

**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 - 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014**

#### **Agenda**

- 1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Guest Speaker- Yvette Sheldon, West Yorkshire Trading Standards**
- 4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Forum held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014**
- 5. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Forum held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014**
- 6. Police Report**
- 7. Report of the subgroup dealing with a Neighbourhood Plan for Beeston**
- 8. Report of Committee meeting held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014**
- 9.. Correspondence**
- 10. Any Other Business**

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014

Attendance:- Mr R. Bell (in the chair in the absence of Christine Thornton) , Mr. J.K. Adamson, Mr. R. Almond, Mr. W.J. Birch, D. Blackburn, J. Blackburn, Insp. C. Bowen (West Yorkshire Police), Mrs. D. Brooke, Mr. K. Burton, Mrs. S. Burton, Mr. R. Casserley, Mrs. R. Casserley, Councillor. D. Cvongreve, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mrs.M. Dinsdale, Mr. J. Fenton, Mr. S. Francis, Mr. J. Hodgson, Mr. J. Hook, Miss P. Johnson, Mr. G.M. Mason, Mrs. M. Mason, Miss. E. Newton, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mr. M. Parry, Rev. L. Pearson, Mr. F. Swift, Mr. G. Turton, Mr.R.J.W. Winfield and Mr. N. Zaman

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Richard Bell welcomed those present to the meeting and noted that as Christine Thornton was unable to be present, he would chair the meeting .

2. Apologies for absence were received from Arthur Kirby, John Peckham and Christine Thornton

3. Guest Speakers- Richard Bell introduced the first guest speaker, Tom Smith, the Locality Manager for South and Outer East Leeds, Leeds City Council

3.1 Tom Smith noted that he last attended a Forum meeting nearly two years ago. He noted that he is responsible for street cleaning and environmental enforcement and that he has a bigger role in improving the environment, working with all service providers such as refuse, parks and highways . He recalled that he last appeared at a meeting of the Forum in August 2012 , and recalled that there was a good debate. He noted that various things were going on , and noted that at that time , there were strange ways of delivering services. At that time, path sweeping was on an eight day rota, so that every week, the day of the week on which paths were swept changed. Additionally, there was no coordination with refuse collection so that often, streets were cleaned on the day before bins were put out. There was also no cleaning of ginnels, and no proactive work, so that those responsible for sweeping paths simply waited for a complaint. There was no enforcement patrol.

3.2 Tom Smith noted that 18 months ago, cleaning dates were fixed. It had previously been impossible to identify a day of the week on which cleaning would take place due to the 8 day cycle. The frequency of cleaning has increased in some areas. The frequency of cleaning in Redhall Close and Redhall Crescent has been increased from every 16 days to every week, subject to sickness. The frequency on Town Street, St. Anthony's Drive, Old Lane and the Heaths has increased from every 16 days to every week, and the frequency of cleaning on the Grovehalls has increased from every 7 weeks to every four weeks. The frequency has been increased by redesigning routes, and by better cleaning services. In addition, the aim is for cleaning to take place on the day of refuse collection or the day after. This does not happen everywhere but this is done wherever it is possible. This information can be provided to the Forum and posted on their website. There has also been an increase in manual cleaning with an extra day allocated to the cleaning of Town Street and Beeston Road, so that this is now cleaned three times per week.

