

**Chair:** Christine Thornton, 40 Cross Flatts Avenue, Beeston, Leeds, LS11 7BG. Tel 0113 270 0875

**Secretary:** Mr Robert Winfield, 7 Allenby Gardens, Beeston, Leeds, LS11 5RW. Tel 0113 271 6985

**E mail** [robert.winfield1@ntlworld.com](mailto:robert.winfield1@ntlworld.com) **Forum Website-** [www.beestonforum.btck.co.uk](http://www.beestonforum.btck.co.uk)

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## BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

### Beeston Forum General Meeting – 7<sup>th</sup> August 2014 Agenda

- 1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Guest Speaker- Councillor Keith Wakefield, Leader, Leeds City Council**
- 4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Forum held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014**
- 5. Police Report**
- 6. Report of the subgroup dealing with a Neighbourhood Plan for Beeston**
- 7. Report of Committee meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014**
- 8. Correspondence**
- 9. Any Other Business**

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), Mr. W.J. Birch, Mr. D. Blackburn, Mrs. J. Blackburn, Mrs D. Brooke, Mr. S. Casserley, Mrs R. Casserley, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mrs. M. Dinsdale, Mr. J. Fenton, M. Ferguson, Councillor A. Gabriel, Mr. M. Griffin, Mr. J. Hodgson, Mr. J. Hook, Mrs. D. Kenny, Mr. E. Leatham, Mr. A. Mahmood, D. McGough, Mr. A. McGrath, Mrs. R. Metcalfe, Mr. J. Morton, Miss. E. Newton, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mr. M. Parry, Mr. J. Peckham, Mr. F. Swift and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks – Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the meeting and noted that it is now officially summer. She noted that she had been advised that Mark Burns- Williamson , one of the guest speakers was en route to the meeting and said that she would proceed to deal with the remaining items on the agenda until he arrived
2. Apologies for absence were received from Richard Bell, Inspector Chris Bowen, Pauline Johnson, Arthur Kirby, Mary Mason, Rev. Lindsey Pearson and Noor Zaman
3. The minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2014 were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting
4. Matters Arising – Stuart Casserley asked what has happened to Harry Booth House. Robert Winfield noted that the reference to Harry Booth in the minutes was in the context of Harry Booth having been the last Lord Mayor of Leeds to represent Beeston on Leeds City Council before Councillor David Congreve assumed the office. Mark Parry pointed out that he is a member of Leeds Community Health Trust , and pointed out that Harry Booth House is run in partnership with Leeds City Council. He noted that he had recently inspected the building. He had tasted the food, which is great , and that the building looks nice and successful. He noted that people stay there after leaving hospital. Rosemary Casserley asked whether patients at Harry Booth House come from Leeds or a wider area. John Cunningham observed that he knew a number of staff members at the Centre. They originally did not to switch when the use of the building was changed , but they retrained and now like it. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that she had also hard compliments about the new set up.
5. Guest Speakers- Christine Thornton introduced the guest speakers Sgt. Jon Arrowsuch of West Yorkshire Police and Mark Burns

Williamson, OBE, the Police and Crime Commissioner. It was noted that Inspector Chris Bowen, who was originally intended to be a guest speaker, had been called at short notice to undertake duties in connection with the Tour de France.

