

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, 17th November 2008 at 1930 hours.

Present

Councillor Sid Grey MBE (in the Chair)

Councillors Linda Banks, Ian Bruckshaw, Eric Carter, Gareth Griffiths, Bill Hollis, Len Lovett, Geoff Stephenson, Stephen Trefor-Jones, Des Rogers and Joanna Walker

Also in Attendance Two members of the public

MINUTES

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

1886 An apology for absence was submitted and accepted on behalf of Councillor Karan Bolton (Illness).

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (EXISTENCE AND NATURE) WITH REGARD TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No member of the Public wished to speak on any Agenda item.

MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Lovett, and -

1887 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 20th October 2008, having previously been circulated, were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Road Traffic Accident – Holly Hill Road

- 1888 The Chairperson referred to the tragic accident on Holly Hill Road the previous Friday evening which had resulted in the death of an 8 year old boy. On behalf of the Parish Council he expressed the Council's condolences to the parents. However, he felt that until the results of the Police investigation into the accident were known, the Parish Council should not comment further.

QUESTIONS

There were no questions

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, ENVIRONMENTAL, HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

- 1889 The following Minutes of the meeting of the Planning, Environmental, Highways and Public Transport Committee held on 4th November 2008 were noted –

(Interleaved document no. 1)

REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH MEMBERS BELONG

Birmingham Standards Board

- 1890 Councillor Griffiths reported that he had attended a meeting of the City's Standards Committee on 28th October. However, because of the confidential nature of the matters considered he could give members no details of the business transacted.

Removal of brick wall in Wide Acres

- 1891 Councillor Hollis reported that the HLB had approved expenditure of £1,000 to remove the brick built island in Wide Acres.

Alleyway at rear of Fabian Close

- 1892 Councillor Hollis stated that arrangements had been made for the Neighbourhood Caretakers to clean the alleyway at the rear of the bungalows in Fabian Close. Additionally, once the alleyway had been cleared, security gates would be fitted.

All Out Day

- 1893 Councillor Trefor-Jones reported that on Friday 14th November, the Frankley Good Neighbour Scheme, which had been set up following the recent Frankley Summit, had arranged for members of the Police, the Fire Service, the City Council, CENTRO and the Bournbrook Community Safety Team to undertake safety work in the community as well as cleaning up areas as part of the Frankley Good Neighbour Scheme. During the day,

working in the Prospero Close, Tatania Close, Oberon, Close, Lysander Road and Miranda Close area, the Fire Service had fitted 60 smoke alarms, including several alarms for the hearing impaired; BCST carried out a survey of potentially vulnerable properties for target hardening; the Caretaking Team had removed one and a half tons of rubbish removed as well as removing graffiti. A Police van was parked outside the Holly Hill shopping parade distributing Crime Prevention Advice. Additionally, Glen Smith, Senior Constituency Engineer was on hand to talk about the proposed Frankley Signage and the Traffic Calming proposals for Ormond Road.

On behalf of the Good Neighbour Scheme Councillor Trefor-Jones thanked everyone involved for their efforts.

Resilience Team

- 1894 Councillor Bruckshaw reported that, as a member of the Forum, he had recently attended a meeting organised by the City's Resilience Team for Forum members. The Team dealt with all emergencies not just flooding. The Clerk had subsequently contacted Jan Quigley, a member of the Team, and had obtained telephone numbers which could be used in the event of emergencies in order to obtain the necessary assistance including access to the Emergency Services. Although the arrangements were in their early stages it was City wide involving all the Forum groups across the City.

Councillor Grey confirmed that Jan Quigley, a member of the Team, had provided personal contact numbers should an emergency occur whilst the structure was being set up. The Chairperson felt that the Forum and the Parish Council needed to work together and to form an Emergency Team on Frankley which could react proactively by anticipating situations before they become emergencies where-ever possible. The Emergency Team would access equipment stored at the parish office, assist in the relocation of residents affected by the emergency to the Reaside Centre. The agreement of the Resilience Team was currently being sought regarding the use of the Reaside Centre as an Emergency Centre for Frankley rather than Colmers Farm School. There needed to be a co-ordinated approach between the Local Emergency Team and the City's Resilience Team when dealing with Emergencies on Frankley. The Resilience Team had the authority to order City Council Departments to respond to emergencies as well as contacting the Emergency Services.

[Subsequently Councillors Bruckshaw, Carter, Grey, Rogers, Trefor-Jones and Joanna Walker indicated that they would volunteer to serve on the Emergency Team.]