3.3 With regard to ginnels, Tom Smith noted that in the past, there had been no programme to clean them. Leeds City Council has worked with councillors about priorities as there will never be the resources to clean them all. Ginnels which have issues are prioritised. He added that St. Anthony's Drive and St. Anthony's Road are on the manual cleaning rotas to be cleaned every Saturday. The Back Lane ginnel, which runs between Old Lane, Cardinal Road and Redhall Crescent is cleaned every Saturday. The ginnels between Crow Nest Lane and the Ring Road, and the ginnel close to Southleigh Gardens, are also in the schedule. Since August 2012, there has been more proactive enforcement. Previously, work had been focussed on complaints. Every eight weeks, staff agree with local councillors where they will go. Patrol work is focussed around litter or dog fouling. Tom Smith noted that he is not satisfied with the cleanliness of St Anthony's Drive and acknowledged that his department must do better and change the way in which it does things. Leeds City Council is trying to change the position from a fixed structure to a flexible structure, which changes in line with the problems which are notified. Tom Smith added that litter pickers walk around a map. A key issue is where the resource is moved to deal with problems. It is intended to break down teams into smaller units and there will hopefully be a Beeston and Holbeck team. If this is introduced local residents will know who works in the area and who manages the team. It will be possible to move resources, something which cannot happen at the moment due to the present structure. Tom Smith noted that there had been a lot of work with the police in linking things together. Hitherto, staff have not been looking for issues but are now encouraged to do so. The police are doing the same with environmental problems. In addition, it is intended to start working with communities. Tom Smith noted that the council has not got enough people in terms of eyes and ears to see what is going on. It may, indeed, have fewer people in future. Dog fouling is an example. If residents report dog fouling, Leeds City Council will take action. If it is not possible to take formal legal action, they will speak to the people responsible informally.

3.4 The meeting then opened to questions from the floor. Amongst the issues raised were street lighting, the cleaning of ginnels, litter close to St. Anthony's Hall, sweeping of Gipsy Lane, paths close to the Community Centre, flytipping and dumping on unadopted roads, litter on days when Leeds United FC are playing at home. **When the minutes were considered for approval, John Hodgson noted that he had congratulated Leeds United FC, the Forum, and our councillors for providing bins in the area. He noted that if this had not occurred, the provision of bins in the area would have been minimal. He added that he has pictures of bins which we no longer have. He noted that Tom Smith had said that Leeds City Council has no money for bins. He congratulated the organisations to which he referred.**

3.5 Robert Winfield noted that he had sent Tom Smith a copy of a letter which he had written on behalf of the Forum dealing with the state of the lighting and footpaths in the vicinity of Beeston Village Community Centre. He noted that there is evidence that this situation is deterring local residents from attending meetings of the Forum, and pointed out that efforts to find a solution to the problem had been frustrated by a degree of obscurity as to who owns the land in the area around the community centre. In the light of this, Robert Winfield asked what is difficult about Leeds City Council investigating who owns the land in the area, so that we can be nearer to a solution. Tom Smith said that this presents no difficulties and that Leeds City Council will do that. He noted that one thing which had come out very clearly at the recent De Puy event is that there is a lack of understanding as to who is responsible for what. If there is nothing the council can do, due to ownership issues, the Council would need to look at the issue. If the land does prove to be council owned, this would open the door to a discussion. Robert Winfield asked Tom Smith to keep the Forum involved in relation to developments relating to the land around Beeston Village Community Centre. Tom Smith agreed to do this.

4. Richard Bell introduced the second guest speaker, Stewart Robinson of International Fun Fairs.

4.1 Stewart Robinson noted that the Valentine Fair had been in existence for 22 years, and the fair which had just taken place was by far the worst in terms of weather. He noted that in previous years, there had been snow at the fair, but this year there was constant wind and rain, but the fair was still well supported by people who braved the weather and became wet through. Stewart Robinson noted that it had been necessary to cancel the planned fireworks display on the first Friday of the fair. The display was almost cancelled on the second Friday of the fair but the weather improved just in time. When the weather was kind, the fair was busy. He noted that on the first afternoon of the fair, when the fair welcomed children with special needs, it was a lovely day. 300 children and representatives of Martin House were there. The day went well; it was the best opening ceremony ever held, and people enjoyed it.

4.2 Stewart Robinson noted that there had been a lot of hard work as contractors for the Park and Ride facility currently being built were on the site. He added that the manager of the contractors was fabulous and had been happy to work with him. He had also used his equipment to make the land safer and cleaner. The council had also been helpful and had got the site in a state in which it had been reasonable to walk around. Stewart Robinson noted that two days before the start of the fair, the land was a real mess and it looked as though no one would go on there. He thanked the council and the contractors who had made the best of a bad job. He thanked those

attending the fair for their support and said that he hoped that the fair can continue at Elland Road after the construction of the Park and Ride facility and other proposed developments. He said that he enjoys going to Elland Road and the fair is very successful. He noted that people from some distance away attend the fair and many people talk about the fair. There are lots of photographs on facebook. Stewart Robinson said that people talk about the fair three months before and three months after the fair.

