

# Minutes of A660 Joint Council, Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016, 7.30pm at HEART

**Attendance Present:** BM, SB, TS, PL, IL, CH, NF, JB, PM, LB, MS **Apologies:** DCJ, DF, JF, NS, SS, CF, TB, LN, CP, GL, CT, MM, GR, RR

**Agreement of minutes** Minutes accepted as an accurate record of 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016 meeting.

## **Treasurer's Report and Collection**

The report was postponed as NS was not present. No collection was taken to mark trolleybus campaign victory. NS can report on where things stand regarding our decision to change the bank account when he next attends.

## **Matters arising**

BM said a decision (as yet unpublished) has been made on his complaint to the BBC about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov Look North trolleybus report.

## **Trolleybus Decision**

IL said the inspector's report states neither the council nor Metro can appeal. But they could ask for a judicial review if there are grounds. BM said Liverpool threatened legal action in 1999 following rejection of its trolleybus application, but never followed through. Key factors in the victory included CR recording everything. PL said it was a victory for common sense. CH thanked the committee and CR. IL said the report listed many things which weren't viable. CH said when the report came out there were lots of comments on social media about how the decision was such common sense. JB said it was a big mistake proposing awful things for the areas the route passed through. BM said they didn't realise they needed ordinary people's support. CH said there's still a problem of some Headingley residents being accused of nimbyism. BM quoted CR who in response to charges of nimbyism asks, "How can we ask people to stop cutting down the rainforest if we don't prevent trees in our own backyard being cut down?" SB thanked BM for his work. BM said that FOWM began as a result of a council plan to build a car park on Monument Moor. The plan was the brainchild of council officer Denise Preston. The trolleybus would have run across Monument Moor and also created a car park on it. The trolleybus was pursued by the head of Metro, Kieran Preston, who was Denise Preston's husband. Was the trolleybus running across Monument Moor a case of unfinished business for the Prestons?

## **Post Trolleybus Strategy**

BM said the trolleybus decision was announced on the 12th May. We subsequently learnt that NWLTF were seeking a meeting with Cllr Judith Blake to persuade her to adopt the Bonsall plan. NWLTF are saying their proposal was well received at three consultation events held last year. In fact, it was well received only at St Chad's - in Far Headingley where most of the plan's proponents live. The reception to the plan at the Headingley consultation event was hostile and at the Hyde Park event, indifferent. NWLTF are also meeting Cllr Richard Lewis to discuss their plan with him.

## **Transport Summit**

CF will attend the transport summit called by Cllr Judith Blake on behalf of the A660 Joint Council. CF has said we need to decide before the summit if there are positive aspects of the NWLTF alternative we can support. BM read the motion we passed on 30 March 2015 setting out our opposition to the Bonsall plan. Under the plan, all parts of the A660 would suffer damage apart from West Park and Weetwood. Two transport experts have said that the primary beneficiaries of the plan would be motorists as they represent 90% of the traffic passing through junctions. BM proposed asking CF to present a statement of our own to the summit. We then composed the following statement:

*"The A660 Joint Council welcomes the Secretary of State's decision to reject the trolleybus for the multiple reasons outlined in his Inspector's report. We welcome that the Inspector and Secretary of State placed more weight on heritage, trees and open space than did Metro or the Council. We ask the Council to reject major infrastructure projects, apart from an underground, as unsuitable for the A660. We ask the Council to reject the proposals of the misleadingly named NWLTF, a small group within the much larger area of North West Leeds whose destructive old fashioned scheme allegedly designed to improve public transport along the A660 would actually increase car use and degrade the inner city environment and public health of areas like Headingley and Hyde Park and Woodhouse. The A660 Joint Council strongly opposes the NWLTF proposals. However we are not opposed to proposals such as the Marchant Plan which are based on the hierarchy of road users."*

NF said Cllr Jonathan Pryor has told her the NWLTF alternative won't go ahead. He'd like to meet groups. NF suggested inviting councillors to our next meeting. TS said he was delighted that Cllr Pryor had said that and agreed councillors should be invited to attend our next meeting. The strength of the A660 Joint Council is that we're from all along the route. TS said that Professor Bonsall's proposals would help cars get to the city centre to the detriment of all areas except West Park and Weetwood e.g. floodlighting of pitches and a car park on playing fields at Bodington. BM said the NWLTF scheme includes elements of the trolleybus proposal. IL asked if NWLTF is trying to cherry pick what they want. BM said that a Weetwood Residents document he'd seen online about 4 years ago showed they want a park and ride at Bodington to stop commuters parking outside their houses in Weetwood. If it becomes easier for people to drive to car parks in town, there'll be even less parking outside their houses. In 2012, they initially held back from joining the A660 Joint Council until they knew whether the trolleybus would run in front or behind the Andale Centre. They only joined us when they learned it would run behind as they'd have preferred a Headingley Bypass for cars as it would have provided a faster drive into town. In Autumn 2012, one of them composed an introduction for the A660 Joint Council website which stated that the A660 Joint Council had been founded in the 1920s to improve traffic flow when it was actually founded in 1973 to oppose the Headingley Bypass. PM said Weetwood and West Park Residents Associations want a return to Motorway City of the 70s. Maximising car flow would encourage more car use. It's antediluvian. NF said it's not forward thinking. So many bad mistakes and now they want to make another. A new road would lead to more car use.

**Date of Next Meeting** 4<sup>th</sup> July