

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, 17 December 2007 at 1930 hours.

Present

Councillor Gareth Griffiths (In the Chair)

Councillors Linda Banks, Ian Bruckshaw, Eric Carter, Sid Grey MBE, Bill Hollis, Len Lovett, Des Rogers, Geoff Stephenson, Stephen Trefor-Jones, Joanna Walker and Geoff Williams

Also in Attendance Councillors Sue and Keith Barton (Ward Councillors)

PUBLIC MINUTES

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

MINUTES

- 1665 The Minutes of that part of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 15 October 2007 held in Public were noted.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1666 The Chairperson announced that the Parish Office would be closed for the Christmas break from Friday, 21st December to Tuesday, 2nd January.

QUESTIONS

There were none.

COMMUNICATION

Frankley Health Centre

The following letter from Ms Symons, Director of Commissioning and Strategy, South Birmingham PCT was submitted –

(interleaved document no. 1)

- 1667 Councillor Rogers felt that unless action was taken to provide the medical services required by the community, the numbers of patients registered at the Centre would continue to drop leading, possibly, to a situation where the continued viability of the Centre would be threatened. Councillor Trefor-Jones felt that one of the reasons for the decrease in patient numbers was the 'couldn't care attitude' of some of the staff. He agreed that the reduction in the number of patients registered at the Centre was of concern particularly as surgeries in the surrounding area appeared to be at operating at capacity.

Following some further discussion it was agreed to invite Ms Symons to a future meeting of the Council to respond to the Council's concerns regarding the Frankley Health Centre.

REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH MEMBERS BELONG

Longbridge Regeneration Consultative Group

- 1668 Councillor Carter reported that at the meeting of the above Consultative Group, the Group were advised that the Draft Area Action Plan would be submitted to Cabinet for approval in January prior to its submission to the Secretary of State. With regard the heavy rail link to Frankley, it appeared that no decision had been made as yet regarding its possible reinstatement. However, given the actions of the developer in removing part of the track adjacent to the former West Works it was felt that reinstatement was unlikely. In this regard, Councillor Corns had indicated that the City had prevaricated on the reinstatement question for far too long and had demanded that a decision be made and communicated to the Consultative Group at its next meeting.

With regard to the transport proposals, it was still being proposed that Frankley be linked with Longbridge by a direct bus service using the former Rover Road although no work appeared to have been undertaken on the type of bus to be used.

Councillor Trefor-Jones felt that proposals for Park and Ride service should still be considered with a bus service linking up with Longbridge Station although in his opinion the current bus services not suitable in that they did not cater for disabled passengers in wheelchairs or mothers with buggies. He added that, environmentally, the rail link was the best option due its low carbon footprint and accordingly, he urged that the Council continue to fight for the reinstatement of the heavy rail link.

Councillor Grey felt that the fundamental problem was that the City had been working on the AAP for Longbridge for the past three years but with little progress. He suggested that the Parish Council write to the Secretary of State demanding a Public Enquiry into the reasons for the delays. With regard to the reinstatement of the railway, he understood that, when completed, the former MG Rover site would generate approximately 20,000 vehicle movements per day into and out of Longbridge but by agreeing to the reinstatement of the railway, the carbon footprint arising from those movements would be spread over a wider area. However, it appeared that the developer had said that they

do not want the railway and the City Council was sitting on the fence putting off making a decision. He added that the AAP should have been ready for submission to the Secretary of State almost twelve months ago but that the City still had to agree to the Draft.

Payment of Grant

- 1669 Councillor Bruckshaw reported that the City Council had just paid the grant for the Neighbourhood News which had been approved by the Ward Committee last May.

FRANKLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD CARETAKERS

- 1670 The Chairperson reported that Tracey Radford had recently approached him regarding the future funding of the Caretakers. Due to the change in the priorities of Government funding, the District was having to re-examine the provision of the service and was requesting that the Parish Council consider funding a Caretaker specifically for Frankley with support services provided by the District at a cost of £22K per year. Whilst the Chairperson agreed in principal to the request he stated before approval was given the District would have to provide certain assurances regarding the service.

Councillor Trefor-Jones disagreed with the request for the funding stating that the District had know for some time of this change to funding but had not prepared an exit strategy. Additionally, he questioned why the District could not use the funding from the unused accommodation on Frankley (The former Neighbourhood Office on Arden Road Shopping Parade and the accommodation in the Library foyer). He considered therefore that, as it appeared that the District had not identified potential sources of saving, the Parish Council should not pay the funding requested.

Councillor Grey felt that there was a need to examine the benefits of the Caretaker scheme on Frankley in order to justify the expenditure to residents. He therefore suggested that Ms Radford be invited to the next meeting in order to present the accounts of the scheme so that the Council could determine whether or not it was getting value for money.