5.1 Mark Burns Williamson apologised for arriving late at the meeting and noted that he had attended a Forum meeting as a guest speaker around 12 months ago. He said that it is good to see so many people at the meeting. He noted that when he last visited the Forum, it was not long after the election for the position which he now holds. He noted that it has been an eventful 20 months since the election in November 2012. The most important matter relating to this area is that he had reached agreement with Leeds City Council about protecting the Neighbourhood Policing Team, notably the numbers of Police Constables, Police Sergeants and PCSOs. He noted that after negotiations with Councillors such as Keith Wakefield and Peter Gruen, agreement had been reached for Leeds City Council to five matched funding for two years. Mark Burns – Williamson added that the budget cuts continue; the police budget would be reduced by £157 million over the six years to 2016/17, but neighbourhood policing has been prioritised. He added that he is pleased that Jon Arrowsmith is present at the meeting and noted that he would be able to answer local questions in relation to Anti Social Behaviour and traffic offences. Mark Burns-Williamson added that part of his own role is to ensure that he is listening, attending meetings such as the one currently taking place, and getting feedback. He noted that his office carries out a public perception survey which is completed by 20000 local residents. The results of the survey feed into the Police and Crime plan. He noted that it is important to hold the police to account. The plan sets out the police's priorities in summary. Domestic issues such as burglary, abuse and violence were set out in the first plan. Upon the review of the plan, twelve months later, road safety became the top issue, in the form of speeding, inconsiderate parking and dangerous driving. Mark Burns Williamson observed that he had recently attended an appointment in relation to the Tour de France. He hoped that this would promote an awareness of cycling and road use; it is important that we send out messages about safety on the road. He added that road safety is a priority but something that can be solved only at local level in partnership with the council, the community and the police.

Mark Burns Williamson said that a new priority is cybercrime which, he noted is technology related. This encompasses the use of mobile phones, the internet and social media. He noted that these are connected to most crimes. When police investigate crimes, the use of mobile phones and text messages is examined to determine where people have been.

Mark Burns Williamson referred to the recent murder, in Leeds of Anne Maguire, and that this had led to what he described as awful comments on twitter and facebook. He noted that people have rightly been arrested and imprisoned for these comments. He added that protecting the Neighbourhood Policing Team in a background of reducing budgets is important, but there are also pressures and demands for relevant skills as cyber crime is growing. Mark Burns Williamson noted that he had been speaking to a number of agencies concerning emerging threats, and the investment required in necessary new skills. Economic crime and fraud is important. It was noted that the Action Fraud Team is based in the City of London. Cases can be referred back to West Yorkshire. The investigation of such crime is costly and time consuming and Mark Burns Williamson noted that he is worried about cuts and their impact on security. He noted that he raises this issue with the Home Secretary and the Police Minister wherever possible.

Mark Burns Williamson then turned to the issue of proceeds of crime. When the police get successful confiscation orders, West Yorkshire is one of the best performing forces in terms of money coming back. £12 million has been earmarked for the financial year before last, but only half of the proceeds of crime are returned to the police, the remainder is divided between the courts and the Crown Prosecution Service. Mark Burns Williamson noted that he has asked why not all the proceeds of crime are returned to the police. He noted however that in the recent Queens Speech, the government announced plans to legislate to return a greater proportion of proceeds of crime to the police, as well as tightening up on a loophole. He noted that he has set up a safer communities fund made up from proceeds of crime funding. He noted that the Chief Constable receives half the money for operational policing with the remaining half going to the Police and Crime Commissioner for community groups and projects. He noted that this fund has been oversubscribed and that £217000 has been allocated to groups which demonstrated that they would make a difference with their projects. There were over 200 applications and Mark Burns Williamson set up a panel to assess them. Announcements will be made in the near future. It is intended to help communities which suffer at the hands of criminals. He added that he wants to see money back in neighbourhoods and communities.

Mark Burns Williamson noted that a further priority is human trafficking. He noted that the Ministry of Justice has given £200000 to set up the West Yorkshire Anti Trafficking Network with Victims Support and the Hope for Justice Charity. He noted that before Christmas, there had been a partnership working with the Council, the Salvation Army and Hope for Justice. There were 20 addresses from which women and children had been rescued from terrible conditions including sexual exploitation and forced labour for £10 per week. He noted that the victims are Eastern Europeans; a lot of people involved in the crime are from the UK and are committing benefit fraud. Mark Burns Williamson noted that he had been seeking to raise awareness of these issues and is working with other Police and Crime Commissioners.

