Robert Winfield noted that he had received a telephone call from Councillor James Lewis, Chairman of the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority, explaining that he would be unable to attend the present meeting but expressing a willingness to attend a future Forum meeting. Robert Winfield added that he had received no response from the other individuals whom he had invited to attend.
4. The minutes of the Forum meeting held on 4th April 2013 were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.
5. There was no correspondence to report.
6. Elland Road Park and Ride Scheme. In view of the absence of the invited guest speakers, Christine Thornton invited Councillor Adam Ogilvie to make a number of remarks about the current situation.
- 6.1 Adam Ogilvie said that he would chase Councillor Richard Lewis and Martin Farrington (who had not responded to the Forum's

invitations to attend the current meeting) , as proposers of the scheme need to send someone to the Forum. He added that a paper had been taken to the last meeting of the Leeds City Council Executive Board about the proposals for development of land in the area of Elland Road (not just the Park and Ride Scheme) . The paper refers to the police station on the site and to other possible uses of the land including an Ice Rink , which still requires planning permission. The proposal will go to the next stage which involves the submission of a planning application. There is a consultation about the proposals during May and early June. Adam Ogilvie said that he would ensure that Councillor Richard Lewis and responsible council officers attend the Forum. Adam Ogilvie added that the Councillors for Beeston and Holbeck ward have expressed a number of concerns, particularly in relation to traffic and solution. Adam Ogilvie added that he was required by the principle of collective responsibility to support the proposals at the meeting of the Executive Board, but he would continue to put forward the concerns of residents about the scheme. He noted that as a result of representations from the Beeston and Holbeck Councillors, it had been agreed that a traffic assessment and a health impact assessment would be produced. Adam Ogilvie said that it is important that the results of these are published.

6.2 Christine Thornton noted that Councillor Angela Gabriel had copied her into an e mail about the pollution situation. Adam Ogilvie said that the residents of Beeston need to get something positive from the scheme if it goes ahead. He noted that Beeston currently has poor public transport; extra resources could be devoted to this. One possibility is a bus linking Cottingley, Beeston, Holbeck and the Morrisons supermarket in Hunslet.

6.3 John Cunningham wondered whether it would be possible for us to obtain any reports about chest problems from doctors' surgeries. Christine Thornton said that these would not be obtainable from local GPs , but it might be possible to obtain relevant statistics from the Director of Public Health.

6.4 John Hodgson noted that Adam Ogilvie had expressed the views of the local councillors at the Executive Board meeting. He noted that the Director of Health had said that South Leeds is unhealthy as a consequence of its being surrounded by motorways. He also noted that Leeds Bridge is only just above sea level. He added that when the pollution surveys for the park and ride scheme were carried out , all were on the top of the brow, rather than below it. John Hodgson added that a number of aspects of the proposals seem to be changing. Originally, the car park was intended to hold 1000 cars, of which 900 would come from the direction of the bridge and 100 from the other direction. Now, the talk is of a capacity of 800 cars. He added that Councillors had described the proposals as a win win situation; he noted that the predictions of the amount of money which would be made by the council had risen from £2 million to £3 million. John Hodgson, however welcomed the fact that something would be done about bus service. He noted that councillors in Morley and Aberford were seeking two loops with nothing in the middle. Beeston residents would be cut out of this bus service. He was concerned about the win win situation and he asked what is the win win for the health of people in this area. He noted that there had been nose to tail traffic on Wesley Street for an hour on the evening before the meeting. Traffic had been using Sunnyview Gardens as a rat run even though the street is access only. He noted that people had been stuck in traffic jams when coming home from work, going to evening shifts and going to entertainment. John Hodgson added that since the erection of the traffic lights at the junction of Wesley Street and Beeston Road ,Doris Brooke and Edna Newton get standing traffic and pollution. He hoped that there would be free and frank discussions about the Park and Ride proposals, and noted that a few people in the area have COPD. Christine Thornton noted that there are lots of children in the area with asthma. John Hodgson felt that a park and ride scheme is better sited in Tingley, Gildersome or Stourton. He noted that anyone driving in this area knows that the Ring Road is frequently blocked , and he expressed surprise that any bus company would wish to operate the service in connection with the Park and Ride scheme. He noted that Elland Road already has a good bus service into Leeds City Centre; the no 51, and that 'bendybuses' had returned to Beeston.

