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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting - 7th September 2017 Agenda

- 1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Guest Speakers I) Rachel Benn, Beeston Library**
ii) Angus Kinnear , Managing Director, Leeds United FC
- 4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 3rd August 2017**
- 5. Police Report**
- 6. Discussion about the Beeston Neighbourhood Plan**
- 7. Correspondence**
- 8. Possible Co-options to the Committee**
- 9. Any Other Business**

There is no committee report as the Committee has not met since the last meeting of the Forum

Minutes of the joint meeting of the Beeston Community Forum and Beeston Neighbourhood Forum held on Thursday 3rd August 2017

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), S. Akhtar, Mr. D. Belton, Mrs. J. Belton, Mr. W.J. Birch, Mrs. J. Birch, Mrs. M. Broadbent, Mr. K. Burton, Mr. S. Francis, Councillor A. Gabriel, Mr. K. Hewson, Mr. J. Hook , PC Jeffries (West Yorkshire Police) , Miss P. Johnson, Mr. A. Mahmood, Mrs. D. McGuigan, Mrs. M. Munro, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mr. M. Parry, Rev. L. Pearson, and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton thanked those present for their attendance and noted that this is the first Forum meeting to take place at the Old White Hart function room. Christine Thornton also noted that this is her first visit to the new venue, apart from a previous visit to the venue in order to form a judgement as to its suitability for Forum meetings . She also noted that this is a joint meeting of the Beeston Community Forum and the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum .

2. Apologies for absence were received from Richard Bell, Dennis Bottomley, Sandra Burton, Councillor David Congreve, Adam Cooper, John Cunningham, Colin Hendrick Ward, Arthur Kirby and Edward Thornton

3. It was noted that there were no new members of the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum to be ratified

4. Guest Speaker- Christine Thornton noted that it had been anticipated that Rachel Benn , of Beeston Library, would be the guest speaker. Regrettably, she had notified Robert Winfield that she had been at an event earlier in the afternoon and there had also been difficulties with the mobile library so she was no longer able to attend. It was noted that she was at the Breeze

5. The Minutes of the Forum meeting held on 6th July 2017 were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting. There were no

matters arising

6. Police Report-

6.1 PC Carl Jeffries apologised for the absence of representatives of the Police from recent Forum meetings . He noted that in the past 28 days, there had been seven residential burglaries, including three attempted burglaries. One arrest had been made. There were four commercial burglaries, one robbery and no vehicle crimes. It was noted that the number of vehicle crimes might increase following the start of the football season. He added that the Department would be increased to full strength over the next few weeks and there would therefore be more high visibility policing . There would be 12 PCSOs patrolling at any one time . There had been some absence due to sickness and holidays. PC Jeffries had brought a supply of leaflets advertising the open day which would take place at Elland Road Police Station between 11 am and 3p.m on Sunday 10th September .

6.2 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor . Robert Winfield noted that Insp. Alan Travis had left his position. PC Jeffries pointed out that he had been succeeded by Insp Cheryl Cawley (5066) .

6.3 Bill Birch noted that at the last Forum meeting, he had hoped to raise the issue of the incident at Rowland Road Working Mens Club. He wondered whether there had been any arrests. PC Jeffries said that an investigation of this matter is ongoing, but there had been an exaggerated call ; in fact , one youth had thrown a rock at a window.

6.4 Christine Thornton noted that two weeks ago, two quad bikes had been running along her road (Cross Flatts Avenue) . She dialled 101, but replaced the receiver after being on hold for 15 minutes. The bike had number plates , but travelled at such speed that it was impossible to read them. PC Jeffries noted that he had recently been on the Woodleas and had been told that there was a problem with quad bikes. The off road biker team would be expanded . Christine Thornton noted that the bike on the Woodleas is probably the same bike that she had seen on Cross Flatts Avenue. Se asked whether such bikes are allowed on the road. PC Jeffries noted that they are allowed , providing they carry number plates. They are subject to the same restrictions as other road vehicles. John Hook wondered whether the police are aware of a bike which comes from the Parkwood Estate and travels along Gipsy Lane and Southleigh Road towards Middleton Woods . PC Jeffries said that he is unaware of this, and would like further details . John Hook said that the bike goes at a fair speed . It is dark blue and the rider does not wear a helmet. PC Jeffries asked about the times of the day at which the bike appears . John Hook said that it appears just before lunch at around 11.30 am , and also in the evenings . It is impossible to give a detailed description of the riders as the bike travels too quickly. Christine Thornton noted that the bike which appears on Cross Flatts Avenue appears during the evening . One of the riders is Asian whilst the other rider cannot be identified. . PC Jeffries said that he would be available after the meeting for one to one conversations with Forum members