Mark Burns Williamson noted that there is some good news in that crime in Leeds over the 12 months to March had fallen by 2%. He added that since March, the figures have probably improved further. Considering the pressures they have faced, Mark Burns Williamson said that these figures are a credit to the police and their partners. He added that in terms of the surveys which go out randomly, the level of satisfaction in the police has improved to 96%. There are high satisfaction ratings in terms of the follow up by the police and the ease of contacting the police. The Inner South Team scores 55% for traffic issues and 59% for environmental issues (such as rubbish). The fear of crime runs higher than actual crime.

Mark Burns Williamson concluded his remarks by noting that he recently had to suspend the Chief Constable. He said that he cannot say too much about this matter other than to say that he received information from the Police Service of Northern Ireland, which is confidential but upon which he had to act in the public interest. There will be an investigation of these matters; he cannot say much about this as this is a live investigation. In the meantime, Dee Collins is acting as the Chief Constable. He said that she is a capable person who will do a good job. The senior officer team is otherwise intact and there will be no change in day to day policing. Mark Burns Williamson stressed that he did not want to do this, but in view of the information which he received, he had to do it.

5.2 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Amongst issues raised were the impact of the government's welfare reforms on the level of crime, the employment of non violent criminals to undertake useful tasks, whether the recent relocation of the police station has had any impact on the police budget, the safety of cyclists, the possible deregulation of taxis, prostitution, quad bikes in the area, the effectiveness of the 101 number, the number and cost of staff employed by the Police and Crime Commissioner, and the protection of the public from international terrorism.

6. Sgt Jon Arrowsuch referred to a recent case in which a local girl was subject to grooming and sexual exploitation in Beeston for a period of 18 months. 12 local people have been charged with offences in relation to this matter, and have appeared at a Magistrates Court. The case is due to come to trial at a Crown Court in the Autumn of this year. The victim and the accused are all from Beeston although Jon Arrowsuch stressed that he cannot say too much about this matter as it is currently before the courts. The girl involved is now aged 12 years. Sgt. Arrowsuch noted that some of the suspects involved are on bail; decisions as to the granting of bail are taken according to the perceived risks of granting bail. Christine Thornton noted that the case had been reported in the newspaper. Jon Arrowsuch noted that the case had come to light as a result of the victim ceasing to attend school and going missing at other times of the day such as evenings. It turned out that the victim was being groomed by males. Sgt. Jon Arrowsuch noted that the Inner South NPT covers Beeston, Holbeck, Middleton, Belle Isle, the City Centre and Hunslet. Last year had been a record year; there was a 48% fall in burglaries, a 48% fall in robberies and a 25% fall in theft from motor vehicles. Overall, crime has fallen by 24%. This figure would have been greater but for an increase in the level of shop theft. He noted, for example, that a female has been arrested for shoplifting on three or four occasions. She is a single parent with two children who stole food. Sgt Arrowsuch noted that her circumstances do not make what she is doing right, but the police approached a charity for assistance with food. Nothing has happened since. In addition, the police had discovered from intelligence from the local community that a female was selling clothes and other items stolen from shops on the internet. This activity had been traced to a member of the public, and the police then recovered £6500 worth of clothing and £1500 in cash. Sgt. Jon Arrowsuch also explained that the police had secured funding for a supply of number plate screws; the police will visit all addresses to persuade car owners to fit the screws so as to prevent theft. He added that the new police model has now been in operation for four months. Under this system, there are six officers ringfenced and managed by Sgt. Arrowsuch. There are also a number of ward managers, who are effectively beat policemen. They are responsible for looking at local issues, such as Anti Social Behaviour, rather than driving around. The policing team can be contacted by e mail on [innersouth@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:innersouth@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk). Incoming e mail is monitored by Sgt. Jon Arrowsuch and Insp. Chris Bowen on a daily basis. This is the best way for a resident to get a local policeman around to his home, and Sgt. Arrowsuch encouraged local residents to send as much information as possible to the e mail address. Christine Thornton asked whether there is still a telephone number for the Neighbourhood Policing Team. Sgt. Arrowsuch said that the number had been discontinued. It would have been no better than contacting the police by e mail, and no one was around to answer the telephone. Thus, a local resident could only leave a voicemail, and experience had shown that voicemails were being deleted by accident.

