

LITTLE WOODHOUSE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Chair & Membership Secretary: Patrick Hall, 19 Moorland Avenue, LS6 1AP Tel 0113 244 9680; Minutes Secretary: Barbara Mitchell 13 Claremont Grove LS3 1AX

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2010/2011

Held at 7pm on 15 February 2012 at Swarthmore Centre, Woodhouse Square

1 Attendance

Patrick Hall (Chair), Cllr Gerry Harper, Richard Bojanowski, Sue Thomas, Gabrielle White, Richard Scott, Barbara Mitchell (Minutes), Norman Cairnduff, Bill McKinnon, Maggi Butterworth, Babette Dorton Scott, Calvin Daley, Jan Daley, Emma Hewitt, Jo Johnson, Mohammed Nawaz, Martin Blakey, Mrs Marjorie Pusey.

Apologies

Richard Hellawell, Garance Rawinsky, Deryck Piper, Mary Cunningham.

Patrick welcomed everyone to the nearly 20th AGM of LWCA, members and new faces and confirmed that it was acceptable to everyone for photographs to be taken. He introduced Martin Blakey Director of Unipol as speaker for tonight.

2 Martin Blakey, Director of Unipol – Developments in housing and planning

- Trends in student population

As the last year for lower fees, 2011/12 has been a record year for student numbers – more than 1200 additional applicants in Leeds. Numbers increased by 1.8%

The 2012 intake is 7.4% down in home applications, 11.2% down in European and 13.7% rise in international applicants. Leeds is important as international destination for students – they make up 20 – 25% of total students. Post graduate research is very important area for international students. The government restrictions on immigration targeting “bogus” could threaten this important market.

- Charging system for higher education

Government is driving competition among HEIs for funding for 65,000 AAB students. If this works may extend to 100,000 BB students. Some HEIs have a strategy of lower fees - together these are likely to squeeze middleranking universities. In Leeds the two universities each target different segments – one ‘higher-grade’ students, the other more locally based. Looks like this year 18 year olds are waiting to see if some courses will get lower fees.

LUU applicants are down 6% and LMU down 15.6% - more significantly, several courses have been scrapped e.g. HND and foundation degrees to FE colleges. Also fall in Joint Honours degrees.

- Will more students live at home?

Nobody knows at the moment.. Could be bad news for Leeds if more stay at home rather than choose Leeds.

- Student residences

Bodington Hall closes in 2013 (1100 rooms) and St marks Flats (down 498 rooms). New developments are expected to absorb these numbers. University planning is for reduced numbers in each accommodation.

Estimated surplus bed spaces across all types of accommodation: 2008/9 – 3066, 2010/11 – 4544 (peak), 2011/12 – 3544, 2012/13 – 4044, 2013/14 – 3395, 2014/15 – 3895.

There has been a shift from small properties into blocks. Vacancies tend to be in outer areas but Headingley and Hyde Park are still densely student housing.. Little Woodhouse has higher rent levels so may not have predominantly students but young professional renters instead. The area is usually marketed as “Belle Vue area” rather than known as Little Woodhouse. Data for identifying student-occupied housing is from Leeds council tax exempt households and licensed Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). (Some queried how complete this information is – there seem to be more rented properties than official maps suggest.)

- Article 4 Direction – effect on housing mix

Not yet known what policy LCC will apply to planning applicants for change from family residence to small HMO – what will be a mixed community and will there be different limits in different areas?

Currently 18513 student bedspaces in purpose built accommodation (41%) and 26437 in “off street”.

There is no evidence that student areas are worse on littering than other high density areas, nor that crime is higher bearing in mind crime in HMOs count as multiple crimes. The most burgled areas in Leeds are not student areas. There is no evidence of growth in student HMOs – there is enough choice already for demand.

The bigger question is first time buyers. Average age now 37 years. Deposit £60 - £70,000 required. So young people need to rent houses. Landlords are reducing density (eg from 5 perhouse to 3 or 4) but worried that they cannot increase it later (not so).

Unipol has commissioned review to look independently at rental demand and affordable renting – due to report April 2012.

- Role of Unipol

Accreditation code for landlords covers 17071 bedspaces out of the offstreet total of 28000. There are 400 code members. Residents can direct complaints about noise, rubbish etc and Unipol will look at ways of dealing with it.

There is no single landlord register and not enough resource to enforce against poor landlords who are not registered. For instance the legislation regulating cellar developments was first passed in 1848 – it still happens.

LCC can only do 60 – 100 enforcements against landlords per year.

On the other hand, licensed properties has made a difference.