7. The Beeston Neighbourhood Plan

7.1 Robert Winfield pointed out that at the recent Beeston Festival (at which he had been unable to be present), those attending the Festival had been encouraged to complete surveys dealing with various aspects of Beeston. Robert Winfield understood however that the survey was not relevant to a large proportion of those attending the Festival, as they live outside the Beeston Neighbourhood Area .

7.2 Robert Winfield noted the recent resignation of Bill birch from the Neighbourhood Forum Committee as a result of the conduct of Leeds City Council at the recent Aspiring Communities Planning Inquiry. As a result of the circumstances in which Bill Birch had resigned, Robert Winfield had written to Tim Hall , Chief Planning Officer of Leeds City Council with copies to Ian Mackay, Abbie Miladinovic and Tom Riordan, Chief Executive of Leeds City Council. Ian Mackay explained that as Tim Hill is currently on leave, he had been asked to reply . Ian Mackay said that he is sorry that Bill Birch had resigned and noted that he had made a major contribution in recent years. He added that the Council had put forward a strong case for the appeal, but that the Inspector was clear in his decision statement that there was no conflict with the relevant policies in the development plan and that the proposal would bring social, economic and environmental benefits.

Ian Mackay noted that our letter makes reference to how the Council would use a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan in the future, referring to a possible scenario in which there was a conflict . As with all planning applications, it would be considered on its merits alongside local strategic policies and the National Planning Policy Framework. It is not possible to be more specific than this but Ian Mackay added that Leeds City Council has a strong national reputation for the support which it provides for Neighbourhood Planning. He added that Leeds City Council will now endeavour to have a strong local reputation for using Neighbourhood Plans to help determine planning applications . Ian Mackay added that there are now a number of 'made' neighbourhood plans in Leeds and these are embedded in the Council's decision making process with many others to follow. Ian Mackay added that the Council has been working closely with Beeston Neighbourhood Forum in recent months to help get it back on track , after a number of delays in bringing the plan forward . Leeds City Council has committed to providing a resource for this, in partnership with Planning Aid England . A made Neighbourhood Plan for Beeston may have resulted in a different outcome on the application , but that would have depended on their policies and their relevance to the application. The priority now should be to prepare a 'policy intentions' document with a view to progressing to examination and referendum in due course

7.3 Bill Birch said that he was lost for words . He noted that Ian Mackay was not present at any time during the Planning Inquiry. He stressed that there is no issue with Ian Mackay, whom he described as 'a good man' . However, the defence made by Leeds City Council at the Inquiry was lamentable . One officer withdrew his evidence whilst the other officer was demolished by the barrister representing Aspiring Communities. Thus, Ian Mackay was talking about matters which he knows nothing of. What is the point of the Beeston Plan if Leeds City Council cannot defend defend its own case. This, he explained was why he had resigned from the

Committee and he was not coming back . Christine Thornton noted that the Committee understands why he had resigned

8. Proposed Amendment to the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum Constitution- Christine Thornton read the text of the proposed amendment as follows :-

That subject to the approval of Leeds City Council, the Beeston Neighbourhood Area shall be amended by adding to the present Beeston Neighbourhood Area the area in and 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

Christine Thornton noted that the amendment shall not be considered to have been passed unless two thirds of the members present and voting vote in favour of it. Additionally , if the proposed amendment to the Neighbourhood Area is not approved by Leeds City Council for any reason, the proposed amendment shall not be implemented.

