

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 Forum Website- www.beestonforum.btck.co.uk

find us on Facebook at 'Beeston Community Forum'



BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting 5th April 2012

Agenda

- 1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Guest Speakers- Martin Farrington and Councillor Richard Lewis, Leeds City Council**
- 4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 1st March 2012**
- 5. Correspondence**
- 6. Report of Committee meetings- 15th March 2012**
- 7. Planning application by Bal Newsagents**
- 8. Tesco and Asda Planning applications**
- 9. Any Other Business**

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 1st March 2012

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), Mr. R. Bell, Mr. W. J. Birch, Mrs. D. Brooke, Mr. K. Burton, Mrs. S. Burton, Councillor D. Congreve, Mrs. M. Cook, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mrs. M. Hobson, Mr. J. Hodgson, Mr. J. Hook, Miss P. Johnson, Mrs. D. Kenny, Mr. A. Kirby, C. Kirk, Mr. R. Kitson, Mrs. E. Lister, Mr. G.M. Mason, Mrs. M. Mason, Miss. E. Newton, Mr. M. Parry, Mr. J. Peckham, Mrs. C. Stevens, Mr. F. Swift, Mr. G. Turton and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton thanked those present for their attendance and welcomed them to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence were received from John Fenton and Kathleen Fenton

3. Guest Speakers. Christine Thornton noted that Stewart Robinson of International Fun Fairs was expected, but had not arrived. She therefore introduced the other guest speakers dealing with education; Kevin Paynes, Secondary School Improvement Advisor, Leeds City Council, Stuart Gosney, Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Lead, Leeds City Council, David Gurney, Head Teacher, Cockburn School and Peter Nuttall, Director of Community Relations, Cockburn School.

3.1 Kevin Paynes commenced his remarks by saying that within his remit is an overview of all Secondary schools. He felt that it is useful for the Forum to see the bigger picture. In terms of Secondary Schools, he feels that South Leeds has done well but the rest of the City had done even better. He noted that although some schools had merged or closed, there are 38 secondary schools in Leeds and their standards had improved. He noted that seven or eight weeks ago, the City had a wild ambition that 80% of pupils would achieve five GCSE A* to C grades. This target has now been hit. However, there is a new gold standard in which the five GCSE passes include English and Mathematics. 54% of pupils achieved this last year. Kevin Paynes noted that nationally, the proportion of pupils achieving this target is going up, so Leeds has not hit the National Average. There are huge challenges, but there have also been big improvements to which all schools have contributed.

Kevin Paynes noted that the government has suggested that each school should have 35% of pupils achieving the 'gold standard'. It was noted that the government has raised the floor standard, and that this is difficult to achieve especially in

challenging circumstances such as those which prevail in South Leeds. South Leeds is doing well to respond to the challenge.

Attendance at Secondary Schools last year was 92%; the best in history, but still below the national average. Kevin Paynes said that he is pleased but there is still a long way to go. The Council wants to be the best city in the UK, but that education standards do not match that ambition. With regard to illiteracy in Leeds, there is still a lot to be done at all ages; too many children are not achieving the appropriate national level. It was noted that OFSTED had changed the format of school inspections 2 to 3 years ago. Now OFSTED has changed the method of inspection again, in January 2012, so that school inspections are becoming harder and harder. Schools could be given four grades; outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate. Schools want to get up this ladder. Kevin Paynes noted that Cockburn School had improved and is now considered a showcase school. The government recently announced that it would be changing the 'satisfactory' grading to 'requires improvement'. A school with that rating is not good enough and has effectively failed. It was noted that pupils in four categories; those with special educational needs, those requiring free school meals, looked after children and children from ethnic minorities, have improved but not as fast as other pupils or the national average. The provision of education by the local authority is smaller than it used to be. There are 38 secondary schools in Leeds but 11 are now academies, which Kevin Paynes described as the way the world is going. All Leeds Children want to do well but the local authority has little say. Leeds City Council works with some academies, but others have gone it alone completely, and Leeds City Council has no influence. Kevin Paynes predicted that some of the schools remaining under local authority control will become academies, as a result of the schools deciding to become academies, or failing an OFSTED inspection. The government wants as many secondary schools as possible to become academies. This will also happen with primary schools. Kevin Paynes said that we need everyone on board to be successful.

