

NEW FRANKLEY IN BIRMINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the New Frankley in Birmingham Parish Council held at St Christopher's Church Centre, Holly Hill, Frankley on Monday, 20 November 2006 at 1930 hours.

Present

Councillor Gareth Griffiths (in the Chair)

Councillors Linda Banks, Ian Bruckshaw, Eric Carter, Sid Grey MBE, Bill Hollis, Len Lovett, Geoffrey Stephenson and Joanna Walker

Also in Attendance Ruth Bowles, Local Housing Manager, Housing Department, Birmingham City Council
Jason Radford, Operations Manager, Frankley Action Resolve
Suzanne Roberts, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator, Frankley Action Resolve

There were 2 Members of the Public in attendance.

MINUTES

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Michael Denny (Illness), Stephen Trefor-Jones (Illness) and Geoff Williams (Holiday).

MINUTES

The Clerk pointed out that, in error, Councillor Denny's name had been included twice in the list of those Councillors present at the last meeting while Councillor Trefor-Jones' name had been omitted from the list.

It was, subject to the necessary corrections referred to above, proposed by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Hollis, and -

- 1432 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 October 2006, having previously been circulated, were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

QUESTIONS

There were none.

FRANKLEY ACTION RESOLVE

1433 Suzanne Roberts, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator, Frankley Action Resolve, explained that following the Neighbourhood Caretaking Scheme which was successfully piloted during 2005, the Frankley Action Resolve project was initiated at the beginning of 2006. The project was based at Arden Road and part of her duties was to liaise with all the service providers. The major concerns to be addressed were the environmental problems which had an adverse effect on the appearance of the neighbourhood and which the project was attempting to tackle. Since the start of the project in January 2006 the project had -

- removed over 300 tonnes of rubbish from the neighbourhood;
- received and investigated over 2500 neighbourhood issues from residents;
- established the Environmental Watch Group, comprising volunteers, which had grown from 30 to over 160 members;
- held at least 6 community clear up days;
- worked with other agencies on areas with particular problems;
- provided over 500 free door/window alarms to residents;
- held a best kept garden competition;
- built and fitted bird boxes with local school children;
- recruited and begun the training of nine local apprentices aged from 17 to 20;
- initiated an Annual Visit pilot scheme for tenants.

Ms Roberts paid tribute to the co-operation of the Parish Council without which the initial pilot scheme would not have started. Additionally, the success of the current project was based on the partnership approach involving the Parish Council, the Fire and Police Services together with the various departments of the City Council. With regard to the Police, it was hoped that the beat officers would be using one of the offices above the shops in Holly Hill as a base by the beginning of the next financial year.

Jason Radford, Operations Manager, FAR, reported that significant progress had been made on Frankley during the past 22 months. He and his colleagues were proud of the improvements they had made and he hoped that the value service would be rolled out into other areas of the City.

Commenting on the Apprentice Scheme, Mr Radford reported that the 9

apprentices, all of whom lived in the local area, were attending college as well as working in the neighbourhood with the experienced workers. The change in their attitude was very noticeable as when they first joined they appeared to accept that graffiti and fly tipped rubbish were part of the scenery whereas after a few months of involvement with the project they were reporting rubbish/graffiti and taking a pride in their environment.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Radford indicated that the Project Management were looking into the possibility of offering a garden service to those residents who were unable, for whatever reason, to manage their own gardens. Additionally, he would investigate the possibility of providing a garden service to new tenants who had moved into properties with overgrown gardens. With regard to the problem of the caretakers undertaking work which was the responsibility of other City Council Departments under Service Level Agreements, he admitted that on occasions, the caretakers did undertake such work but that he considered that the Project had a responsibility to ensure that outstanding work was completed and that on occasions that meant doing work that another departments were being paid for. He accepted that it wasn't the correct way of doing things but often was the only way of ensuring the work was carried.

Councillor Carter, on behalf of the Council expressed thanks to all members of the project and expressed the hope that it continued.

TENANCY ALLOCATIONS – TEENAGERS

- 1434 Ruth Bowles, Local Area Housing Manager, Northfield Constituency, explained her role in connection with the provision of housing services within the Northfield Constituency.

Regarding her role in relation to Anti Social Behaviour, Councillor Grey questioned whether she would consider a constant stream of visitors to a tenant at all hours of the day or night to constitute Anti Social Behaviour. Additionally, he queried whether the police advised the housing department when they visited a property. Ms Bowles advised that the police only advised the Housing Department of such visits when they were in connection with criminal activity which was in contravention of the tenancy agreement. If the police attended for non-criminal activities, they would not normally advise the Housing Department.

