

To all Boscombe Area Forum members and Ben Prescott

Florence Road

May 13th 2008

Dear friends and colleagues

It is with some sadness that I write this, but I have given the matter a great deal of consideration and I have come to a decision which I know is right for me and which I will not be persuaded to re-consider.

With immediate effect, I am stepping down as Chair and committee member of the Area Forum. As you know, I took up the role with some reservations when my name was put forward, and these have proved to be the case. Obviously this means that I will no longer carry out any of the duties associated with this role.

I am resigning for the following reasons (in the order of most importance):

- i) I need to pay attention to my work / life balance. I have many other commitments, my job, my family, my other charitable and voluntary work. The forum takes up a huge amount of time, which I am simply not able to devote to it, and in addition, I do think there is an issue around lack of support for this role, which needs to be addressed if the forums are to thrive.
- ii) I have come to the conclusion that perhaps I am not the best person to act as Chair and it need someone with a different set of skills to which I possess. I am finding it increasingly stressful to deal with a variety of local “characters” and issues in a positive manner and this is having an effect on my personal well-being.
- iii) I am increasingly disaffected by local politics (of all persuasions) and dubious (and a little cynical) about the role and purpose of the forums. Are they simply a convenient mechanism for the local authority to control community consultation or a “bottom up” forum where the community can really have its voice heard? I am not sure. I know the council are reviewing the forums and perhaps this will address this. I also have some concerns about the long term sustainability of many of the initiatives set up under NM in Boscombe and issues of accountability and openness in general

There are a few practical issues that I suggest are addressed in the following manner

- i) I suggest the June meeting is postponed in order to plan for change
- ii) As Steve ran for the role of Chair against me at the last AGM, perhaps he should take on the role for the rest of the year – maybe it is something you should discuss amongst yourselves?
- iii) The July meeting already has two speakers booked, one from Bournemouth council re S106 money and one from the PCT to talk about new health provision in Boscombe. I will ensure all arrangements are made for this meeting and they turn up!
- iv) The August meeting is an open agenda
- v) I will try to get to the AGM in September to talk / report about my time as Chair of the forum (but only if you want me to of course!)
- vi) I will let Tejinder know of my decision .

I am really sorry to do this to you but I believe it is for the best

I wish you all every success as individuals and for the forum, I hope we can stay in touch and I will try to support the forum in the future as I really believe Boscombe is full of great people, diversity and possibilities to be even better in the future.

My best wishes

Kathie (Pearce)