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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Community Forum General Meeting- 7th July 2011

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 Community Forum on 2nd June 2011**
- 5 Correspondence**
- 6. Report of Committee meeting on 16th June 2011**
- 7. Beeston Village Community Centre**
- 8. Report of the launch of the Investment Strategy for South Leeds**
- 9. Possible elections to the Committee**
- 10. Any Other Business**

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on Thursday 2nd June 2011.

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), R. Almond, Mr. W.J. Birch, Mr. D.C. Bottomley, Mrs D. Brooke, Mr. J. Cunningham, P. Eales, Mr. J. Hodgson, Miss. P. Johnson, Mr. R. Kitson, J. Leithead, Mr. G.M. Mason, Mrs. M. Mason, Mrs. E. Newton, Councillor A. Ogilvie, Mr. M. Parry, Mr. B. Stevens, Mrs C. Stevens, Mr. F. Swift, Mrs. N. Watkis and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks- Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the meeting. She noted that the guest speakers from the West Yorkshire Fire Service had not arrived at the meeting.
2. Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Congreve and Angela Gabriel, John Fenton, Kathleen Fenton, Miss L Stevens and Miss R Stevens.
3. Minutes of previous meetings. Christine Thornton noted that because of the full agenda at the last meeting of the Forum, the minutes of the Forum meeting on 7th April 2011, and the minutes of the Special General Meeting on 14th April 2011 (which was a debate about the possible introduction of the Alternative Vote system) , had not been considered although copies had been circulated at the previous meeting. It was agreed that these minutes be accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting. It was also agreed to accept the minutes of the Forum meeting on 12th May 2011 as a fair and accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters arising . Pauline Johnson said that the 30 mph speed limit should apply over a wider area than Old Lane, and suggested that it should also apply on Beeston Road and Cross Flatts Grove. Christine Thornton said that drivers should be aware that the speed limit in a built up area is 30 m p h and that it is too expensive to put up signs everywhere in a built up area. Councillor Adam Ogilvie said that he had sent an e mail about the issue to the Highways Engineer. He had been told that the speed limit is automatically 30 mph in areas where there is street lighting. However under legislation, it is not permitted to erect signs describing this speed limit. Adam Ogilvie

acknowledged that he could not understand why this legislation is in place . He said that a speed indicator device can be loaned from the Road Safety Unit. This is pointed at passing vehicles and could make an impact. If the Forum is interested , he could arrange for the loan of such a device. John Hodgson referred to signs which give drivers an indication of their speed as they pass the sign. He felt that they make drivers slow down, and suggested that they could be used. He added that bins in Ilkley bear stickers giving details of the speed limit in the area. Although the bins are only put out on one day per week, this could be a useful reminder of the speed limit. A member of the audience said that the legislation which Adam Ogilvie described is to prevent streets being cluttered with an excessive number of signs.

5. Correspondence

5.1 Robert Winfield had received a letter from Councillor Richard Lewis setting out an invitation to the launch of the Investment Strategy for South Leeds. This would take place at 10.30 a.m on Saturday 25th June at Elland Road Football ground. Robert Winfield asked anyone who is interested attending to approach him after the meeting.

5.2 Robert Winfield had received an e mail through the website from a woman whose bicycle had been stolen from a location close to the Spinning Wheel Pub, Dewsbury Road , and who was seeking the assistance of the Forum in securing its return. Robert Winfield said that obviously, we had every sympathy with her situation, but he noted that the Spinning Wheel Pub is actually closer to Leeds City Centre than to Beeston. The chances of the Forum being able to be of assistance are small at best. He assumed that this matter will have been reported to the police, but said that he would give a hard copy of the e mail to the police who were present at the meeting at the conclusion of the meeting.

6. Report of Committee meetings held on 28th April 2011 and 19th May 2011. Christine Thornton noted that the meetings had discussed speakers at future meetings, the Tesco planning application, the Rod Stewart pop concert at Elland Road Football Ground, and the stall at the Beeston Festival. There was also a discussion of the meeting involving a number of students from the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds, who were undertaking a project in connection with the religious mapping of Beeston.

7. As the representatives of the West Yorkshire Fire Service had arrived at the meeting, Christine Thornton introduced the Guest Speaker; Martin Robson. It was noted that Sean O'Flynn, who had been due to be the guest speaker from the Fire Service, had been unable to attend. Amongst matters dealt with are the refurbishment of the fire station, the fact that the station specialises in petrochemical fires, visits to homes by the fire service, the installation of smoke detectors, and the availability of carbon monoxide detectors.