Kevin Paynes noted that the Leeds Education Challenge had been launched; this is a huge project involving all Primary Secondary and Special Schools which work together on projects involving teaching and learning, leadership and management, challenging circumstances and closing the gap. This project is in its early stages. Kevin Paynes noted that some people may have heard of the London Challenge or the Greater Manchester Challenge, which have secured large funding. There is little funding for the Leeds Challenge, and this is mostly based on goodwill. There cannot be a top down model, and the secret is in using schools. The task is now a school led system, with a partnership arrangement. The Leeds Education Challenge is in its early days. We have done well but lower than we want.

3.2 The meeting then opened up to questions from the floor. Amongst issues raised were the extent of the powers of Leeds Education to intervene in the running of individual schools and Free Schools

3.3 David Gurney, the Head Teacher of Cockburn High School then spoke. He explained that he is in his fourth year as Head Teacher, and that he has taught in South Leeds since qualifying as a teacher 15 or 16 years ago. He described Cockburn School as fantastic in terms of facilities, and noted that the school had benefited from the Building Schools for the Future programme. This is a school fit for the 21st Century. David Gurney felt that this can have an impact on achievement.

David Gurney described the values and expectations of the School in five words; resilient, responsible, aspirational, independent and respectful. He noted that this is an IT rich world. The values can also be expressed in 'five Ps'; polite, positive, prepared, punctual and pride. He noted that a lot of students are on virtual learning; that is, they study at home.

The number of pupils on the school roll are 1082 compared with the national average of 986. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is 38% compared with the national average of 15.9%. The proportion of pupils on SA+ or special educational needs is 13.8% compared with the national average of 8.5%. The percentage of LAC pupils (looked after) is 16% compared with the national average of 7%. The percentage of pupils with English as a second language is 10.9% compared with the national average of 12.3%.

The proportion of pupils in various local schools who are entitled to free school meals is Rodillian, 22%; Bruntcliffe, 19%; Morley, 10%; Royds 20%; South Leeds, 45% and Woodkirk, 9%. David Gurney explained that Cockburn takes 210 students in year 7. The school attracts 452 applicants making it the second most oversubscribed secondary school in Leeds. 235 pupils named Cockburn as their first choice, 129 as their second choice and 74 as their third choice. Cockburn scores very highly in terms of the Contextual Value Added (CVA). This measure looks at the value added to the progress of a pupil, and looks at factors such as where a pupil lives or whether he is on free school meals. When pupils arrive at Cockburn in Year 7, their progress at Cockburn is outstanding. Cockburn is the third highest school this year; in terms of success it is outstanding. Pupils are typically below average on arriving at Cockburn. The recent OFSTED report describes Cockburn as having made outstanding progress. David Gurney added that all the data to which he has referred is public data from the website of the Department for Education.

Cockburn School has formed a trust; the South Leeds Learning Trust, which works with local Primary Schools and seeks to ensure that children leave school with qualifications for University, employment or training. David Gurney added that Cockburn is about to introduce new sixth form provision. 100 people have applied. The number of people who have gained

five or more A* to C GCSE grades has risen from 11% in 2001, when the school should have been closed, to 90% in 2011. OFSTED has rated Cockburn as good with outstanding features. The behaviour of pupils was rated as good. Teaching and learning was rated as good, as was attendance. By comparison, Morley Academy was rated as outstanding with Woodkirk Academy rated good with outstanding features. Royds and Bruntcliffe are rated as satisfactory. David Gurney said that he wants Cockburn to become an outstanding school. David Gurney said that when you see Cockburn students in the community, they are smart; wearing a smart uniform including a shirt and tie. He added that he would be happy to show Forum members around the school building, take them into lessons and enable them to meet students and staff. He explained that the school has the most committed staff. Anyone coming to Cockburn after school hours would find staff still there working with children, on an evening and even on Saturday mornings. The school is on a journey moving forward.