6.1 John Hook noted that Sgt. Arrowsuch had spoken a lot about shoplifting. John Hook said that he hoped that the police have advised the major stores. He noted that when people walk out of a store, causing the alarm to go off, no one bothers. He added that when he recently visited Sainsburys, the alarm had been activated by his wife's pacemaker. This apparently induced major stores to alter their alarms to stop then being activated by pacemakers. However, he noted that no one stops people walking out of a store when the alarm goes off. Jon Arrowsuch noted that he has a forthcoming meeting with the Regional Manager and the Loss Manager of Morrisons. It was noted that stores are reporting thefts so that the figures have climbed. However, Jon Arrowsuch noted that stores have little interest in preventing thefts as the costs payable to prevent thefts would outweigh the losses to the stores. With the profits of leading supermarket firms dropping, security staff are being sacked. Sgt. Arrowsuch noted that another supermarket firm has just six security staff as these are moved to where the problems are the greatest. Doris Kenny noted that there is a hassle factor involved in reporting crime.

6.2 Bill Birch said that he welcomed the fall in crime but he asked Sgt. Arrowsuch what he would attribute this to; for example, a change of style, targeting or something else. Sgt Arrowsuch said that a big part of this is an increase in sentences for crimes such as burglary. Prior to this, offenders were getting out of jail and reoffending. In addition, most crimes in this area are committed by resident. There has been a continuity in policing in the last 2 to 3 years; thus, if there is a burglary, the police will be aware that it has probably been committed by one of the 'usual suspects'. Thew police visit such people morning noon and night. Eddie Leatham asked whether it is bad news when police move. Sgt. Arrowsuch said that in the past, when a police officer is promoted, they were moved and police staff were formerly shuffled around in order to 'freshen up' an area. He described this as a ridiculous idea, as it is better for police to get to know the area in which they are based.

6.3 John Cunningham noted that he had read in the newspapers about a robbery at the White Hart Pub. The person convicted of this offence received a three year prison sentence. Sgt. Arrowsuch noted that he had spent a 17 hour day working on this crime.

6.4 A member of the audience asked about 20 mph zones. It was noted that cars are still driving at 50 to 60 mph along Cardinal Road.

Sgt Arrowsuch was asked what the impact of 20 mph zones have been. Sgt Arrowsuch said that he cannot answer this question as he is not on the road, but acknowledged that a person who is willing to ignore a 30 mph speed limit would be unlikely to observe a 20 mph limit. He acknowledged that the police could direct roads police officers into the area and use a speed device, but he acknowledged that whenever a speed device has been taken into the area, little speeding has been observed. It was noted that traffic uses Cardinal Road to avoid the traffic lights at Tommy Wass's. Rosemary Casserley noted that at a previous forum meeting, it was stated that the police had acquired a 'smiley face' device, but she noted that she had not seen this in Beeston. Sgt Arrowsuch said that this had been deployed several times.

7. Report of Committee meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Christine Thornton noted that the Committee had noted the guest speakers at Forum meetings for the remainder of the year. The guest speaker at the August meeting would be Councillor Keith Wakefield, Leader of Leeds City Council. In September, we will be hosting Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn MP. In October, we will welcome Councillor James Lewis, Chairman of 'Metro' and Graham Riley from First Leeds whilst no guest speaker has so far been arranged for the November meeting. As usual, the December meeting will be the AGM. Most of the meeting was, however, taken up with discussion about the Beeston Neighbourhood Plan. Christine Thornton noted that three drop in sessions have taken place. She acknowledged that these had been total failures, with two people attending the session at Cockburn High School, two people attending the afternoon session at Beeston Village Community Centre and one person attending the evening session at Beeston Village Community Centre. Christine Thornton concluded that either everyone knows everything about the neighbourhood plan, or the committee approached the organisation of these sessions in the wrong way. Mark Parry pointed out that further copies of the neighbourhood plan leaflet delivered to all Beeston Residents were available at the meeting. He drew attention to the box in which completed questionnaires could be posted. It was noted that discussions have taken place with the delivery company responsible for delivering the neighbourhood plan leaflet about shortcomings in the delivery of the leaflet.