4.3 The meeting then opened up to questions from the floor. Steve Francis noted that Stewart Robinson had been coming to the Forum for a long time and felt that there should be a vote of thanks to recognise that International Fun Fairs had attended the Forum and sought to involve the community. This vote of thanks was duly passed.

5. The minutes of the Forum meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014 had been circulated to the members present. Edna Newton noted that the agenda item dealing with the approval of the minutes refers to the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, rather than 6<sup>th</sup> February. Robert Winfield acknowledged this error, noting that when he cut and pasted from a previous agenda he had overlooked altering the date. Robert Winfield referred to two other issues in relation to the minutes. First of all, he noted that pages two and four of the minutes were missing from the documents which had been circulated at the meeting. He apologised for the situation and felt that he would understand if the Forum takes the view that it would not be appropriate to consider a resolution to approve the minutes. Secondly, Robert Winfield referred to his own health at the last meeting of the Forum. He felt that he had been on the margins of fitness to attend the meeting and later realised that his health had been a lot worse than that. Because of this, he felt that there is a higher probability than usual of errors having crept in to the minutes. Forum members should not be reticent in pointing out such mistakes. The meeting agreed to a suggestion from Richard Bell that no resolution to approve the minutes be put. Robert Winfield asked the meeting whether any mistakes had occurred in those parts of the minutes which were included in the document. No such mistakes were identified. Richard Bell said that he appreciates Robert Winfield and the efforts which he makes in relation to the minutes.

6. Matters Arising. John Hodgson noted that Christine Thornton had told the meeting that in her judgement further discussion of the Aspiring Communities planning application would be pointless. He noted, however, that Aspiring Communities had revised its planning application. He added that he had been led to believe that catering is no longer included in the planning application, but noted that catering and the exit from the rear is still included in the planning application. Richard Bell noted that the planning application is what has been lodged with Leeds City Council, not what people might say. John Hodgson felt that the planning application had fundamentally changed, but noted that it is still inaccurately stated that the 64 bus service operates on Sunday. Richard Bell noted that issues of detail have been pointed out. John Hodgson noted that the plans have been amended so as to provide a place for a caretaker. Mary Mason noted that Ash Mahmood had told a number of people at the meeting organised by De Puy at St Mary's Church that if the planning application is rejected, they would carry on applying until it is accepted. Rosemary Casserly wondered whether, in view of the objections to the plans, objections to the original plans would remain valid or whether it is necessary to lodge a fresh objection. Councillor David Congreve said that in such circumstances, the original objections are reported, providing the revised plans are not substantially different. Greg Turton said that he had been unable to tell the difference between the original and revised plans. He noted that it had been reported at the last meeting of the Forum that Aspiring Communities had been asked to make submissions to the planning department with a view to a decision being made about the planning application by 10<sup>th</sup> February. Robert Winfield noted that he had received an e mail from Jillian Rann of the Leeds City Council Development Department explaining that as a result of new information received from the applicant it is unlikely that the application would be considered by a plans panel before 3<sup>rd</sup> April. She added that the Beeston Forum would be informed in advance of the meeting at which the planning application would be considered. Steve Francis suggested that this information should be circulated by e mail or letter to Forum members. Richard Bell said that the costs of doing so would be excessive. Robert Winfield said that according to the constitution of the Forum, all residents of Beeston are regarded as Forum members. He added that he hoped that there is no proposal to circulate the information to all residents of Beeston, as one consequence of such a proposal would be that the Forum would be insolvent! He added that even if the letter were sent to a smaller group of Forum meetings (for example those attending recent forum meetings), practical considerations, notably long working hours and the fact that Robert Winfield had not yet fully recovered from his recent illness would make it difficult for him to send out the letter. Steve Francis offered to assist with the task. Councillor David Congreve pointed out that the agenda for all of Leeds City Council's Committees and Panels is published on its website 10 days before the meeting. He noted that it is possible to visit a library and look at the website, and was sure that library staff would be happy to assist, if necessary. Thus, people will get to know about the meeting which will consider the planning application without Robert Winfield overworking himself. Rosemary Casserley suggested posting relevant details on the Forum website. Richard Bell noted that the Forum's facebook page is somewhat disused.