3.5 The meeting then opened up to questions from the floor. Amongst issues raised were the incentives for pupils to work hard, vocational courses, the practice of some children to throw litter at a bin, the new Cockburn Sixth Form, the popularity of the school and its pupils amongst local residents, the levels of truancy and the fencing around the school

3.6 Stuart Gosney spoke about school places, noting that there had been press reports about the subject during the week. The number of pupils entering primary schools is increasing and will continue to increase for the foreseeable future. He urged the forum to look at births and birth rates in parts of Leeds. This leads to pressure on school places. He noted that he is relatively new to the job and had been quite surprised by this. Schools such as New Bewerley, Greenmount, Hugh Gaitskell and Cottingley had expanded. It is vital to ensure that each pupil is offered a good school place. Because of this there is a need to keep adding more and more places. There is an increase in the number of people moving into Leeds which is a popular city. This is not just as a result of immigration but also through movements of population within the UK. There has also been a significant amount of housing development. This has an impact on the number of school places and there is pressure from all directions. This followed a period of sustained reductions, which led to education authorities being told by the government to remove surplus places. Now, the situation has turned around the bottom of the curve and the authorities are being told to add places. It is indeed necessary to add a new school in south Leeds. The existing schools are getting quite big. A two form entry school will take in 60 pupils per year. Stuart Gosney felt that this is the right size for a school. A three form entry school would take in ninety pupils per year. Beyond that, a school would be too large, and indeed almost as large as some secondary schools. Stuart Gosney added that schools have grown as much as they want. The government has also changed its policy so that if a new school opens, someone else is required to run it, such as an academy with a sponsor. However, the new school for south Leeds had been advertised before the government changed the rules in this respect. This will be a two form entry school. People will come along and bid to run the school which could be a free school or an academy with a sponsor. Stuart Gosney added that most schools in the area have formed a trust and are working together co-operatively. He is fairly certain that the trust, which is a consortium of schools would bid to run the new school. He added that the new school is a large venture and that the Education Service will do nothing which would undermine the success of this, such as expanding other schools. Christine Thornton wondered whether the new school would have its own head teacher. Stuart Gosney noted that the new school would be built on the site of South Leeds Sports Centre

3.7 There were a number of questions from the floor asking for a justification for the proposal to build a school on the site of South Leeds Sports Centre

4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 2nd February 2012. Robert Winfield noted that he had been reminded by Councillor David Congreve that he had been present at the meeting despite his omission from the list of those attending. Robert Winfield added that he would be delighted to propose an appropriate amendment to the minutes. Subject to this matter, the minutes were accepted as a fair and accurate report of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

5. Correspondence- Robert Winfield reported that Tom Smith, of the Inner South Leeds Area Committee, who is responsible for Environmental Services had accepted an invitation to attend the August meeting. Subsequently, Robert Winfield heard from representatives of the South Leeds Investment Partnership who would also like to attend the August meeting. Following consultation with Christine Thornton, Robert Winfield asked the South Leeds Investment Partnership whether they could attend one of the three meetings (October, November and January) where no guest speakers have already been allocated in order to avoid the possibility of a congested agenda in August. If the attendance of the South Leeds Investment Partnership at any of the other meetings is impossible, they would be welcome to attend in August. Robert Winfield had yet to hear from the South Leeds Investment Partnership about these issues.

6. Report of Committee meetings on 19th January and 16th February. Christine Thornton apologised for the fact that she has no report of the meeting on 19th January as she had not brought a copy of the minutes with her. With regard to the meeting on 16th February, the meeting had discussed guest speakers, an event organised by Leeds City College at which Mark Parry had volunteered to represent the Forum, the Asda and Tesco Planning applications, issues connected with Beeston Village Community Centre and the South Leeds Life live blog.