Robert Winfield, the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Forum noted that following the decision of a previous Neighbourhood Forum meeting he had written to Ian Mackay, the Leeds City Council Neighbourhood Planning Officer, applying for this extension to the Neighbourhood Area. His colleague Abbie Miladinovic had completed an application form, based on the content of the letter . Robert Winfield confirmed that the application form was acceptable to him. Robert Winfield pointed out that the application would be subject to the same process of consultation as the original application to designate the Neighbourhood Area. A discussion took place. Steve Francis noted that the amendment should refer to Stank Hall Barn and the area around it. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that there are two buildings Stank Hall and Stank Hall Barn. Robert Winfield noted that the proposed extension to the Neighbourhood Area would be defined by a map which had already been prepared by Abbie Miladinovic , and added that no reasonable person believed that the intention was to add the area around Stank Hall Barn, but not Stank Hall Barn itself. An amendment to clarify these issues was agreed . The proposed constitutional amendment was put to the vote. It was carried with no votes against. Bill Birch abstained. The necessary two thirds majority having been achieved, the amendment was passed

9. Proposal to ratify the appointment of Colin Hendrick Ward as Treasurer of the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum. It was noted that Colin Hendrick Ward , who is already the Treasurer of the Beeston Community Forum was unable to be present at the meeting due to him being on holiday, but had agreed to serve as Treasurer of the Neighbourhood Forum. The proposal to ratify his appointment as such was agreed with no votes against. Bill Birch abstained.

10. Proposal to ratify the appointment of Rev Lindsey Pearson to the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum Committee. This was agreed with no votes against. Bill Birch abstained.

11. Report of Committee meeting held on 12th July 2017 . Christine Thornton noted that the Committee had discussed the survey which was subsequently used at the Beeston Festival. There was also a discussion of the venue for meetings whilst Beeston Village Community Centre was unavailable. A decision was taken to use the function room at The Old White Hart for meetings. It had also been decided that there would be no Committee meeting in August.

12. Correspondence

12.1 Robert Winfield had received a letter from the office of Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP explaining that he will no longer be able to attend the Forum meeting on 7th September due to a three line whip in the House of Commons on the day of the meeting. A discussion took place about a replacement guest speaker at the meeting on 7th September. Robert Winfield noted that he could approach Rachel Benn who had been unable to attend the current meeting, this was agreed. The meeting agreed to a proposal from Councillor Angela Gabriel that we invite the new Chief Executive of Leeds United FC . Robert Winfield noted that Chris Powell of First Leeds had failed to attend the July Forum meeting, to which he had been invited as a guest speaker. He had sent him an e mail about this matter , to which there had so far been no response. Mark Parry pointed out that Chris Powell no longer works for First Leeds. Bill Birch wondered whether we had originally invited Chris Powell to the Forum meeting several months ago. Robert Winfield pointed out that invitations to guest speakers are normally sent out following a discussion at the December Committee meeting. He noted, however , that last year, there had been no committee meetings in December but that invitations to potential guest speakers had been agreed by committee members by e mail. Bill Birch said that he was disappointed that this could happen given the amount of notice which had been given, and felt that someone at First Leeds could have alerted the Forum to the fact that Chris Powell no longer works for them. Robert Winfield noted that he would make enquiries with a view to securing an alternative speaker from First Leeds. A discussion took place about the rescheduling of Hilary Benn's appearance at the Forum. Robert Winfield noted that on the last occasion on which Hilary Benn had been unable to be present at the Forum , his appearance had been rescheduled for the January Forum meeting, which had taken place on a day on which Parliament was not sitting. Robert Winfield noted that he is unsure as to whether Parliament would be sitting on the day of the January 2018 Forum meeting . It was agreed that Robert Winfield would write to Hilary Benn.