It was therefore agreed that Ms Radford be invited to the next Council meeting to account for the funding the Caretakers already receive and to clarify the reasons for the request of £22k for the next financial year.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were none.

DECISIONS MADE ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were none

FRANKLEY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

- 1671 The Clerk advised that at the last meeting he had reported that Birmingham

Property Services would be taking a report to Cabinet on 20th December recommending the appointment of a preferred developer to undertake the regeneration of the Frankley Centre. Unfortunately, he had now been advised there had been a delay in the preparation of the report by Grimleys, the Agent appointed by the City Council, and accordingly, the Cabinet report would be delayed and would now be submitted to the January meeting of Cabinet.

Additionally, Members were informed that Councillor Neville Summerfield, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, had expressed a wish to visit Frankley to view the potential development area. That meeting had been arranged and would be attended, in addition to Councillor Summerfield, by Councillors Sue and Keith Barton and Judith Parry-Evans and Kathryn James. The meeting would be held at 1030 hours on Tuesday 15 January and was open to all Members of the Council.

In response to a question from Councillor Grey, the Clerk advised that as far as he was aware, there were no proposals for consultation prior to the Cabinet decision but that consultation would take place with the community following the decision to appoint the preferred developer.

With regard to the lease of the land adjacent to the WMSNT site, Councillor Rogers reported that the City had offered a lease on the land for 9 months with a 40% increase in the rental as well as costing £2000 in solicitors fees.

TRANSPORT ISSUES

There were none.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Closed off Access – Car Park – Coldstream Public House

- 1672 Councillor Linda Banks questioned why the wall between the Coldstream car park and the adjacent pathway had been blocked off which had effectively blocked off wheelchair access to the pub.

Councillor Griffiths advised that the City Council had told the pub to close off prevent vehicles driving through.

PAYMENTS

(i) Business Visa Credit Card

The following Business Visa Credit Card Statement was submitted -

(Interleaved document no. 2)

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

- 1673 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. 3)

It was proposed by Councillor Trefor-Jones, seconded by Councillor Lovett, and -

- 1674 RESOLVED: That the payments, as set out in the Schedule now submitted, be approved.

LOCAL ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

At 2019 hours, it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to enable the Members of the Public to raise issues of concern.

Traffic Calming – Ormond Road

Councillor Barton reported that £120,000 had been released by the District Engineer for the traffic calming scheme on Ormond Road and that the plans would go out to consultation in due course.

Longbridge Area Action Plan

Councillor Barton advised that the four ward councillors at the Consultative meeting referred to earlier in the meeting had received a briefing on the draft plan but as it had to remain confidential until reported to the City Council, he was unable to give any details.

He stated that the Area Action Plan was a new planning procedure introduced by the then Secretary of State, John Prescott which was supposed to streamline the planning process for major developments such as the former MGRover site. However, as it was a new process, the City Council was on a learning curve, although he could now report that the document had been signed off by Councillor Summerfield and would be presented to full Council in January. As one of the Ward Councillors for Frankley he offered offer to make any representations to the full Council as the Parish Council may wish.

Regarding a decision on the reinstatement of the rail link, having spoken to CENTRO, he had been led to believe that the only justification for its approval would be if the scheme could provide a 1000 park and ride facility to serve North Worcestershire – otherwise it would not be viable.

Caretaking Scheme

Councillor Barton reported that in order to meet the Council's 'Gershon Efficiency Savings' 2008/2009 targets in the Northfield District, the District was required to find savings of £220,000. Officers were striving to identify areas of savings without having to cut frontline services.

Frankley Centre Regeneration

Councillor Barton confirmed that consultations on the preferred options for the redevelopment proposals would be undertaken once the preferred developer had been appointed.

Lease of Land for Car Parking

Councillor Barton indicated that the site had only been leased 9 months in the first instance because of the proposed development work at the Centre. He gave an assurance that a new lease would be offered to WMSNT once the development details were known.

There being no issues to be raised by the public, Standing Orders were reinstated at 2028 hours

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

- 1675 RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, which includes the following exempted information, it is advisable in the public interest, that the press and the public be temporarily excluded from the meeting and they are therefore instructed to withdraw.

Agenda Item	Exempt Information
Private Minutes of the last meeting of the Council	Confidential Information relating to an employee of the Council

PRIVATE MINUTES

MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Grey, seconded by Councillor Bruckshaw, and

- 1676 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of that part of the meeting held in Private on 19 November 2007, together with the Minutes of the Public part submitted earlier in the meeting, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and confirmed and signed.

The meeting ended at 2029 hours.

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Chairperson