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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting - 7th January 2016

Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Guest Speaker- Chris Powell, First Leeds
4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum meeting held on 12th November 2015
5. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Forum held on 4th December 2014
6. Police Report
7. The Beeston Neighbourhood Plan
8. To consider and if thought fit pass the following resolution.
That the Forum meetings held in February, May, August and November shall be reserved for a longer discussion of Neighbourhood Planning than has hitherto taken place at Forum meetings. These meetings shall host no guest speakers, except for brief presentations which cannot practically take place at any other Forum meeting
9. Report of the Committee meetings held on 15th October 2015, 24th November 2015 and 17th December 2015
10. Correspondence
11. To consider the ratification of the Committee decision to elect Colin Hendrick Ward as Treasurer of the Forum
12. Co-options to the Committee
13. Any Other Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 12th November 2015

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), Mr. R. Bell, Mr. W.J. Birch, Mrs. J. Birch, Mr. D. Bottomley, Mrs. D. Brooke, Mr. K. Burton, Mrs. S. Burton, Councillor D. Congreve, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mrs. B. Draper, Mr. J. Fenton, Mr. S. Francis, Councillor A. Gabriel, Mr. K. Hewson, Mr. J. Hook, Miss. P. Johnson, Mr. A. Kirby, PCSO C. Leach (West

Yorkshire Police), PCSO. R. Manning (West Yorkshire Police), Mr. D. McGough, Mr. J. Morton, Mrs. M. Munro, Councillor. A. Ogilvie, Mr. M. Parry, Rev L. Pearson, Mr. L. Seniot, Mr. B. Weatherall, Mr. R.J.W. Winfield and Mr N. Zaman

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton thanked the members present for their attendance and noted that the weather was a little breezy but pleasant for late autumn

2. Apologies for absence had been received from Colin Hendrick Ward and Greg Turton

3. Guest Speaker- Christine Thornton noted that it had originally been intended that the guest speaker for the present meeting would be Councillor Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council, but she had informed the Forum some time ago that she would no longer be in a position to attend . Christine Thornton introduced the first guest speaker, Jon Tubby, of Leeds City Council

3.1 Jon Tubby said that he would speak about work carried out in relation to air quality in the City Centre and in particular areas. He made a slide presentation, which, he noted starts with a quick review. He noted that some members of the audience may be able to remember the smogs of the 1950s. He just missed this era but recalled hearing news bulletins about the Manchester pea soupers. In 1952, there had been 4000 additional deaths in London from smogs in December. Since then, things had improved. Graphs from Jon Tubby's presentation show an improvement in the level of Sulphur Dioxide due to the Clean Air Acts , the use of smokeless fuel, the use of gas rather than coal. As a result of this, the levels of Sulphur Dioxide are now next to nothing.

Jon Tubby said that the next problem was that of lead. Lead is required in petrol in order to make cars work properly. However, there was a need to clean up emissions. European standards were issued in 1992 which resulted in the installation of catalytic converters as being the easiest way of getting cars to work. However, these would not work if there is lead in petrol . Petrol companies had argued that they could not make petrol with no lead; they then found that they could!

In 2000, there was a national commitment to tackle climate change, including to reduce emissions of Carbon Dioxide and to stop burning fuel. The less fuel burnt means that less carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere. New wood releases 'recent' carbon dioxide compared with oil and coal. that releases 'historic ' carbon trapped thousands of years ago

