

**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 Community Forum General Meeting- 4<sup>th</sup> August 2011**

#### **Agenda**

- 1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Guest Speaker- Leeds City Council Adult Social Care Department**
- 4. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011**
- 5. Correspondence**
- 6. Report of Committee meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011**
- 7. Beeston Village Community Centre**
- 8. Any Other Business**

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), Mr. R. Almond, Mr. R. Bell, Mr. W.J. Birch, Mr. D. Bottomley, Mrs. E. Bower, Mrs. S. Bowes, Mr. K. Burton, Mr. S. Casey (Yorkshire Evening Post), Councillor D. Congreve, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mr. R. Davis, P. Eales, Mrs. I. Hawkins, Mr. J. Hodgson, Mrs. J. Hodgson, Miss. P. Johnson, J. Kaye, Mrs. D. Kenny, C. Kirk, Mr. R. Kitson, Mr. J. Lee, MBE, Mrs. J. Lowe, Mr. A. Mann (Leeds Tenants Federation), Mr. G.M. Mason, Mrs. M. Mason, Mr. P. McHale-Webster, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mr. M. Parry, Mr. R. Pavarotti-Hunt, Mr. J. Peckham, Mrs. D. Smith, Mr. F. Swift, Mr. G. Turton, Mrs. N. Watkis and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the meeting .
2. Apologies for absence were received from Doris Brooke, John Fenton and Kathleen Fenton.
3. Guest Speaker. Christine Thornton introduced the guest speaker, Councillor Keith Wakefield, the Leader of Leeds City Council.
  - 3.1 Keith Wakefield pointed out that he has been attending the Beeston Forum AGM for around 7 or 8 years; he was unable to attend the AGM just before Christmas . He then received an invitation to the present meeting. He explained that he has fond memories of this area having lived in the Marleys. He added that it is always worth coming to this area, and had recently visited the area to discuss its proposals for its regeneration. Keith Wakefield said that we are living in different times in terms of local government and its finance. He said that he would be expecting questions along the lines of 'Why can't we do this?' and 'Why can't we have this?'. He said that Leeds City Council has had the biggest cuts in its history whilst other northern cities have faced the biggest cuts since the war. Leeds City Council has had a cut of £90 million at a time when its budget on social services and childrens' services was overspent. Leeds had suffered an 8% cut in its grant whilst Dorset has had an increase in 0.5% and Surrey has had a cut of only 0.5%. Thus, the North of England has had a massive cut, whilst the south gets away with it. Keith Wakefield stressed that these figures are verifiable and that Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds

and Newcastle are struggling. Keith Wakefield stressed that he has a real commitment to helping the vulnerable. Thus, the childrens' services budget has been increased by £13m and adult social care has received an extra £17 million, which Keith Wakefield described as 'not enough'. In the next 20 years, there will be the biggest increase in population of the over 80s in history; 70%. This is great news, but this is accompanied by issues relating to the finance of elderly care. Leeds City Council has kept its commitment to raise funding on childrens' services and adult social care. The Council had also kept its commitment to maintain the number of PCSOs at the same level as last year. We are now putting an additional £ ½ million into the budget to enable young people to find apprenticeships, training and jobs. There is a problem with young people not finding work, college or training. 15 % of young people in Beeston are walking around with no hope and aspirations. This causes problems unless we do something about this.

3.2 Keith Wakefield spoke about the community consultation event about the regeneration of South Leeds which had taken place on 26<sup>th</sup> June. He noted that the White Rose Centre would expand and provide local jobs. There would also be an ice rink, casino, a police station and probably a hotel coming to the area. This is a massive investment and we need benefits for local people. If there are any jobs, Leeds City Council is committed to working with local people. He added that for around 1 years, this part of South Leeds has been waiting for a PFI scheme. At last the green light has been given for a £180 million PFI scheme for new housing in Holbeck; another opportunity. Although this is further away from this area, the Aire Valley has been given enterprise zone status in order to accelerate development and investment. This excellent news would create 5000 jobs, and we would focus on getting local people into the jobs. Keith Wakefield added that out of 94000 people in the South Leeds wedge 17% have no qualifications. There is a massive challenge to ensure that local people share the benefits of the investment.