12.2 Robert Winfield drew the attention of the meeting to the substantial inconvenience which had been caused to him, as a result of the change of venue for the present meeting . Robert Winfield noted that at the meeting of the Beeston Village Community Centre

Users Committee on 26th June, groups had been told that groups would no longer be able to use the centre after 6th August, and that the centre would close completely on 13th August. At the same meeting, Robert Winfield had sought and received a categorical assurance from Toshal Bhatia of Health For All Leeds that the Forum would be able to use Beeston Village Community Centre for the meeting on 3rd August. The first indication to the contrary came in an e mail from Toshal Bhatia which had been sent at 11.31p.m on Tuesday 25th July, whilst Robert Winfield was on holiday on the Isle of Man. It was plain from the e mail that the timetable for the closure of the Centre had been brought forward, although the e mail did not explicitly confirm this. Robert Winfield noted that he needed to make seven telephone calls whilst on holiday to deal with this situation, including liaising with Christine Thornton, contacting Toshal Bhatia to confirm that Beeston Village Community Centre would no longer be available for the meeting and, and booking the present venue for the meeting. Additionally he had needed to take significant amounts of time (mostly whilst he was still on holiday) composing e mails in relation to the situation. Robert Winfield noted that Toshal Bhatia's e mail had made no explicit reference to the fact that users of the centre had previously been given a different timetable for the closure of the centre. Robert Winfield also noted that in view of the circumstances, Toshal Bhatia had assured him that she would arrange for notices to be placed on Beeston Village Community Centre explaining the change of venue. Robert Winfield had e mailed such a notice to Toshal Bhatia. Despite this, when Robert Winfield passed Beeston Village Community Centre on his way to the meeting, no notices had been placed on the building. He had, however, brought a number of notices with him which he attached to the building. Robert Winfield proposed that we write to Pat McGeever, Chief Executive of Health for All (Leeds), explaining that we continue to support the redevelopment of the centre, but drawing attention to what has happened. Robert Winfield felt that in the circumstances, it is not unreasonable to request that our first two meetings at the new Community Centre would be free of charge. Bill Birch said that he could not agree more with Robert Winfield's comments and agreed that our first two hirings of the new centre should be free of charge. He understood that the change of timetable was due to the possibility of users of the centre, were it to remain open being exposed to asbestos, following an asbestos survey, but added that it is strange that the date had to be moved. He wondered what the standard of management is, having given assurances that the building would be available, only to say 'Sorry about that'. Robert Winfield felt that given the assurances which had previously been given, Toshal Bhatia should have e mailed users of the centre as soon as there had been an element of reasonable doubt as to whether groups could use the centre. Instead, as Toshal Bhatia had acknowledged, the e mail had been sent a week after Toshal Bhatia had become aware of the circumstances requiring a change in the timetable for the closure of the centre. Christine Thornton pointed out that Robert Winfield had not been the only Forum member to be subjected to inconvenience by this matter. She had to rush to empty the Forum's cupboard at Beeston Village Community Centre. She noted that some time ago, the Forum had had two cupboards donated. It was impossible to get into one cupboard, but noted that a caretaker and an odd job man had broken into the other cupboard in order to check its contents. Christine Thornton was annoyed about this, but noted that the locks had been changed so that we still have a usable cupboard. She retrieved all the Forum's belongings in the cupboard, including a supply of tea and coffee, a bag full of Christmas trees and other Christmas decorations, and a number of table cloths, which were thrown away. She noted that the sound equipment owned by the forum, which had been disused for several years, had been donated to Aspiring Communities. She added that she had phoned Toshal Bhatia on the morning of Wednesday 26th July (in advance of a brief holiday of her own) asking whether she could visit the Community Centre. She left a message. She then phoned again on the morning of Monday 31st July. She spoke to Toshal Bhatia who told her that she had thought that her message was an old one. It was agreed to write to Pat McGeever.

12.3 Robert Winfield noted that Christine Thornton had asked to read an e mail from Sean Sturman, which had been addressed to Robert Winfield, with a copy to Bill Birch. Christine Thornton read the e mail :-

'As secretary of Save our Beeston, I was busy leafleting all the local homes near the Ice Pak development prior to the last Forum meeting in July. The leaflets informed local residents of how we have been short changed by the labour council and tory government over Ice Pak. After spending yet another couple of hours posting this information I continued on to the Forum meeting.

When I walked in and sat in my usual seat I overheard the chairperson say to you and I quote "We are not having any of his bloody leaflets" and on that comment I went home before the meeting started.