There are problems with particles, and in complying with Nitrogen Dioxide standards as set out in EU and UK air quality regulations. Cars are becoming diesel driven rather than petrol driven. Particles come from diesel and wood burning stores. Nitrogen Dioxide comes from combustion including motor vehicles. Jon Tubby then showed a photograph of an air quality monitoring station. He also referred to a national website; AURN (Automatic Urban and Rural Network). Five pollutants are recorded; ozone, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide , nitrogen dioxide and particles, of which the latter two cause particular concern . There has been a monitoring station in Leeds since 1993 so that it is possible to get a picture of the change which has occurred since. Jon Tubby showed a graph which shows a trend of general decline. The level of Nitrogen Dioxide has shown a decline but the level has been bubbling along since 2000. Jon Tubby then discussed the composition of Leeds City Centre pollution. There is a natural background which cannot be influenced , as well as a regional background. Pollution in Leeds can come from further afield from Leeds including across the Pennines. It is even possible for Sahara sand to reach us. Pollution from all sources travels across the country. All pollution is mixed together in an urban background . It is not possible to identify pollution to a source. Peaks occur, for example when a car goes past; efforts are being made to tackle this; however when backgrounds get lower , air quality improves. It had once been said that air quality is not a problem in Leeds and that the majority of Leeds people do not suffer poor air quality. Jon Tubby then showed a graph showing the levels of Nitrogen Dioxide in Headingley, which is more serious because the area is heavily trafficked , with narrow streets and buildings on both sides. We need to tackle traffic to solve this . Jon Tubby then showed a graph showing European emissions standards for diesel vehicles. In 1992, there were relatively high levels of particles and Nitrogen Dioxide; both of these had been reduced by 1996 and there were further reductions in 2001, 2006, 2009 and 2013. Jon Tubby referred to the recent Volkswagen scandal. He showed a diagram relating to petrol and diesel cars; the red bubble shows the standard , whilst the grey bubble depicts the actual measurement. Petrol was cleaner in 2000; it has more or less stuck to the standard. Diesel passed the test but when on the road more pollution was produced than expected. A German company carrying out some testing drove a car on a pair of rollers to test emissions. The car passed the test. They then put the car onto a rolling road with rollers on the front and back wheels going round. There were higher emissions. This is the sort of issue which was identified in the Volkswagen scandal – a fix which created the illusion of lower emissions works when the back wheels are not going round, but when the back wheels do go round the fix does not work.

In Leeds, there are six air quality management areas where Leeds City Council is not satisfied that standards are being

achieved . In Kirkstall on the A65 road, there are back to back houses right at the back of the footpath . The highest levels of pollution are found on heavily trafficked roads where there is little separation between traffic and properties. Pollution quickly falls with increasing distance from the road source- in Kirkstall acceptable levels are reached about 10 yards back from the road.

Jon Tubby noted that he had been asked to look at roads in Beeston. Monitoring devices for Nitrogen Dioxide had been installed at various locations in Beeston. The readings at the various locations were as follows; Maple Court, 18; Old Lane (at Jessamine Avenue), 19; Traffic lights at Tommy Wass, 25 and the junction between Dewsbury Road and Westland Road, 24. The standard is 40. All the readings are substantially below 40. There are no enclosed areas where pollution can hang around . The readings had been made during the summer. Monitoring is still taking place with higher readings expected during the winter, when readings are typically higher than in summer. Readings are expected to remain under 40, so that there is no large problem in the area .

The Leeds City Council Executive Board had a report presented to it last month, which outlined an air quality action plan. It was noted that Air Quality is a regional problem. Leeds City Council is working with other West Yorkshire Councils on a low emissions strategy. An 80 page document has been produced and is available for consultation on the Leeds City Council website . Jon Tubby said that we must try to move people away from driving cars, but this is not going to happen, nor is it what the country wants. Instead, there should be more cleaner vehicles, such as electric vehicles; however, there needs to be a recharging structure. Gas powered vehicles require a gas refuelling station . It is possible to think about a depot running vehicles on gas, which can be propane or natural gas.