7. Asda and Tesco planning applications. Robert Winfield noted that there are two important issues to be determined. Firstly, does the letter which he had written to the Planning Department (copies of which were given out at the last meeting of the

Forum, a number of additional copies were available at the present meeting) accurately reflect the views of the Forum. Robert Winfield noted that it is the view of the Committee of the Forum that it does but that the Forum is welcome to take a different view, if it wishes. Secondly, does the response from Philip Bartram of Asda , which is set out in the minutes of the last meeting fully address the Forum's concerns in a way which would enable the Forum to withdraw its holding objection to Asda's planning application. Robert Winfield noted that it is the Committee's view that Mr Bartram's letter does not fully address the Forum's concerns.

Bill Birch suggested that if Asda is willing to give a written undertaking that the assurances which are seeking would form part of the planning conditions, we should withdraw our holding objection. If they do not do this, we should not withdraw the objection. Greg Turton noted that Mr Bartram's comments had been weighted to what Leeds City Council wants. He added that all the measures which we are seeking had been agreed by Tesco in the context of their planning application for a site a few hundred yards away. John Peckham said that Philip Bartram's response had been carefully worded and accused him of backsliding. He noted that one of his phrases, relating to noise mitigation is very important to those living in the area. Mr Bartram's response is not good enough.

Bill Birch said that all Asda needed to say in response to our points is , 'we agree, we agree, we agree, we agree'. He said that instead, Asda were making smoke and trying to confuse things. He asked hy Asda could not simply agree with our points. Christine Thornton said that she does not think Asda have addressed the issues in a favourable way. Richard Bell described Asda's response as wishy washy. John Hodgson noted that a giant Asda van had been seen travelling up Wesley Street.

Robert Winfield noted that he had telephoned the planning department and been advised that there was no possibility of the Asda and Tesco planning applications being considered at the February planning meeting (which had, of course now taken place) and only a slight possibility of being considered at the March meeting. It was agreed that Robert Winfield wrte to Philip Bartram along the lines suggested.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Sandra Burton asked why John Baron, who had reported about Forum meetings on the South Leeds Life blog , was not present at the meeting. Christine Thornton said that he had been unhappy with the way in which he had been treated at the last meeting of the Forum and had been advised by his manager not to come. John Hodgson noted that he had resigned from the committee. He was critical of John Baron for not having accepted an invitation to attend the last meeting of the Committee. He noted that a letter of apology was sent , but asked why this was sent to Health for All (Leeds). John Hodgson added that despite what has happened, he still maintains that the business of the Beeston Forum should be conducted in the meeting, not elsewhere. He noted that there is already a campaign questioning why a supermarket should be built on Old Lane.

It was noted that Christine Thornton had sent a letter of apology to John Baron and Pat McGeever. John Hodgson felt that the function of the Forum is to protect the people of Beeston. He noted that there had been a comment on the live blog from a representative of the Ingram Tenants Association. He noted that if the principles of the Colliers International Report are to be applied, this would prevent the building of a supermarket in Holbeck until 2026. Christine Thornton noted that John Baron had sought to explain how a blog works. She stressed that she des not want this issue going on and on and noted that it had been discussed at the last Forum meeting, the last Committee meeting and now the present meeting. She stressed that the minutes of Forum meetings are the only official record of the meeting.

8.2 Mick Mason noted that he had seen details of a planning application for traffic calming measures opposite St Andrew's Church. Mary Mason noted that this would involve the introduction of 20 mph speed limits. Councillor David Congreve noted that the proposals relate to the Cardinal Estate. He added that 20 mph speed limitshad been introduced in many areas, particularly where there are schools near by. The traffic calming measures involve platforms and bulges. Richard Bell recalled that guest speakers had been invited to the Forum two years ago to discuss the plans. David Congreve acknowledged that the matter had been going on for a long time.