6.5 Christine Thornton wondered what form the consultation would take. Adam Ogilvie confirmed that it is the role of the councillors to ensure that the consultation is real, rather than a paper exercise. He noted that there are a number of developments in and around Beeston, notably the possible building of a supermarket on Old Lane, the expansion of the White Rose Centre and the expansion of local schools. Adam Ogilvie and Angela Gabriel had raised a number of concerns. John Hodgson expressed surprise that all the developments envisaged in the masterplan are waiting for the economic situation to recover. He noted that there had been arguments about the Casino; that the Council had lost a battle about the White Rose Centre and ended up with a dead site, and he also noted that the Park and Ride facility is short term due to the developments on the site. John Hodgson noted that Councillor Keith Wakefield, Leader of Leeds City Council had said that if he were a Beeston Councillor, he would want to see benefits for Beeston.

6.6 Richard Bell asked about the road capacity. He noted that on a recent journey, he had taken 40 minutes to drive to the M621 from the bottom of Wesley Street. He mentioned that this happens relatively frequently; if anything happens with traffic, it leads to gridlock. Adam Ogilvie said that we need to see details of the number of cars travelling along various roads. He hoped that the speakers dealing with the Park and Ride scheme at a future Forum meeting will bring proper figures with them. Richard Bell said that he finds it hard to see how roads in the area can take on additional traffic. Pauline Johnson asked whether the Park and Ride Scheme would become a white elephant. Would drivers need to pay to park; what bus fares would be charged. She felt that drivers would be reluctant to walk. Adam Ogilvie said that the York Park and Ride facility is well used. Where the mode of travel into the City Centre is a train, it is quick, and there are no hold ups. Adam Ogilvie said that buses are bound to be held up. Bill Birch said that the York Park and Ride facility works well as it is located on the periphery of the city. Motorists can park on the outskirts of the city and take a bus. However the Elland Road proposals offer the worst of both worlds; and are effectively a park and walk scheme. Traffic will be gridlocked, and owners of cars might as well park at the £3 per day Whitehall Road. Car park. Bill Birch also asked whether Leeds City Council would be willing to give an undertaking that the bus services connected with the Park and Ride Scheme will not be subsidised by the Council. He feared a scenario in which the operators of the buses from the park and ride facility will realise that the buses are not financially viable, and present the Council with the choice of subsidising the service if it is to continue at all. Adam Ogilvie said that this question would need to be directed to Councillor Richard Lewis and the responsible council officers. Christine Thornton said that the York Park and Ride

scheme imposes no charges for car parking. Users of the scheme simply pay on the bus. Edna Newton noted that it could cost £2 million to set up the park and ride scheme. She added that Boar Lane is congested enough; you might as well put the cars in Lower Briggate and let them turn left and wait for ever. She noted that in Toronto, there is a park and ride scheme which uses small trains and works well. She said that Elland Road is too close to the City Centre for an effective Park and Ride scheme and that those proposing the scheme have wooden heads; they do not think ideas through, instead saying 'this sounds alright, let's have a go'.

6.7 Noor Zaman noted that there is only one existing Park and Ride facility in Leeds; that at King Lane. He said that this scheme is not successful as it is not used; he noted that he drives buses there and if five people get on at the car park, it is an event. He noted that people from Otley use the King Lane scheme. He felt that the Elland Road Park and Ride scheme would be no more successful. A member of the audience felt that an error had been made by locating all the multi storey car parks close to Leeds City Centre on the north side of the city centre, rather than having at least one of the car parks on the south of the city centre. John Cunningham noted that there are hundreds of cars parked at New Pudsey Railway Station; he asked why this could not also happen at Morley Railway Station. Adam Ogilvie said that a park and ride scheme should catch traffic coming off the motorways. John Peckham said that the idea of a park and ride scheme at Morley Railway station is not practical, because although the Leeds to Manchester railway service (5 times per hour) passes through Morley, there are only two stopping trains per hour, which would not be sufficient to make a park and ride scheme viable. There is not sufficient capacity on the line. Bill Birch said that he had seen a string of missed opportunities, and that he has no confidence in the planning officers. He noted that there was the intention to build a new bus station next to the railway station; the land was then sold off to build a hotel. Two motorways then came together; there were plans for a multi storey car park at this site, but the land was sold off for office development, so the opportunity to do the right thing was missed. Now, space for car parking at Elland Road was being reduced, as the land is instead being used as a police station. Bill Birch said that he would want to see the land in the area used to deal with problems from the developments. Bill Birch added that a Residents Only Parking scheme will not solve the problems. He noted that friends of relatives will not be able to visit them without parking permits. He added that he would like to see a multi storey car park in this area, but council officers have said that this cannot happen. Nevertheless, the Systime factory in the area has a multi storey car park. Adam Ogilvie noted that he has made this point. Bill Birch said that planning officers are always planning for yesterday's solutions; he recalled science fiction films and asked how often you see someone catching a bus. He noted that there are no driver cars in Nevada; he said that that is the future but that no one is planning for it. Andrew Pointon said that this has been a characteristic of this country for decades. He argued that but for the Beeching rail closures, there could have been a Park and Ride scheme at Gildersome which does not touch the 'Huddersfield Line'. Track beds could be re established, but we need an integrated system, which would be prevented by government constraints. The Leeds Park and Ride scheme, should, he said be at Junction 27. He added that the government is changing how councils raise money so that business rates are more important. This would lead to councils building developments in order to increase revenue which is wrong.