8. Tesco Planning Application – Robert Winfield pointed out that following the decision of the last meeting of the Forum, he had written to the Planning Department explaining the Forum's willingness to withdraw its objection to the Tesco planning application providing a number of conditions, which are set out in the letter, are met. It was agreed that the letter would be available for inspection by members of the Forum at the conclusion of the meeting. Robert Winfield also explained that he had spoken to a Yorkshire Evening Post journalist , Sam Casey who had contacted Robert Winfield through the Beeston Forum website. Sam Casey explained his inability to attend the Forum meeting on 12th May but asked to be informed about what had happened. In a subsequent telephone conversation, Robert Winfield referred to the withdrawal of the Tesco planning application , stressing that this is subject to a number of conditions being fulfilled. Regrettably, the resulting YEP article made no reference to the conditions. Robert Winfield was pleased to see that there was a brief YEP article referring to the meeting which was currently taking place. It was noted that the Tesco Planning Application would cease to be an agenda item for Forum meetings, unless there are material developments in relation to the planning application.

Bill Birch noted that the minutes of the meeting state that £300000 would be set aside for public transport under a section 106 agreement. He wondered hat the phrase 'public transport' means and who would be getting the money. He added that a section 106 agreement should be in the public domain. Robert Winfield pointed out that his letter to the planning department says that there should be full public consultation regarding any section 106 agreements made in relation to the new store , and that any projects resulting from section 106 agreements should be genuinely beneficial to the local community, rather than pet council projects with little demonstrated public support.

9. Possible Development of land at Elland Road- Robert Winfield pointed out that a discussion had taken place at

the last meeting of the Committee as a result of an article in the Yorkshire Evening Post on the same evening. The committee had resolved that we write to Councillor Richard Lewis expressing the view that there should be full public consultation about the plans. Robert Winfield had also suggested that we make clear our fundamental opposition to any plans which involve a reduction in the number of car parking spaces. The committee felt that this should be decided by the Forum. Bill Birch suggested that the Forum should remain vigilant ; he opposed a reduction in the number of car parking spaces which he felt is likely to lead to an increase in on street parking. He added that the issue of Residents only parking permits causes difficulties for visitors. He explained that the offices near the White Rose Shopping Centre have multi storey car parks and felt that this would be appropriate for any new development. It was noted that the land which would be developed is owned by Leeds City Council, and is completely separate from developments being undertaken by Leeds United FC on land owned by the club. John Cunningham noted that according to the latest issue of the 'Yorkshire Evening Post' , the police are applying for planning permission to fence off the former greyhound stadium. Bill Birch described this as a fantastic waste of money. Councillor Adam Ogilvie noted that the Councillors will be briefed about the development on Monday after which a paper would go to the Council's Executive Board. The Councillors, he explained, are opposed to any reduction in car parking spaces. Adam Ogilvie added that the Councillors will be able to discuss any issues dealt with at the meeting on Monday freely. John Hodgson called for the establishment of a liaison committee , similar to that which was established in connection with the abortive plans to build an arena at Elland Road. He also noted that proposals by the Council to introduce a park and ride scheme at Elland Road had been opposed by First Bus on the grounds that this is too close to Leeds City Centre. He said that there is enough traffic in the area without bringing in additional traffic. He said that the land proposed for development is an eyesore which needs to be developed; however, the development must be an asset not a hindrance. He had spoken to people on the Heath Estate. Since the Council took over the responsibility for enforcing car parking restrictions, wardens regularly tour the area to issue tickets. Bill Birch felt that it would be good to reiterate our views about car parking and the liaison committee. In view of the current emphasis on localism , we expect to be treated in the same way. This was agreed. .

10. Beeston Festival Stall- Christine Thornton pointed out that she had booked a stall with a table and two chairs. She had the relevant documentation. John Cunningham volunteered to set up the stall whilst Robert Winfield would write a newsletter. It was noted that the festival, which would take place on Saturday 11th June would finish at 5p.m .

11. Beeston Village Community Centre- Robert Winfield noted that the committee had expressed its concerns about the fact that the steering committee, which assists in the running of the centre, had not met for some time. Robert Winfield emphasised the importance of users being consulted about the centre and being kept informed of meaningful developments. Robert Winfield also noted that the committee had put forward useful ideas about the running of the centre. Christine Thornton said that when Forum members had arrived for the last meeting of the Forum , dirty pots had been left in the sink by the group which had used the building beforehand. This had been reported.