The Chair thanked Martin on behalf of the meeting for a very pertinent and informative presentation and response to questions.

3 Minutes of 2011AGM and matters arising

The minutes of the AGM held 25 January 2011 were agreed as a true record – proposed Cllr Gerry Harper, seconded Maggi Butterworth. There were no matters arising.

4 Chair's Report

The Chair's report was introduced by Patrick Hall. The newsletter forms the basis for the annual report. **Project Little Woodhouse 2011** was funded by Leeds Community Foundation Grassroots Grant - a full programme of events was held including a historic walk, a workshop to develop ideas for the Bridge project, a commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Leeds, a Picnic in the Park in Hanover Square, the launch of the Neighbourhood Design Statement and a garden festival on the Rosebank. The Swarthmore Centre has been a very valuable source of resources and support for all activities – thanks to Maggi Butterworth and all at Swarthmore.

Special thanks were expressed to Freda Matthews who resigned as Chair and from the association last January. She had continued to play a major role in the events throughout the year and had also continued as Treasurer until the end of the year. The Neighbourhood Design Statement contains many interesting illustrations of local history contributed by Freda. Freda was also largely responsible for steering the process of the NDS to publication over the last three years. Many friends attended a surprise retirement party in March 2011 to express their thanks and appreciation for all her work for residents and the local area. A formal vote of thanks to Freda was proposed by Patrick Hall and seconded by Gerry Harper and passed unanimously. The community association also holds four Community Forums in January, April, July and October. All local residents are invited to attend the forum along with local councillors and officials from planning, housing, streetscene etc, representatives from the police, universities and landlords. The purpose of the forum is to exchange information, to raise issues of local concern and to help identify and coordinate ways to address problems. The next forum will be held on Tuesday 3 April at 7.00pm at the Civic Hall, to be chaired by Councillor Gerry Harper.

5 Financial Report

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2011 prepared by West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service were presented by Barbara Mitchell. Their review had not identified any matters of concern.

During the year LWCA received a total of £8110 in grants and £157 in subscriptions and sales: £4450 from Leeds Community Foundation Grassroots for events and £3660 from LCC INWAM for the NDS. Expenditure for the year totalled £11,638. The balance carried forward is £5521, including restricted funding of £768 and unrestricted funds of £4753.

Acceptance of the financial report was proposed by Gerry Harper and seconded by Richard Scott and agreed.

6 Election Of Committee 2011

Patrick Hall outlined the responsibilities of committee membership. The Community Forum meets four times a year at the Civic Hall and the committee meets once or twice between these dates. Also members take part in organising events such as Picnic in the Park, Light Night etc., liaison with planning officers, police and university reps. Nominations/volunteers are welcome to join.

The committee members elected were : Patrick Hall, Garance Rawinsky, Maggi Butterworth, Deryck Piper, Barbara Mitchell, Sue Thomas, Babette Dorton Scott,.

Also members ex officio are Councillor Gerry Harper and Emma Hewitt (LUU community rep) and Jo Johnson (LMU community rep). It was also agreed to check with Simon Jordan and Sylvester Johnson and approach St George's for a representative. **Action: PH and GR**

7 Membership report and subscriptions

Patrick Hall reported that the membership list has 31 paid up subscriptions. The subscription had been from January to December but will now be on a rolling basis. It was agreed subscriptions will remain at £3 for individuals £5 for student households £10 for businesses.

8 Meeting open for questions / AOB

Bill Mc Kinnon raised the issue of developments in student housing blocks along Burley Road. There will be a developers drop in meeting on 16 February at Swarthmore to show plans for the smaller YTV site. There were also two other developments at the bottom of Belle Vue Road planned for the furniture depository and Concept House though no formal applications yet. The problem is high rise blocks that tower over the residences higher up the hill. This goes against planning guidance from 2003 that levels should be gradually stepped. The number of large blocks unbalances the community mix and residential houses and flats are overlooked by many windows in the large blocks. Large groups returning late at night and music played loudly from many open windows are also problems. Bill McKinnon proposed sending a delegation to the next Inner West Area Committee to draw attention to these issues, seconded by Babette Dorton Scott and carried nem con.

Mohammed Nawaz raised the question of play areas – there are none nearer than Woodhouse Moor. This is a lack in the area for families with children.

He also said there is no bus route within the area, especially serving the Belle Vue Road. A signed petition was presented in October 2010 but Metro responded that there was insufficient demand to run a service. Jo Johnson said that when a LMU bus service to Headingley was cut they had approached Centre Bus (Gelderds) to see if they would run it. It might be worth another approach.