#### 8. Correspondence-

8.1 Robert Winfield had received an e mail from Kris Nenadic of Leeds City Council in connection with the lighting and footpaths around Beeston Village Community Centre. Kris Nenadic said that after further consideration, his department will consult colleagues in Highways to seek their views regarding footpaths and lighting. He added that financial resources are stretched across the council and a solution may not be possible. However, he will let us know of the outcome in due course. Robert Winfield said that this is disappointing considering that the building is a community centre in which important meetings are held. He noted that there is considerable evidence that the poor state of the lighting and footpaths is deterring a number of people from attending meetings which conclude after the hours of darkness. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that the building is owned by Leeds City Council and rented, on the basis of a peppercorn rent to Health for All (Leeds). Robert Winfield noted that Pat McGeever, Director of Health for All (Leeds) had spoken about a feasibility study for the building, but this depends on funding. Angela Gabriel confirmed that the Inner South Leeds Area Committee of Leeds City Council had granted the funding necessary (£6000) to conduct the feasibility study. She noted that there is a consultation about the possibility of a new building on the site, which would involve the demolition of the existing premises and the building of a new building. She added that there is a requirement for better car parking, particularly during the daytime. A site visit is being considered to look at the mound close to the community centre. One possibility is to push this back, but this depends on funding. Mark Parry noted that the path close to the community centre has been cleared. It was noted that this had been carried out by De Puy, not Leeds City Council. It was also noted that there had been a request for the grass to be cut. Angela Gabriel said that the point of saving the building was to enable it to be used as a community centre. Christine Thornton noted that if the building is demolished the Forum will need to find an alternative venue until the new building is erected. Angela Gabriel noted that Health for All is looking at the possibility of a two storey building, which could incorporate offices and thus be more likely to be self sufficient than the existing building. Rosemary Casserley noted that the problem resulting from the lamp post in the trees had been solved.

8.2 Robert Winfield had received an e mail from Nicholas Hunt, Principal Traffic Engineer of Leeds City Council in relation to vehicle movements close to the former Ice Pak factory on Barkly Road, in response to an e mail expressing the concerns of Forum members about such movements. Mr Hunt noted that he has visited the location on several occasions to observe the vehicle type and movements along Firth Road and Wooler Drive. He noted that Firth Road is residentially lined on one side of the street and acts as a rear service area to some industrial units on the opposite side. The road is wider than the standard 7.3m wide carriageway width which would be expected on a residential street, and this may be due to the fact that it also serves several industrial access points along it. Mr Hunt noted that his own onsite observation was unable to identify any evidence of HGV and steelwork delivery to the former Ice Pak factory and the gates themselves appeared to be rusted together. However, the adjacent industrial unit also located at the end of Firth Road (George Boulter limited, Ventilation Engineers) do have a large steelwork structure which appeared to be a hoist fitted to their building off this access point and the steelwork may have been associated with this structure. Mr Hunt added that whilst he is able to provide an environmental HGV ban on roads, he needs to demonstrate using an evidence based approach that such vehicle movements are detrimental to the local community. The general rule is that HGV movement along a route has to be more than 10% of all vehicle movements, which is not the case for Firth Road. Even if such HGV movements were observed, any established industrial units would still be permitted to serve their premises via the three rear accesses of Firth Road which would negate the need for such a restriction. Mr Hunt added that he did not observe any walls which had been knocked down, but did see damage to the coping stones on the boundary wall to 1 Wooler Drive but this does not like new damage. A member of the audience noted that he had seen 40ft trailers delivering to the building at the corner; a packaging place. In addition George Boulter Limited had had steelwork delivered. The delivery had not taken place to the car park as this is used by employees and there are also no deliveries to the Barkly Road entrance. Christine Thornton noted that the entrance is only tiny, and she also pointed out that when the premises were owned by Ice Pak the gates were used late at night by delivery vans.