## 7. Police Report.

7.1 Insp. Chris Bowen apologised for his absence from the last Forum meeting and noted that he had looked at the minutes to see what issues had been raised. He noted that the Holbeck Neighbourhood Policing Team will be merging into the Inner South Neighbourhood Team. This has effectively happened, although the change does not officially take place until 7<sup>th</sup> April. One of the plus points is that instead of a boundary, the whole of Inner South Leeds is in the same police area. Chris Bowen noted that resources and people equipment have been reviewed across the whole of Leeds and that new pieces of equipment would be useful for dealing with issues which are raised at the Forum. He noted that the Neighbourhood Policing Team would be getting a speed gun for the first time and that there would also be a number of 'Smiling Sid' signs which indicate whether a passing car is within the speed limit. He noted that these signs have an effect on drivers, and give a nice reminder if a driver is travelling a little too fast. Chris Bowen also said that the police would be getting an immobiliser, which offers a better chance of tracking items if a burglary occurs. Valuable possessions can be registered. Chris Bowen noted that a tram disband and asked who wanted this equipment. Chris Bowen took the opportunity to take it.

7.2 Chris Bowen noted that a cold calling zone, covering the Cardinals and the Waincliffes has been applied for and this will go live on 17<sup>th</sup> March. He noted that charity collectors are still allowed to call at doors and suspected that many callers will disguise themselves as charities. Chris Bowen added that Beeston and Holbeck Ward will have two neighbourhood ward managers; two PCs who would be responsible for problem solving in the areas which they serve. Chris Bowen noted that in the past, policemen were broken off from problem solving. The two neighbourhood ward managers are PC Joanne Kemp and PC Alex Smith, who would attend Forum meetings on a regular basis.

7.3 Chris Bowen said that funding had been obtained for shed alarms on the Cardinals and Waincliffes. When people lose bicycles and lawn mowers, the police would seek to install shed alarms. With regard to crime figures, Chris Bowen pointed out that since last month there have been two burglary dwellings; one of which involved a smashed window and the other a smashed lock. Chris Bowen suggested that anyone who has an old lock in a double glazing door should let the PCs know, because these locks are easily snapped. Such locks can be replaced with new locks which are designed to break in the door without opening it. There have also been two thefts from motor vehicles. Three suspects have been arrested; one is on remand awaiting trial, and one is in jail. There have been two instances of criminal damage to vehicles; these had been carried out on the same day by the same person. There have also been six 'burglary others' (burglaries of any premises other than a house). These include burglaries of garages, sheds, shops, offices and takeaways. Chris Bowen said that there may be a link between the crimes and the police are looking into this. Chris Bowen noted that the area described as Beeston by the police is probably slightly larger than the Beeston Forum area.

7.4 Roy Casserley showed Chris Bowen a sheet setting out a list of burglaries, and added that when he first attended a Forum meeting he said that there would be an increase in the number of PCSOs. However, he had not seen any PCSOs other than at Forum meetings, despite the fact that he frequently walks around Beeston. He had, however seen two highway cars when he had visited the Exhibition at the Elland Road Valentine Fair. He spent 1 ½ hours at the exhibition and noted that the car had not moved. Chris Bowen noted that he is not responsible for Highway Cars. He said that there may be a reason for what happened. Roy Casserley said that the Highway Cars were so far away from everything. Chris Bowen said that the PCSOs are out and about and that he had seen one on patrol when driving to the present meeting. He noted that there are currently six PCSOs on each team covering the Holbeck NPT area. Under the new structure, there will be 8 PCSOs on each team, but they will cover a larger area. There should be at least 2 PCSOs in Beeston on the day shift and two on the late shift.