Councillor Grey stated that there were a number of flats across Frankley occupied by young men whose behaviour was causing problems to the surrounding residents. When he spoke to the Tenancy Support Officer concerning a young man living in a flat in his neighbourhood, he was advised that the officer had made three attempts to see young man – all of which were unsuccessful. Councillor Grey suggested that it ought to be a condition of tenancy that during a tenant's probationary period, there should be a specified number of successful visits by the Tenancy Support Officer. While he accepted that there were circumstances where these young men had to be housed but he considered housing should bear in mind when allocation the properties the likelihood of the problem caused to neighbours. He was concerned that young men were not natural homemakers and required support.

In response Ms Bowles advised that providing the young men met the criteria, they were allocated properties in the area once they were the highest case. Although the Housing Department offered support to such tenants, unfortunately in most cases it was not accepted and the tenancy conditions did not require the tenant to accept it.

Councillor Grey reiterated his concern with regard to the effect of these young tenants on the established neighbourhood and felt that there was a need to incorporate a requirement to accept the services of the Tenancy Support Officer during the probationary period of the tenancy agreement – if the services were not accepted without good reason in the probation period then that should be grounds for eviction.

It was agreed to arrange a special meeting between all the appropriate Housing Officers and Members of the Parish Council to discuss the problems as soon as possible.

REPORTS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Neighbourhood Forum

- 1435 Councillor Bruckshaw advised that there would be a meeting of the Management Committee of the Forum and Officers of the Birmingham Association of Neighbourhood Forums at the parish office on Tuesday 5 December 2006 at 7.30pm to discuss the annual grant paid to the Forum.

Frankley Police Liaison Committee

- 1436 Councillor Bruckshaw referred to the free door/window alarms mentioned during Ms Roberts' presentation and felt that the offer should have been publicised at the recent Police Liaison meeting.

City Council Standards Committee

- 1437 The Chairman reported that at a recent meeting of the City Council's Standard Committee, Members had been advised that a new Code of Conduct for Members would shortly be introduced. Amongst the changes proposed would be changes as to how declarations of interests made at meetings were dealt with – in certain circumstances Members having a prejudicial interest but no pecuniary advantage would be permitted to take part in the discussion but have to leave the meeting when the vote was taken.

COMMUNICATIONS

A Grass Cutting – Frankley

- 1438 The following response from Mr Tim Oakes, Operations Manager, Birmingham Parks and Nurseries was noted –

(Interleaved document no. 1)

B Ormond Road, Frankley

- 1439 The following letter from Inspector Mayhew explaining the various categories of accident statistics was noted -

(Interleaved document no. 2)

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENTAL, HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

- 1440 The following Minutes of the meeting of the Planning, Environmental, Highways and Public Transport Committee together with the Council's response to the Longbridge Area Action Plan were noted –

(Interleaved document no. 3)

Hereon, Councillor Grey submitted a copy of an email received from the local MP, Richard Burden, in which Mr Burden appeared to support the option of the high speed bus service rather than the extension of the Cross City Line. It was of concern to Councillor Grey that Mr Burden was supporting the bus option even before the options for development of the Rover site had been determined.

(Interleaved document no. 4)

BUDGET 2007/2008

The following report of the Clerk was submitted –

(Interleaved document no. 5)

Following a brief explanatory introduction from the Clerk it was proposed by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Lovett and

- 1441 **RESOLVED:** That the budgeted expenditure for the 2007/2008 Financial Year of £72,329 funded by a precept of £71,679 and £650 other income be approved and that, accordingly, a precept of £71,679 be issued to Birmingham City Council as the Billing Authority.

PLANNING APPLICATION

There were none.

DECISIONS MADE ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

S/05560/06/NOT

**Installation of 10 metre streetworks monopole mast with three antennae housed within plastic shroud and equipment cabinets
Holly Hill Road, Land adjacent to playing fields, Frankley B45**

- 1442 Members were advised that the above mentioned application had been refused for the reasons set out in the attached document –

(Interleaved document no 6)

FRANKLEY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

1443 The following briefing note relating the development was noted –

(Interleaved document no. 7)

CROSS CITY LINE EXTENSION

There was nothing to report.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

The Local Government White Paper

1444 The following summary of the main points of the recently published Government White Paper prepared by NALC was submitted for Members' information.

(Interleaved Document no. 8)

PAYMENTS

(i) Business Visa Credit Card

The following Business Visa Credit Card Statement was submitted -

(Interleaved document no. 9)

It was proposed by Councillor Grey, seconded by Councillor Joanna Walker, and –

1445 RESOLVED: That the VISA Credit Card Statement, as now submitted, be approved.

(ii) Schedule of Payments

The following Schedule of Payments was submitted -

(Interleaved document no 10)

It was proposed by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Hollis, and –

1446 RESOLVED: That the payments, as set out in the Schedule now submitted, be approved.

LOCAL ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

At 2039 hours, the meeting adjourned to enable the Members of the Public to raise issues of concern.

There being no issues to be raised by the public, the meeting was reconvened at 2039 hours

The meeting ended at 2039 hours

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Chairperson