6.8 Mark Parry said that he is opposed to the construction of a Multi Storey Car Park. He noted that this could attract additional traffic and fumes, which is what we say we do not want. John Hodgson recalled that he had, on numerous occasions called on planners to look at South Leeds as a whole when considering traffic issues. He noted that traffic which had been deterred from travelling along Belle Isle Road as a result of the road humps, travels along the Leeds Ring Road instead. He recalled a meeting involving a doctor who did not realise that local residents were present in the meeting who said that we can move things about to make it appear as though we are getting rid of pollution. He feared that there could be hell on earth when the police station is being built and he feared that buses might get stuck.

6.9 Pauline Johnson noted that a considerable amount of work had been undertaken on Kirkstall Road. Travel along the road is not better now than it was before, after a scheme which had taken years to complete. She also asked what would happen to buses in the city, if we get the trolleybus. It was noted that a proposed trolleybus route would follow the no 1 bus route between Holt Park and Albion Street. How would trolleybuses and buses be run in parallel? These issues had not been thought out. She had contacted 'Metro' and NGT which promotes the trolleybus proposal; they said that issues such as this are the responsibility of the bus company. Meanwhile, the bus company is unaware of what is going on. There might be through buses, but there is a risk that Leeds will cease to be attractive for shopping. We could end up with a worse situation than we have now. Adam Ogilvie said that when Metro Officers attend a meeting of the forum, we can ask questions such as this. He noted that he sold his own car in order to save money and now travels everywhere on buses. He added that the UK has a poor transport system and that governments of all parties had failed when compared with other European countries. Pauline Johnson noted that money had been spent on buses, trams and hybrid buses similar to those which operate the no 7 service. **When the accuracy of the minutes was considered at the next meeting of the Forum, Pauline Johnson pointed out that she had not made the remarks attributed to her in the previous sentence.**

6.10 Pauline Johnson noted that buses are more flexible than trams and that Leeds is considerably larger than when trams ran in the city. She added that one trolleybus route would destroy all other routes to no advantage. She noted that she came to Leeds in 1974 to decide whether to move to Leeds. She noted that there was a wonderful bus service compared with London; there was only a wait of a few minutes for the bus. This, she said, was destroyed by deregulation, and has not been quite the same since. She felt that we should spend money on as good. Adam Ogilvie felt that we should re regulate the bus service, rather than introduce quality contracts. Pauline Johnson wondered whether Metro would go ahead with the trolleybus, if they go ahead with this. Will fare payers have to subsidise the trolleybus scheme or will there be cuts. Pauline Johnson added that Metro seem to be obsessed with the trolleybus. Bill Birch said that there had been thirty years of stupidity, regardless of the party in power. Everything benefits London and there is nothing for the rest of the country. London has an excellent transport system which is controlled by the Greater London Authority. He noted that in the immediate aftermath of deregulation, there had been a large number of bus companies, but smaller companies had been forced off the road. Bill Birch added that Metro must hand out the routes to companies which have a monopoly on the routes. They would specify the price and quality. Bill Birch added that we cannot have companies forcing other companies off the road, so as to create a cartel. Adam Ogilvie

noted that most of the bus services outside London are run by two private companies, which he described as a disgrace. Pauline Johnson noted that the Wimbledon to West Croydon rail line closed after she left London and is now operated by tram. She suggested a tram train route to Leeds Bradford Airport. She noted that the present bus route to the airport was ridiculous and that buses are frequently delayed. Pauline Johnson recalled that she had returned to Leeds on the Airport bus after a walk in Pool. The bus was delayed by an hour after an accident. She asked the audience to imagine what the situation would be if she had been going to the airport to fly.

7. Guest Speakers for the remainder of the year. Robert Winfield noted that it had been the intention of the committee to hoist a number of speakers dealing with education in June, but that he had been notified by one of the local head teachers that she would not be able to attend the Forum meeting in June. The meeting agreed to a suggestion from Robert Winfield that we invite councillors and council officers dealing with the Park and Ride Scheme to the June meeting, with the Education meeting taking place in October or November.

