

Minutes of A660 Joint Council AGM and standard meeting Monday 20th Oct 2014 7.00pm at HEART

Attendance

Present: SB, TS, CF, DCJ, NS, PP, DW, MS, DF, GF, PM, JB

Apologies: MM, GR, RR, BM, TB, CR, MT, HP, EP, SS, GL

AGM

Officer Nominations

No new nominations at meeting or by email beforehand, all current officers happy to re-stand. These are: CF – Chair; BM – Vice Chair & Secretary; TB – Treasurer; DCJ – Secretary. CF proposed and TS seconded that current officers were re-elected. Everyone present agreed, no-one opposed. DW proposed a vote of thanks for the officers who have agreed to be elected again as the continuity will stand the group in good stead. DCJ & BM were thanked for producing comprehensive minutes, SS & NS were thanked for being at the inquiry so regularly and special thanks went to CR for all the audio work and blogging which everyone relied on so much.

Motions

None proposed by email or at meeting.

Officer Reports

Chair: Verbal report: Inquiry: TS was right, it would have been nice to have a referee saying "Stop the Fight now!" Objectors won a lot of the arguments. Business case shot down in flames which to many people was most important aspect to win. Promoters unable to win economic case and everything falls after this. Promoters must have thought their environmental statement flawed because they submitted another one well into the inquiry. The proposals are not in conformity with lots of planning policy. View, shared by many is that objectors won every round but that doesn't mean we'll win the inquiry. However, if Inspector's Report goes against everything that's happened the door is open for a Judicial Review. JR also possible if Inspector says no but Secretary of State says yes. First Bus would consider a JR. Comments: DCJ: Labour is still whipping. TS: Keith Wakefield says that if we pull out Leeds will never be given any money. DW: That's spin. Money from war chest can be asked for at any time. They're trying to get support from developers in South Leeds.

Treasurer: Report circulated at meeting showing incomings and outgoings. Cheque to DCRA contributing to heritage report still to be paid in. CF will have a bill for £70 for badges as agreed by officers. DCJ proposed motion to reimburse BM £500 spent on a legal opinion from the chambers of Francis Taylor Building about land appropriation, which concludes it was illegal. Seconded by SB. No-one against. Carried. CF moved to adopt the accounts. Seconded by MS. No one opposed.

Secretary: Have answered lots of emails and tried to help people communicate with each other.

Standard Meeting

Agreement of minutes

Minutes accepted as an accurate record of 8th September meeting.

Matters arising

Not been possible to meet to look at A660JC evidence and avoid duplication at inquiry. The closing statements are what people will remember but the communication about and deadlines for closing submissions has been unfair to objectors. St Columba's Lodge would become a traffic island if the scheme goes ahead. Tenants objected and will be giving evidence on Wednesday. They weren't consulted because correspondence went to landlords not tenants. Similarly, LN not in book of reference because she is a tenant, not owner. Numbers of receptors associated with St Columba's must be in thousands.

Inquiry

TS: Gets impression Inspector always asking questions which relate to possible other scheme. Raises question of whether £250m for this scheme alone or for another, possibly hybrids – which would not necessarily preclude damage. Holes knocked in all promoters' evidence. South Leeds opposing as well as North. Promoters deliberately proposing trolleybus stops in busy places whilst moving conventional bus stops to quieter places. One NGT rebuttal to trolleybus stops being further apart than bus stops says they've put extra seating in along the way! NS was attacked by Mr Walton who was trying to make out that he was biased.