12. It was agreed that Mark Parry be elected to serve as a member of the Committee.

13. The police.

13.1 Sgt Aldred gave details of crime figures for May in the area. The number of burglaries from dwellings was just one in May. He hoped that June would be just as good. There were 11 thefts from motor vehicles (including five involving registration plates, two of which were used in other crimes- for example, the plates were put on other vehicles). Sgt Aldred said that the police would find out if stolen plates are taken to a different part of the country. He added that it is possible to obtain tamper proof screws which prevent a number plate being removed without being broken. There had been two thefts of motor vehicles, seven other burglaries and seven instances of criminal damage compared to 17 in April.

13.2 Sgt Aldred spoke about metal thefts. Sgt Aldred referred to a recent Yorkshire Evening Post article featuring Sgt. Darren Chapman. It was noted that the police are working with waste traders about this matter. The police had spoken to everyone coming to a waste trader in Hunslet to check whether the metal which they are seeking to sell is stolen. £1200 in fines had been imposed on traders who were found to have no licence. However, no one had been apprehended for lead thefts which are sharply increasing. A member of the audience said that people are touring the area in vans , asking about scrap and even picking things up from gardens. Sgt. Aldred said that such people should be asked whether they hold the licence which is necessary to dispose of metal. He added that most

rag and bone merchants are legitimate ; however, if a trader looks suspicious, he probably is. Sgt. Aldred referred to a recent case in Beeston in which someone chased a metal thief off an estate. Nicola Watkis said that some metal had been taken from the porch of her house. Can this be stopped? Sgt Aldred said that householders can use razor wire, but are required to comply with a number of legal provisions relating to the height of the wire. It is also necessary to display warning signs. Sgt Aldred also noted that anti vandal paint, which can be obtained from leading retailers, can be used freely. Bill Birch referred to thefts of copper wire. He said that this should be obvious when the wire goes to the scrapyards, and asked why scrapyards are not asking where the wire has come from. Sgt. Aldred said that he had been in contact with scrap dealers. He noted that a shopping trolley costs around £240. Although metal prices are at an all time high, it is still likely that the scrap value of a trolley is considerably less than this. Sgt. Aldred said that only so many officers can be engaged on this operation, but added that some cars pull into a scrapyard, see the police and turn round. Bill Birch wondered whether such vehicles can be videoed. Sgt. Aldred noted that he can wear a headcam. A member of the audience asked what the reaction of traders is to this situation. Sgt. Aldred said that traders want to help and those who do not risk losing their licence. He suspected that sooner or later , someone will come in with lead.

13.3 Bill Birch wondered whether the police still target offenders. Sgt. Aldred said that the police still do this; the Intelligence Unit provides details of prolific offenders , who are visited twice a day. If they engage with the police, that is a good thing; for example, if an offender is on drugs the police would get treatment for the offender. If an offender is unwilling to engage , the police will be a pain and the offender would be likely to be a suspect when a crime is committed.

13.4 A member of the audience referred to a gang of youths ‘playing chicken’ on Cross Flatts Grove close to the junction with Theodore Street, engaging in activities such as circling around cars and ‘daring ‘ motorists. Sgt. Aldred said that if the police cannot identify a suspect, there is little they can do.

13.5 John Cunningham asked whether the dispersal order covering most of Beeston has been a success and whether it will be renewed. Sgt. Aldred said that the dispersal order, which had been very successful, ended six months ago as there was not enough evidence to support its maintenance.

13.6 A member of the audience said that a work colleague in Farnley had received a leaflet featuring the photograph of a person who is the subject of an ASBO. John Peckham wondered whether the photograph of a person who is the subject of an ASBO can be posted on the police website. Sgt. Aldred acknowledged that he is not familiar with the rules governing these issues , but felt that if a photograph can be published in a leaflet he could see no reason for barring publication on the website.

13.7 A member of the audience who walks to Leeds City Centre twice per week, using the subway under the motorway and New Princess Street. A few years ago, the subway had been vandalised, and money had been spent on a good job rectifying this. Now, the subway is worse, with vandalism, including the use of spray cans. Councillor Adam Ogilvie said that he had seen the graffiti , which he photographed and reported. Christine Thornton said that she had seen graffiti on seats in the MUGA in the park.

14. Any Other Business- Harry Booth House. John Hodgson said that he is concerned to have heard that Harry Booth House is under scrutiny. He had heard that it will stay open as a respite but not as an old people’s home. If this occurs, the Council will have closed three old peoples’ homes and two day centres in the area. He added that we need some provision for the elderly in the area. Christine Thornton pointed out that the Forum is seeking to get a guest speaker from Adult Social Care. Robert Winfield added that Councillor Keith Wakefield, the Leader of Leeds City Council, would be the guest speaker at the next Forum meeting