7.5 Roy Casserley urged the police to monitor the ginnel between Southleigh Road and Westland Road, and said that there is a bike coming out of the ginnel. Chris Bowen said that he would mention this to the police officers who use off road motor bikes. Bill Birch noted that there have been three people driving around the area in a red Citroen van, and knocking on doors. After they had gone, his next door neighbour had found that a number of ornamental chimney pots had vanished from their garden. He had given the registration number of the van to the police. John Hodgson noted that a number of people had broken into a back door on Wesley Street, and two PCSOs had come to the street. He noted that the PCSOs had come from outside the area. John Hodgson added that it had been useful that Chris Bowen had been involved in riot control when based in London. He noted that there had been a demonstration at Elland Road football ground by supporters of Leeds United FC who had been upset about recent developments at the club. He could see the horses involved in the police operation. Chris Bowen felt that his officers had handled this situation well. He noted that he had been the Commander for that operation.

8. Report of Sub Committee dealing with Neighbourhood Plan For Beeston. Greg Turton said that this would be a brief report but with some very good news; the Beeston Neighbourhood Area was designated on 24<sup>th</sup> February. This will enable the group to apply for a grant, then put into place a Neighbourhood Forum representing the community. Greg Turton thanked the members of the subgroup, the Beeston Forum Committee, Councillor David Congreve and the Leeds City Council Neighbourhood Planning Team. Greg Turton added that he had sent a Press Release to the Parish Magazine, South Leeds Life, the Yorkshire Evening Post and the local community radio station. South Leeds Life had published a large spread including the new logo, and an explanation of its significance. The logo includes the strapline 'Lets Make Beeston Better'. Greg Turton added that the group had secured the assistance of a Planning Student; Laura Young, who is a second year student of Human Geography and Planning at Leeds Metropolitan University. She will attend the Forum Committee meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> March, and she will be given relevant tasks. Greg Turton and Christine Thornton will be attending a planning conference in York in late March. This will give them the opportunity to network with others from the North of England seeking to set up neighbourhood plans.

9. Report of Committee Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014. Richard Bell noted that he had been unable to be present at the meeting. Robert Winfield noted that there had been a discussion of a number of items of correspondence. The Neighbourhood Plan for Beeston had been discussed. Robert Winfield noted that Greg Turton had just reported about important developments. There had been a significant discussion about Beeston Village Community Centre. Robert Winfield noted that there had been a number of significant developments which would be reported under the separate agenda item. Robert Winfield added that there had been a brief discussion of the proposals which First Leeds had made, as an alternative to the trolleybus scheme, which would involve using a variant of the New Bus for London on certain bus routes in Beeston. It was noted that the no 1 bus route, through Beeston would be apart of the first phase of the scheme, whilst the second phase of the scheme would include the Dewsbury Road routes; 2, 3 and 3a.

## 10. Correspondence

10.1 Robert Winfield noted that he had been requested by the last meeting of the Forum to write to Asda and Tesco to ask them about their plans, in the light of the recent decision to approve a planning application for a new Asda Store on Old Lane and to reject the

planning application for a store by Tesco. He had received an e mail from Mark Thomas of Tesco (who had taken over the responsibilities of Deborah Hayeems, who has left Tesco) explaining that there would be a meeting in April at which Tesco would decide to do one of three things in relation to their site on Old Lane. They could sell the site, appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against the decision to refuse planning permission or submit a fresh planning application for the site. Mark Thomas will ensure that the Forum is updated about any decision. Richard Bell noted that the site is derelict. Mary Mason wondered whether we have been given the date on which the meeting would take place. Robert Winfield said that he had not been given this information. Bill Birch noted that there had been a debate as to whether Asda or Tesco would be granted planning permission. Asda had been granted planning permission and had done nothing. He asked what is going on. Richard Bell noted that there had been suspicions that Asda submitted their planning application in order to block Tesco. Bill Birch said that this is not on; Leeds City Council should say that they would not accept that and that Asda should either build their proposed store or give up their planning permission. John Hodgson noted that the current Asda store on Old Lane is popular, but there is not enough room. It is not possible to get sufficient stock in the small building; for example, the store does not stock Onion Rings. Robert Winfield noted that Asda had not yet replied to his letter. Greg Turton noted that a number of instruments had been seen on the Asda site; he understood that these were evaluating the subsoil. Noor Zaman understood that there is a time limit of three years for the implementation of planning applications. Robert Winfield noted that it had not yet been one year since the planning application was granted. Rosemary Casserley said that she had spoken to a number of staff at the Asda store; they were expecting things to happen.