8. Report of Committee meeting held on 18th April 2013. Christine Thornton noted that the Committee had discussed the Elland Road Park and Ride scheme and had invited a number of Councillors and Council Officers dealing with the scheme to the meeting currently taking place. It was noted that the Yorkshire Evening Post dealing with the Park and Ride proposals. Mark Parry noted that the Metro website refers to the Park and Ride proposals. The timing of the meeting dealing with education was also discussed.

There was also a discussion of the possible Neighbourhood Plan. The Committee resolved to invite a council, officer dealing with neighbourhood plans to the June Committee meeting. There was also a discussion of the plans by Aspiring Communities for the Ice Pak factory. It was noted that Noor Zaman had been to the site and was given short shrift by a workman there.

It was decided that the Forum would have a stall at the Beeston Festival, and it was agreed that the committee would seek people to help on the stall. It was resolved to put a newsletter together for the stall. Christine Thornton noted that it was hoped to buy a gazebo which would protect those helping on the stall from wet weather. It was noted that the banner is in John Fenton's house. John Peckham, Arthur Kirby and Mark Parry volunteered to help on the stall. Richard Bell wondered whether we would want to do something such as a raffle. Christine Thornton said that we can do this if we want, but noted that in the past this had gone down like a lead balloon. She noted that a raffle also required prizes which could be bought or donated. She added that in the past, we had had a quiz. John Peckham said that the most important thing is flyers to promote the Forum. He felt that when we had raffled a teddy bear, this had been a waste of effort. John Cunningham suggested that the flyers should refer to the Park and Ride proposals, but noted that many people take no notice. It was also suggested that our leaflets should refer to the neighbourhood plan.

There was a suggestion that we could find a nursery for one to three year olds. It was also suggested that we could ask young people for suggestions about the Forum. Christine Thornton said that it would be good to have younger people coming to the Forum. Richard Bell said that the demographics of those attending the forum are not like people living in Beeston. He asked whether we can understand why. Christine Thornton suggested that younger people with small children might find it difficult to attend the forum, as meetings typically take place when young children are being put to bed. Richard Bell noted that many people moan, but are unwilling to do something about it. A member of the audience said that it would only take one to three people telling their friends to boost attendance. Bill Birch noted that people saying 'why bother' will not make a difference. People have had enough. Turnout in local elections has dropped as people believe that they make no difference. Bill Birch acknowledged that he has no idea how to change this. Christine Thornton suggested a slogan similar to 'If You have got a moan about Beeston come to the Forum'. There was a suggestion from PCSO Kirsty Johnson that the Forum highlight examples of where it has made a difference. Christine Thornton noted that this is one of the best attended Forums in the area. Doris Brooke noted that if there is a problem, people come to the Forum, but they do not become regular attenders. Christine Thornton noted that a lot of Forums have folded but not the Beeston Forum.

9. Any Other Business

9.1 Bill Birch referred to the disappointing trading position of a number of supermarket companies, including Tesco, which he noted has a large land bank. He suggested asking Tesco about their intentions in relation to the Old Lane site, and also writing to the Development Department to ask whether they had raised a similar question. Robert Winfield noted that Tesco had been consistent in asserting that they would develop the Old Lane site if they are granted planning permission, and he knew of no reason to believe that the situation has changed; he added that he could not see any harm in asking the question. Bill Birch noted that Tesco had withdrawn from 800 sites. John Hodgson suggested that we also write to Asda with a similar question in relation to their proposed development. A member of the audience noted that goods traffic was going along Old Lane to Asda between 8 a.m and 10 p.m six days a week. David Congreve said that developments are imminent, and that the reports requested by the relevant Plans Panel had been completed. Christine Thornton said that a decision about the planning applications had been 'imminent' for a year. David Congreve said that there would be something going to the relevant Plans Panel, probably in June.

9.2 John Peckham wondered what progress had been made in asking about road accidents on Dewsbury Road. Robert Winfield noted that as a result of the pressures on his time caused by the need to catch up on spare time activities following his recent illness, the matter remains outstanding.

9.3 PCSO Kirsty Johnson noted that Winston's 'Health Club' had recently applied for a licence to sell alcohol. Christine Thornton said that the premises are not in Beeston and Holbeck ward. Richard Bell asked what is going on at Winstons, why is it allowed to operate. He said that it brings the area down.

9.4 Bill Birch said that he had seen numerous advertisements on television offering people free money to gamble. Firms would not be allowed to offer free cigarettes or whisky, but we are allowing these things to happen. Christine Thornton suggested that we write to

Hilary Benn and the Prime Minister about the matter. Richard Bell noted that there had been a growth in the number of betting shops recently and noted that the only shop on Beeston Shopping Centre which is open late is a betting shop.