One aim is to clean up the taxi and private hire fleet. Some private hire firms are using hybrid vehicles which are much cleaner, and can drive forward on their battery. Thus, there is no need to keep the engine running in slow moving traffic . It is also possible to make better use of Park and Ride facilities , possibly using clean buses. In addition, a lot of work has been carried out on Leeds City Council's own fleet of vehicles. The first bin wagon to run on natural gas was introduced six years ago. This was a great idea but the vehicle is worn out and has now been replaced . A new refuelling station has been built but even this can only refuel six vehicles. A larger station is required so that more of the fleet can be refuelled with gas . Other measures taken include the cycle super highway on the Leeds to Bradford Road . A demo of low emission vehicles was also held in Millennium Square and a photograph taken . This shows a Sainsburys lorry which 'runs on rubbish'; they collect food waste which is composted to obtain methane . TNT has an all electric vehicle, but it is difficult to hear it. There are also hybrid vehicles which run on petrol for most of the time but have a small battery . There is an air quality bulletin which can be viewed on a national website

Jon Tubby then summarised what is happening in West Yorkshire. On 4th November, the weather was foggy . The level of Nitrogen Dioxide was low and the level of particles was creeping up. Jon Tubby described 5th November as a lousy night. There were no problems with pollution although last year, the measurements reached the top of the scale . Particles are really important. They are tiny and are responsible for a number of deaths . They aggravate heart problems and respiratory issues. Particles can get into mouths, lungs and the blood stream. If viewed under a microscope, they are not like the grit from coal fires. We must try to reduce the incidence of particles. In 2008, 29000 people died prematurely from particles. In Leeds , the figure (which is currently 350) can be brought down.

3.2 The meeting opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Issues raised included why Kirkstall Road is not converted into a dual carriageway. Jon Tubby was asked why Kirkstall Road is not converted into a dual carriageway, the use of average levels, rather than peak readings to determine compliance with directives, and pollution caused by traffic close to houses

4. Christine Thornton introduced the remaining guest speakers; Ross Housley of Yorkshire Water and Reuben Horner and Michelle Myers of Morrison Utility Services.

4.1 Ross Housley noted that he is a Senior Project Manager for Yorkshire Water. He noted that work has recently started in the area replacing lead water pipes from water mains. Yorkshire Water are responsible up to the boundary of properties. The reason for the replacement is a European directive which aims to reduce the level of lead in water from 25 microgrammes per litre to 10 microgrammes per litre. He noted that there are 5 million customers in Yorkshire and houses with the highest lead levels are being targeted. Over the next 6 to 7 months , we will see Morrison Utilities in the streets. Properties built in 1970 or before tend to have lead pipes. More recent properties tend to have pipes made of material such as copper, which Yorkshire Water is not seeking to replace. The construction work will move as quickly as possible up the streets, dealing with around 50 to 70 properties per week. Reuben Horner pointed out that work is currently being undertaken in Sunnyview Gardens. It is then intended to move to the Parkfields, then to the Marsdens before moving across Beeston. He noted that there will still be lead pipes from the boundaries, up until the point of entry. Customers who wish can have lead piping between the boundary and the point of entry replaced at a cost which is likely to be around

£1000. Such pipes are normally 75cm in length. Ross Housley said that it would not be good for people simply to see construction workers turn up. Reuben Horner said that it is intended to get information in the post as to when contractors will be working. The letters will give a contact telephone number for use if the householder has any further questions.

4.2 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Amongst issues raised were the reinstatement of roads by contractors, and whether customers who want lead piping within their boundary replaced can pay the costs of undertaking this work gradually, and whether Yorkshire Water would require access to properties when work is undertaken

5. The minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Forum held on Thursday 1st October 2015 were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting.

6. Matter Arising. Robert Winfield referred to the absence of Chris Powell of First Leeds from the last meeting of the Forum, to which he has been invited as a Guest Speaker. Robert Winfield noted that he had learned from Noor Zaman (who is an employee of First Leeds) that Chris Powell had been unwell and that this explains both his absence from the meeting, and the fact that we were not informed of his inability to attend the meeting. Robert Winfield added that it is hoped that Chris Powell will be in a position to attend the January Forum meeting