Report from NS: Most objections had already come out during cross-examination of NGT's witnesses. Since the summer break NGT's Max Forni (Noise & Vibration), Kevin Leather (Additional Environmental Matters) and Richard Caten (Land & Property) have given evidence. Kevin Leather's evidence was pulled apart. Then came case for objectors. Around 30 witnesses been heard so far. Deborah Fahey gave a brilliant presentation about the Whitfields which we think the promoters had originally thought would not resist. Professor Todd spoke, followed by several objectors who would suffer land loss, as well as Emma Stewart who spoke very well about access. Various people have given short or longer presentations which have been significant. People have been coming at things from different angles and all has been relevant. Martin Fitzsimmons expressed concern about building on the Stourton site because of old mine workings and cost. NGT haven't carried out deep surveys. Claire Randall spoke on behalf of herself and others. Grahaeme Lauder criticised the business case. Sue Sleeman gave a short presentation about safety. Janet Matthews, a professional auditor criticised the financial case and said if she had to audit the scheme she wouldn't be able to because of a lack of info. Lorraine Nelis spoke about horses and land. George Geapin reckons NGT hasn't taken into account all the electrification work and finance involved. Mrs Phelps spoke about effects on her hair and beauty salon in Headingley. Nigel Sleeman, Doug Kemp and Michael Broadbent talked about road safety and traffic management. The scheme would get rid of right turning pockets meaning right turning traffic would block the road for other users. Lizzie Reather spoke for Leeds Cycling Campaign. David Alexander, Regional Director of FirstBus spoke. Mr Brooks spoke for FirstBus about the scheme not complying with many national planning guidelines. Doug Kemp represented NWLTF, West Park Residents Association and himself. Mr Cameron tried to emphasize a split between NWLTF and the A660JC in his cross-examination of Doug Kemp but didn't get anywhere. TS: Some of the points NGT lawyers are trying to make are so insignificant. NS: Don't think they want to go into significant things. Professor Bonsall has demolished their technical case. Geoff Fawcett spoke for the Adel & Wharfedale Labour Party. Mike Holmes spoke for Highfield Surgery, Holt Park. Cathryn Shuttleworth, governor at Richmond House School spoke about the blocking of Weetwood Lane which would prevent people getting to a car park that they've just put in. Cllrs Barry Anderson and Jonathan Bentley gave presentations. Cllr Anderson highlighted problems with political machinations. Geoff Steel spoke for Adel Association and John Dickinson for Weetwood Residents Association. During Heritage Week someone spoke on behalf of Headingley Castle, Stuart Natkus represented a few groups, Dawn Carey Jones and Sue Buckle spoke for South Headingley Community Association, Tony Ray for NWLTF, Helen Pickering for Drummond and Churchwood Residents Association and Katy Lightbody for FirstBus. There was also a round table discussion about planning conditions and there will be another session this week. Lots of people said these conditions should have been included in NGT's original evidence. SB: When SHCA gave evidence we spoke about tenants of the shops proposed to be demolished at

Hyde Park Corner who'd emailed objections to DCJ. They really value their premises and customers which belies the promoters' claim that people don't want the shops. DW: The scheme isn't meant to be for the benefit of people living along the route but for commuters at our expense. NS: Doug Kemp made the point that felling trees alters the character of our area, as does the planting of trees along the open spaces of Otley Old Road. Also, problems with consultation seem to be now hitting home with the Inspector who has leaflets and plans from 2009 in front of him and sees that they're meaningless considering what the current plans are and NGT's reliance on 2009 consultation results is meaningless. NGT's web site still says the scheme will be congestion busting. The figure of 4,000 new jobs from the scheme seems to have come from the promoters' erroneous modelling. The model they're using to get economic growth works well on a large area but DfT commented that it's unlikely to be accurate in a confined location and could be predicting too little or too much growth.

Site Visits

The site visit which included the Whitfields was going to be this Thursday but the programme officer has now said it won't be this week. This is a problem for DF as she is on holiday next week. Also, when the site visit happens it looks like there will only be fifteen minutes for the Inspector to look at St Joseph's, the Penny Hill Centre, the Whitfields and the Garden Gate pub. The programme officer asked DF if she needed to be present and she said yes. CF will speak to Inspector Whitehead tomorrow to make sure the site visit happens when DF can be present.

Publicity

At Headingley Market CF gave out all the leaflets about inquiry. There was only one person who he chatted to who was in favour of scheme and that was because she thought it was going to reduce congestion. JB: Some people still don't know about the scheme. DW: Survey feedback is going to be released in the YEP. Stuart Long has made a FOI for cost of inquiry and scheme so far. CF: Hope the media will show up on final day. Might be a good idea to have people with placards outside the venue. Need to set a date. 31st October? 9.30am til 9.30am? DF: We got in trouble from building management for holding up a banner outside the inquiry venue. CF: Maybe stand across the road then. SB: Should we print some more flyers? DCJ: I'll print some and give them to SB.

Collection

A collection was taken which amounted to £50.

AOB

NS: Forgot to say that when Claire Randall was presenting evidence she wanted to include two video clips of the Lewises, having told the inquiry about this months ago and supplying a DVD. When it came to her presentation they said they didn't have the technology! CR persisted and it has been promised they will be played.

Date of Next Meeting

Monday 24th November if room available.