Please be aware of the fact that 2 of your committee members who I have the utmost respect for, put together the leaflet that over a thousand homes were able to get the information that otherwise they might not get.

It is quite safe to say that I will not be attending anymore forum meetings. I spend a lot of hours trying to help our local residents and I thought the Forum was singing from the same hymn sheet but by the comment you are obviously not'

Christine Thornton pointed out that she does not swear, and that Sean Sturman had consequently misquoted what she had said. She did, however acknowledge that she had noted that Sean Sturman had arrived at the meeting with a pile of papers, and that she had made a remark similar to that described by Sean Sturman, but that she did not swear. She added that she was not in the habit of refusing people the opportunity to speak at Forum meetings, and had never prevented members of the Save Our Beeston Campaign from speaking at Forum meetings. She was surprised that Sean Sturman did not have the manners to approach her directly about this matter. She added that people who know her know that she does not swear and that even her grandchildren are surprised that she does not swear! She had not been brought up in that way. She added that it is Sean Sturman's privilege not to come to meetings. However, she is aware that two members of the Save our Beeston Campaign serve on the Beeston Forum Committee, and she does not discriminate against them. If anyone is unhappy with her conduct, or the way in which she chairs meetings, they should say so. She would be happy to stand down as Forum Chairman if that is the wish of members. Bill Birch said that he is happy with what Christine Thornton does, and said that this matter had arisen as a result of a misunderstanding. Sean Sturman had indeed arrived at the meeting with a quantity of leaflets but was not intending to circulate them at the meeting; it may have been the case that Christine Thornton

thought he was intending to circulate them. Bill Birch acknowledged that Sean Sturman can be somewhat emotional, and is aware of this from personal experience. He does, however, do a good job. Sean Sturman had left the meeting before Bill Birch noticed that he had done so. Bill Birch was happy to offer his continued support to Christine Thornton, and accepted that she does not discriminate when undertaking her duties as Chairman of the Forum. He would speak to Sean Sturman about the discussion which had taken place. Christine Thornton said that if Sean Sturman had asked to circulate the leaflets at the meeting, she would have allowed him to do so. Steve Francis noted that it had taken Sean Sturman over three weeks to send the e mail ; if he regarded the matter as important, he should have written the following day. Ash Mahmood noted that Christine Thornton had allowed him to circulate leaflets on behalf of Aspiring Communities at a previous meeting. Christine Thornton felt that Sean Sturman could have addressed his e mail to her. Robert Winfield agreed with the points which had previously been made. He felt that Sean Sturman should not have delayed sending the e mail until 25 days after the meeting , and that Sean Sturman could have remained in the meeting and raised the issue at that time

13. Co-options to the Committee . Christine Thornton reminded the meeting that there are a number of vacant positions on the Committee .

14. Any Other Business

14.1 Mark Parry pointed out that although he does not wish to return to the Committee of the Neighbourhood Forum, he had agreed, when necessary to e mail the Forum's membership, and to update the Neighbourhood Forum's website. He noted , however, that the Neighbourhood Forum's contact list had not been updated since he ceased to be Secretary of the Neighbourhood Forum . Additionally, there had been a large number of e mails sent to the Neighbourhood Forum's e mail address. As he is not a Committee member, it is not his role to respond to them. Robert Winfield agreed to deal with these matters . Mark Parry also noted that he is in possession of a large quantity of leaflets. Steve Francis undertook to collect them.

14.2 Christine Thornton asked the members present whether they are happy with the venue . Councillor Angela Gabriel said that it was possible to hear comments very clearly; number of other positive comments were made. Ash Mahmood however noted that he was aware of a number of people who had intended to attend but were uncomfortable about the fact that the meeting was taking place in a pub function room. He noted that St Mary's Church had been under consideration as a possible temporary venue for Forum meetings, and wondered whether meetings would continue to take place at the present venue. Christine Thornton said that meetings would continue to take place at the present venue . She noted that the bar at the rear of the room is closed and added that she would not allow alcohol to be brought into the meeting. Robert Winfield noted that he has drunk no alcohol for over 20 years and was aware that Christine Thornton does not drink alcohol .