7. Police Report

7.1 PCSO Claire Leech noted that she covers the Inner South area. She noted that it is a busy time of the year. She added that a newsletter had been produced incorporating monthly crime figures. She noted that there had been some arrests. She noted that there is an issue with people drinking in Cross Flatts Park. The police will set up an operation to get Polish speaking volunteers. PCSO Leech noted that Poles sit on park benches and drink. This occurs in most areas of the park. She noted that this even occurs at 7.30 am, at which time the police sent five people who were severely drunk home. Many people had said that there were problems in walking through the park and taking children to school. It was acknowledged that the police must get control of the situation as soon as possible. PCSO Leech added that there have been a number of thefts from the new Asda store on Old Lane. The police have been proactive in taking a crime prevention officer to Asda for the benefit of staff and shoppers. The police were giving out purple bells whilst also gathering bits of information. The police are providing reassurance and security. Security personnel employed by stores do catch some shoplifters. Seventeen thefts from shops have been reported and there have been eight arrests. CCTV posted on the internet helps to identify criminals. Regular shoplifters have been identified and printed pictures have been taken to Asda.

PCSO Leech noted that drivers of Gee Gee taxis have been parking outside properties and dropping litter, sounding car horns and shouting and swearing. She asked Forum members who have any reports about drivers of Gee Gee Taxis to tell the police. PCSO Rob Manning said that Forum members should take car licence numbers and taxi badge numbers. These can be reported to licensing.

PCSO Leech said that a device had been attached to the cash machine at Old Lane Post Office. If anyone sees anything suspicious or people acting suspiciously, they should dial 999, so that any device can be checked. PCSO Manning added that anyone wishing to use a cash machine should look above the keypad and see whether there is any additional plastic which is out of place. The device takes the form of an iPod with a recording function. Thieves take back the card which is swallowed by the machine and use the card to withdraw cash. He stressed that if anything appears odd with a cash machine, an individual should not use it, but should instead phone the police.

PCSO Leech noted that burglaries increase drastically in winter. In the past month, there have been fourteen burglaries in this area, seven of which have involved entry through doors and windows. It is therefore important to lock doors and windows rather than leave them ajar. Two people have been jailed for the burglaries. PCSO Leech added that if a patio door is left open, this is an opportunity for a theft even if a householder is in the house. If a door is locked, a thief would need to smash the glass to get in. Burglaries have occurred on Cardinal Road, Grovehall Parade, Ring Road, Dewsbury Road, Heath Mount, Gipsy Lane, Parkside Mount, Waincliffe Terrace, Tanglewood, Redhall Crescent, Ring Road, Woodlea Grove, Cross Flatts Avenue and Preston Parade. The police are paying particular attention to someone who has recently been released from jail

7.2 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Dennis Bottomley wondered what the current position is in relation to the family feud. PCSO Manning said that one of the suspects has been remanded whilst another suspect is the subject of an injunction which prevents him from entering West Yorkshire. Since these developments, the situation has calmed down. Richard Bell wondered whether anyone has been arrested for the recent shooting. PCSO Manning said that a suspect is on remand. Richard Bell asked whether the gun has been recovered. PCSO Manning noted that a property has been blocked up and a house search taken place. Richard Bell noted that if the gun has not been recovered, it is likely that someone else will have it. He feared that there could be an effect on people living here.

7.3 John Cunningham asked about flytipping. PCSO Manning said that this is not a matter but a matter for the

Environmental team at Leeds City Council. John Cunningham noted that some of the flytipping obviously relates to building work . Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that the Co-op has flytipping on CCTV . She added that although the Co-op no longer has a bottle bank, the White Hart pub has a bottle bank capable of taking mixed bottles.

7.4 A member of the audience asked about police cycling on footpaths. Myra Munro noted that she had stopped two police people doing this, and they had said that she had caught them out. PCSO Manning noted that the police always abide by the law and PCSO Leech said that she knows who was involved. PCSO Manning said that he would give anyone caught cycling on a pavement a ticket. PCSO Leech added that PCSO s do not cycle on a pavement except in an emergency where there is a need to get to a location quickly

7.5 Pauline Johnson said that she had seen a fast motorbike driving along Cross Flats Grove recently, and that by the time she had the opportunity to get to the window , it had gone. She added that speeding motorbikes are a frequent occurrence an that it is not possible for her to see registration numbers or even the colour of the bike in the dark. PCSO Manning noted that he would report this to the off road team and added that instances of speeding motorbikes can be reported online.

