

On 20th November there was a meeting of the County Council, at which a motion was proposed that the Council agree to recognise its duty to protect services, and to transfer from reserves (where necessary) funds required to achieve seven disparate objectives, including

- c) Ensure that the Middle Street Resource Centre in Beeston remains open for community use.

This composite motion was defeated, and since then we (BCR) have been contacted by concerned local people who had gained the impression that the effect of the vote was that the Council had decided not to save Middle Street.

We wish therefore to assure our readers that the present position relating to the future of the Middle Street Centre is as stated on the front page of this newsletter. Our local County Council member, Cllr Kate Foale, is a staunch supporter of our enterprise, and we have her permission to quote from her speech to the meeting on 20th November, as follows:

Thank you for including in this motion the proposal - To ensure the Middle Street Resource centre in Beeston remains open for community use - because this gives me the opportunity to bring you up to date on the work I've been doing with officers and members try to achieve just that, not to deliver a council run service, but one for local people, designed and driven by local people that can meet the needs of local people now and in the future. This is in the true spirit of 'redefining your council', we are doing our very best to support them to make it work and want to continue to do so.

Last month the newly established steering group and their partners ran an excellent open day to showcase the different activities going on at the centre which actually has never closed. Central college were there who run courses, music and stained glass classes were going on, there is a thriving gardening group as well as a new memory café for those with dementia. All the evidence suggests that more groups are interested in using the centre.

To that end we have made an offer to the new user led steering group at their request to give them the opportunity to run the centre. It is early days, but we are working with them to try to enable them to provide a sustainable future for the centre as a community resource to meet the needs of the local community both now and in the future.

Whilst nothing is yet settled and we must not relax in our efforts until we have secured a firm commitment from the Council to allow us to manage the Centre, it is comforting to know that there appears to be a consensus at County Hall, across the whole political spectrum, that Middle Street Resource Centre should indeed remain open for community use.