3.3 Keith Wakefield said that there are strong pockets of community and good activities in the area, notably Beeston in Bloom. There is a strong identity and a sense of belonging to the area.

3.4 The meeting then opened up to questions from the floor. Issues dealt with included

- the feasibility of returning to a Direct Labour Scheme
- noise and litter affecting residents living close to the White Rose Centre
- problems caused by tenants of certain private landlords in the area
- consultation with residents in connection with the possible development of land in the area of Elland Road and the number of car parking spaces in conjunction with such development
- the state of roads, notably Cross Flatts Grove
- the provision of rubbish bags to residents of the Beeston Park Estate
- drug dealing in Holbeck Cemetery and streets close to the Cemetery
- litter in the area
- the affordability of PFI schemes
- the possible provision of an Ice Rink at Elland Road

4. Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2011. Christine Thornton apologised for the fact that only a small number of copies had been produced , due to difficulties with the photocopier. The minutes were agreed as a fair and accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matter Arising- Harry Booth House- John Hodgson said that he is now aware that Harry Booth House will cease to be an old peoples' home. There is now a petition about this issue. He suggested inviting a representative from the Action Group concerning Harry Booth House, to the next meeting of the Forum. He noted that the individual concerned is the daughter of a resident of Harry Booth House. He noted that unless the plans are reversed, all three old peoples homes in the area would have closed. Harry Booth House is also the last public old peoples home in the area. He added that South Leeds is at the back of the queue and that no one wants to be in an old peoples home. Although there is a home at the top of Churwell Hill, this requires a journey involving two buses. He would like to see the Forum take up the cause and save the home for the old people of this area. Christine Thornton noted that it would be possible for the intended speaker to make her remarks under Any Other

Business or in a Question and Answer session. It was resolved to invite the speaker.

## **6. Correspondence**

6.1 Christine Thornton had received a letter from Deborah Hayeems of Tesco thanking the Forum for its views in relation to the planning application by Tesco for a store on Old Lane. She reaffirmed the commitments which Tesco had made which would form part of the planning application.

6.2 Robert Winfield had received an e mail from Dr Melanie Prideaux, the Lecturer in charge of the group of students who had undertaken a research project about the Religious Mapping of Beeston. She had attached a copy of the report produced by the students.

7. Any Other Business- Rory Davis pointed out that he is a student at the University of Leeds undertaking a Research project about the development of the Elland Road area. He hoped that Forum members would complete a questionnaire which he had prepared at the conclusion of the meeting.

## **FUTURE FORUM MEETINGS**

**All meetings take place at Beeston Village Community Centre and start at 7.30p.m**

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September – Guest Speaker Rt. Hon Hilary Benn, Member of Parliament for Leeds Central**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October- Guest Speakers connected with the Investment Partnership for South Leeds (subject to confirmation)**

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November – Guest Speakers, Mr. Shaun Harvey , Chief Executive, Leeds United FC, Mr . Charles Donnelly , First Leeds and speakers from the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority 'Metro'**

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December – The Forum AGM- This will be addressed by a number of political and other prominent figures relating to the City of Leeds and will elect the Committee which will serve until the 2012 AGM. Officers and members of the Committee wishing to remain in office are required to seek re election. Members of the Committee are required to be residents of Beeston (as defined by the Constitution of the Beeston Forum). Anyone who would like to serve on the committee, or has any questions about the Committee is welcome to speak to any Committee member.**

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2012- Guest Speakers – St.Clair Brown, Leeds City Council Youth Services and a speaker from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.**

**The responsibility for inviting guest speakers to the remaining Forum meetings in 2012 falls on the Committee which will be elected at the Annual General Meeting.**