8. Beeston Neighbourhood Forum. –

Robert Winfield noted that a committee meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum had taken place on 2nd November. The members present were shocked to hear the announcement by Greg Turton that he was resigning as Chairman of the Neighbourhood Forum, for personal reasons. The committee determined that Robert Winfield would act as the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Forum until the AGM in May, subject to ratification by the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum which would take place on 1st December. Robert Winfield paid tribute to what he described as the outstanding Chairmanship of Greg Turton , noting that the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum had been his idea and adding that without Greg Turton, there would be no Beeston Neighbourhood Forum. Robert Winfield noted that there are a number of priorities , including building up the membership of the Neighbourhood Forum, persuading existing members to become more active, and building up the membership of the seven task groups ; Environment, Housing, Youth Opportunities, Integration and Community Cohesion, Business and Retail, Heritage and Community. Robert Winfield also hoped to use the facebook group, facebook page and twitter account to engage with people who cannot, or do not wish to attend Forum meetings.

9. Aspiring Communities planning application Bill Birch noted that Aspiring Communities have appealed to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds of non determination, despite the fact that Leeds City Council had given them extension after extension , but they never answered their questions. He suggested writing to Leeds City Council explaining that we are unhappy with how Aspiring Communities had behaved .They had been given all the opportunities they had been to answer the questions posed by Leeds City Council, then argued that the non determination is Leeds City Council's fault. Bill Birch noted that Aspiring Communities are now seeking a public planning inquiry, which Bill Birch felt is good for us. We would be able to brig as many witnesses as Aspiring Communities do, and prepare a case, which explains the grounds of our opposition to the planning application. In the meantime, Bill Birch felt that we should write to Leeds City Council noting that they had already prepared a report which had been withdrawn from consideration by the Plans panel at the last minute. We should expect Leeds City Council to be with us in opposition to the planning application. Councillor David Congreve noted that he does not wish to become involved in detailed discussions . He noted that he had come to the issue late in the day and pointed out that the councillors had received an e mail to explain that officers have been asking questions of Aspiring Communities and had given them chance after chance to explain themselves before they had pit in an appeal for non determination. David Congreve noted that the planning system favours developers. He noted that a revised officers report would be going to the Plans Panel later in the month for consideration by the December Plans Panel meeting. He noted that the council must take a view whenever an appeal on the grounds of non determination is made. He could not say what the report and recommendations will say. This will determine whether the council fights the case or seeks to reach an agreement . Clearly, Aspiring Communities had a reason for wanting to go to appeal . They could have appealed for 14 months but did not do so. Aspiring Communities, and the objectors to the planning application have the right to speak at the Plans Panel meeting. David Congreve noted that Aspiring Communities are seeking a public inquiry, but added that this is normally reserved for major planning applications. The application by Aspiring Communities would be unlikely to be regarded as such, even though it is important to the community . Whether a public inquiry is granted depends on how the inspector plays it. In any event, the determination of the planning application is out of the Council's hands. He added that the report had been rewritten due to the chance of an appeal. The officers therefore might look at the report again which probably explains why the matter will be considered by the plans panel meeting in December. He added that the report had been revised by the Head of Planning due to legal implications. We have not seen the revised report which has not yet been made public. David Congreve added that the letter from Leeds City Council predates the appeal. Christine Thornton noted that the letter from Martin Sellens to Chris Weetman, Aspiring

Communities' Planning Advisor was dated 28th October. David Congreve noted that the Head of Planning had asked Aspiring Communities to give Leeds City Council the information which they require, but they have not done so. Christine Thornton wondered whether Leeds City Council would abide by the date which they propose for consideration of the application by the plans panel or whether there will be a further delay. David Congreve hoped that Leeds City Council would stick to the planned date and added that the Inspector will decide when the application will be determined and noted that Leeds City Council must have a position and a case to advance by then. Dennis Bottomley noted that in London, a planning application for a mosque holding 10000 people had been ongoing for 18 years. He wondered whether this could happen in Leeds. David Congreve said that he could not answer that! Richard Bell suspected that Aspiring Communities had been advised that an appeal is the best course of action for them, but they had lost legitimacy in the community. They had circumvented the Planning Department and aggrieved everyone. Their proposal is, he said, not a factual statement of what they want. David Congreve noted that developers can do this.