10.2 Robert Winfield had received an e mail from Yvette Sheldon of West Yorkshire Trading Standards describing a programme which they are delivering advising people how they can better protect themselves from common scams, fraud and avoid the clutches of unscrupulous loan sharks. She explained that they are currently looking to deliver a number of workshops to existing community groups, and wondered whether the Forum would be interested. Robert Winfield noted that no guest speaker has so far been invited for the April meeting and wondered whether we should seek to invite Mrs Sheldon. Richard Bell wondered whether it would be possible for her to condense the workshops into, say 25 minutes. It was agreed to invite her.

11. Beeston Village Community Centre- Robert Winfield noted that a meeting of the Beeston Village Community Centre Users Committee meeting (on which he and Doris Brooke serve) had been due to take place on 27<sup>th</sup> February. He noted that he and Doris Brooke had arrived at the Community Centre on this date expecting a normal meeting to take place. Upon arrival, they were informed that Brian Pine, Facilities Manager for Health For All (Leeds) had left the employment of Health for All. After some discussion, Robert Winfield noted that a meeting, chaired by him, had taken place involving himself, Doris Brooke, Lynn Bailey of Beeston Action for Families and Toshal Bhatia. The meeting, which those present felt had been useful had dealt with the concerns, which had frequently been raised by the Beeston Forum, about lighting and footpaths in the vicinity of the centre. It was noted that Lynn Bailey shared these concerns. The meeting also discussed a newspaper report to the effect that Health for All are hoping to engage an architect to carry out a feasibility study in connection with possible improvements to the building. It was noted that both the engagement of the architect, and improvements to the building are dependent upon obtaining funding. Following the meeting Robert Winfield sent a copy of the minutes to Rachel Irwin, who is now looking after facilities for Health for All, and Pat McGeever, the Director of Health for All. Rachel Irwin pointed out that all future meetings of the buildings committee had been cancelled until a decision had been taken as to how to proceed. She added that Brian Pine would not be replaced. Pat McGeever said that they are currently waiting to hear whether they can progress with the feasibility study as they do not know what Leeds City Councils plans for the centre are. She suspected that Councillor Adam Ogilvie and Area officers such as Tom O'Donovan would know more. If it is decided to proceed with a feasibility study she would immediately inform the Forum so that Health for All could work in partnership with us. Councillor Adam Ogilvie noted that Pat McGeever had approached the councillors as they were looking for improvements to the centre. Adam Ogilvie added that the councillors support this, having secured the building for the Community. He added that the Leeds City Council Asset Management Department are currently reviewing all centres. Adam Ogilvie added that he is pushing for a feasibility study, and is waiting for Asset Management to do its work, which he expects to be in May or June. Robert Winfield noted that the Beeston Forum had advocated the conversion of the building into a community centre several years before this actually happened.

12. Possible Co-options to the Committee. Richard Bell urged members to volunteer to serve on the committee. He noted that committee meetings generally take place two weeks after each Forum meeting.

### 13. Any Other Business

13.1 John Adamson referred to the internal corner at the rear of the Ice Pak site. He noted that a steel wagon has been pulling into the site. It comes up Firth Road, swings into Wooler Drive and reverses back onto the site. He noted that cars are parked at both sides of the road, and that there are fears that cars would be damaged. The meeting agreed to a proposal from Greg Turton that Robert Winfield will write to Aspiring Communities to express our concerns about this.

13.2 A member of the audience asked why vehicles owned by Hunters Coaches are driving up Town Street empty at around 40 miles per hour. He described this as a nuisance. Mark Parry said that the coaches are taking employees to the Millshaw call centres. It was noted that Town Street has a 20mph speed limit. It was agreed to write to Hunters Coaches about this matter.