Robert Winfield noted that he and Christine Thornton had visited the premises earlier in the day at the invitation of Aspiring Communities. Robert Winfield noted that they had looked around much of the premises and also noted that they had walked around the perimeter of the premises and up Firth Road. He noted that there is a fundamental conflict of evidence about vehicles calling at the premises in that two Forum members had insisted that vehicles were moving on and off the premises whilst Aspiring Communities had adamantly denied that any such movements had taken place. It was noted that neither of the two Forum members who had complained about the supposed vehicle movements were present at the meeting. Robert Winfield, having visited the premises and the vicinity of the premises said that the likeliest reconciliation of the conflict of evidence between Aspiring Communities is that a delivery took place to premises which the local residents believed is a part of the Premises owned by Aspiring Communities but which is not, in fact owned by Aspiring Communities. Christine Thornton noted that Naz Maroof who had issued the invitation was unable to be present during the visit as he had been stuck in motorway traffic. She noted that she and Robert Winfield had looked into the ground floor of the building which she described as 'just an expanse of empty space', in which nothing was happening except the installation of roof insulation. Robert Winfield added that there is no lighting in the building, which makes it even less plausible that any activities are taking place there. Christine Thornton noted that they did not visit certain areas of the site due to health and safety concerns (the unavailability of hard hats and the risk, however small of item falling from the ceiling). Ash Mahmood (who was present for part of the visit) said that there is nothing going on in the building but noted that people simply cannot walk onto a construction site without appropriate protective clothing. He noted that before planning permission had been sought for the site, there had been fires, burglaries and even two deaths, and Aspiring Communities needed to employ a security company. Stuart Casserley noted that he had worked on beach in a seaside town and was required to wear a hard hat.

8.3 Councillor Angela Gabriel had received an e mail, which she had forwarded to Robert Winfield from Richard Arnold of the Engineering Projects Department of Leeds City Council in relation to the lack of maintenance to the planing areas established as part of the Ring Road Beeston Park bus lane scheme. He noted that he was the engineer overseeing the construction of the scheme and he had also been concerned about the lack of maintenance since completion. The landscape design brief issued to Parks and Countryside was to design, establish and maintain the planting for two years before the planting areas passed onto the Parks and Countryside General Maintenance contract. The planting areas were established in January 2012 and some initial maintenance work was carried out during the initial twelve months but very little thereafter. Richard Arnold noted that he has been in contact with various officers over the past 12 months to try and resolve these issues and he is pleased to report that Parks and Countryside have finally agreed to add the areas to the General Maintenance Contract. They visited the site last month and improved most of the planting areas and it is hoped that an improvement to the look of the area will now be noticed. Angela Gabriel noted that the beds have been weeded and the grass cut. John Hook noted that Leeds City Council has done a fantastic job in cutting the bushes back, although a bin had been overflowing today which, he felt spoils the work which had been undertaken. Angela Gabriel pointed out that the litter pickers should empty any bin which is full.

## 9. Any Other Business

9.1 John Peckham praised the recent Beeston Festival as the best ever and said that credit for this should go to the organisers. Christine Thornton noted that those who had manned the Beeston Forum stall had had a good time.

9.2 Robert Winfield noted that he had received no reply to a letter to Asda asking why, in applying for 24 hour opening and longer delivery hours for their proposed store at Old Lane, they were seeking to go back on an undertaking which they had freely given to the Forum and to the wider community. The meeting agreed to a suggestion from Robert Winfield that we copy the letter to the Yorkshire Evening Post. A member of the audience wondered whether Asda are supposed to deal with the grass in the area of the store. Angela Gabriel; said that Asda does have this responsibility and suggested that if he is dissatisfied he could see the manager about this.