Robert Winfield noted that the e mail from Martin Sellens had said that the decision to withdraw the planning application from consideration by the August Plans Panel meeting was taken due to concerns about the quality of the officers report and the need to ensure that any decision was not vulnerable to a legal challenge. Robert Winfield wondered whether Forum members with a knowledge of the planning system would share these criticisms of the Officers Report. Bill Birch said that the Officers Report is of no poorer quality than the submissions by Aspiring Communities which are vague as to what they are seeking to do and why they are seeking to do it. They had made contradictory statements and council officers could not see what is going on. The meeting agreed to Bill Birch's proposal that we write to Leeds City Council. Bill Birch added that the key thing is that the Council must be certain that they are not challenged in a judicial review. Their decision therefore needs to be watertight. Aspiring Communities has said that they do not want Leeds City Council to determine the planning application as the Council might turn it down and have grounds to defend this decision. Councillor Angela Gabriel said that it is her understanding that people living outside Beeston do not have voting rights at meetings of the Forum. Robert Winfield said that this is correct

10-. Correspondence. As time was pressing, Robert Winfield briefly outlined letters which he had received. He noted that he had received a copy of a letter from Martin Sellens, the Head of Planning Services for Leeds City Council to Chris Weetman, Aspiring Communities Planning Advisor, asking a number of questions of Aspiring Communities. He had also received a letter from the Chief Constable of West Yorkshire replying to our letter seeking an explanation as to why two police officers were serving on the Steering Committee set up by Aspiring Communities in connection with the planning application. The letter stated that the officers had been given police permission to serve on the steering committee on condition that they remain neutral on the planning application. They then withdrew from the steering committee when the committee changed its remit.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that the AGM of the Beeston Festival would be taking place at 6p.m on Tuesday 17th November at the Watsonian Pavilion, which, she noted has a capacity of 30 people. Angela Gabriel said that people could come along and put forward ideas for the festival. Tea, coffee and biscuits would be available. (When the minutes were submitted to the following meeting for approval, Angela Gabriel pointed out that the actual venue of the AGM was the Brew Cafe on Beeston Road, not the Watsonian Pavilion)

11.2 Richard Bell wondered whether there had been any developments in connection with the site on Old Lane on which Tesco had hoped to develop a store but for which planning permission had been refused. Robert Winfield noted that he had written to Tesco but had yet to receive a reply. He would be happy to chase up a reply.

11.3 Rev Lindsey Pearson noted that St David's Church will be closing with the last service at the ends of November. She cannot say what will happen to the site as it is not owned by the Church. The final service will take place at 11.15 am on 22nd November. She added that the switching on of the Beeston Christmas lights would take place at 5.30p.m on Thursday 3rd December (before the Forum AGM). The Salvation Army Band will play. Burgers and other food will be available at St Mary's Church Hall afterwards

11.4 John Hook noted that the screen at the bus stop on Dewsbury Road had not simply been cleaned but had been replaced. However, with regard to the bus shelter on the Ring Road, it is impossible to install a similar monitor there as there is a light on the shelter. No one can fit a monitor as no one can find the electricity supply. Robert Winfield added that he had been informed that the money for such monitors comes from section 106 payments from developers, and there is no such funding available for a monitor at this bus shelter.

11.5 Christine Thornton noted that Beeston in Bloom had recently attended the Leeds in Bloom awards and had received a silver award for spring judging and a gold award for the summer judging. The flowers at St Mary's Church, which are looked after by two parishioners had received two gold awards.

11.6 Christine Thornton reminded the members that the next meeting , on 3rd December will be the Forum AGM