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – 30TH SEPTEMBER 2008

- 1895 The following report of the Clerk setting out the financial position of the Council as of 30th September 2008 was noted -

(Interleaved document no. 2)

DRAFT BUDGET 2009/2010

The following report of the Clerk was submitted –

(Interleaved document no. 3)

In introducing the report the Clerk drew particular attention to the proposed Section 137 budget. The Government had already notified Councils that the sum allowed for each elector for 2009/2010 was to be £6.15 and on the assumption that there would be 5500 registered electors in the parish as at 1st January 2009, the total sum allowed for Section 137 for 2009/2010 would be £33,825. However, the proposed Section 137 expenditure, as set out in the draft budget, was £32,660 and, accordingly this would only leave £1,165 unallocated which the Clerk felt could be insufficient. However, the Chairperson stressed that it was necessary to ensure that the Neighbourhood Caretaking Service continued to be funded and therefore, if necessary, the grants to other organisations could be cut back to ensure the continuation of the service.

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

- 1896 RESOLVED: That the budgeted expenditure for the 2009/2010 Financial Year of £86,859 funded by a precept of £86,059 and £800 other income be approved and that, accordingly, a precept of £86,059 be issued to Birmingham City Council as the Billing Authority

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES: A CONSULTATION

The following Legal Briefing from the National Association of Local Councils in connection with the Government's consultation paper on a number of policy commitments set out in the White Paper, Communities in Control; Real people, real power was submitted –

(Interleaved document no. 4)

The Clerk explained that the Government was consulting on two matters –

- (i) the revocation of the current Code of Conduct which was to be replaced by a new model Code which would be, it was contended, easier and clearer to interpret. The new model Code would clarify when the Code of Conduct would apply to members' conduct in a non-official capacity. It was proposed to divide the new model Code into two sections: the first dealing with members' conduct when acting in an official capacity which would reflect what was in the current Code, the second dealing with members' conduct in their non-official capacity. With the new members' Code the Government wished to make clear what provisions of the Code would apply to members in their (a) official capacity and (b) unofficial capacity.
- (ii) the introduction of a Code of Conduct for local authority employees. The employees' Code could be restricted to those officers which exercise executive,

regulatory overview and scrutiny powers under the authority's scheme of delegation to officers. Although the Government proposed to introduce a code of conduct for employees of all local authorities (including parish councils) the consultation paper provided that the employees' code of conduct would not apply to part time employees. However, that would not preclude individual parish councils introducing an employee's code of code for its employees, subject, of course, to the agreement of the staff concerned.

Members, whilst welcoming the proposed clarity to the new Model Code, expressed some concern as to how the Code would draw the distinction between members acting in an official capacity and an unofficial capacity.

1897 RESOLVED: That the foregoing Legal Briefing be noted.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT: NEW PUBLICATION SCHEME

The following New Model Publication Scheme and Guide to Information was submitted –

(Interleaved document no 5)

Following a brief introductory commentary by the Clerk on the Publication Scheme and Guide, it was proposed by Councillor Trefor-Jones, seconded by Councillor Hollis and -

1898 RESOLVED: That the New Model Publication Scheme, as now submitted, be adopted without modification with immediate effect and the Information Guide, as now submitted be, approved.

TRAINING COURSES

Details of the following training courses were submitted –

- (i) Visionary Leadership and Community Engagement
- (ii) End of Year Accounts and Preparing for Audits

(Interleaved document no. 6)

1899 It was agreed that Councillors Bruckshaw, Carter, Grey, Griffiths and Trefor-Jones plus the Clerk be authorised to attend to two training courses.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were none

DECISIONS MADE ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were none.

LONGBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN

1900 The Chairperson reported that the final session of the Examination into the viability and implementation of the LAAP, due to conclude on 24th October, had been adjourned for three weeks in response to the concerns raised by Advantage West Midlands. The Inspector had agreed to the adjournment to allow further work to be done to:

- Clarify the funding assumptions in the Plan in relation to money from AWM, which had previously not been made clear; and
- Consider other changes in circumstances since the AAP was submitted to the Secretary of State, including the recent downturn in the economy.

That has been done to enable all parties to satisfy themselves that the AAP can be found “sound” by the Inspector – to be found unsound would require work to start again with possibly a year’s delay.

FRANKLEY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

1901 The Clerk reported that, at a meeting of the Frankley Officers Group the previous Thursday, in response to his questions relating to the development of the Centre, he had been advised that Grimley’s, the Agent acting for the City, had requested Taylor Wimpey on a number of occasions, to confirm whether or not it was going to proceed with the development. However, Grimley’s was still waiting for a response from Taylor Wimpey. In the meantime the City was ‘formulating a Plan B’ which would see the sale of the land to the Housing Corporation for affordable housing without the retail factor.

The Clerk added that the lighting upgrade around the shops was continuing.

Councillor Rogers reported that WMSNT had been advised by Arden Park Properties, the landlord, that the external aspect of the Units on Arden Park were to be refurbished.

TRANSPORT MATTERS

There was nothing to report.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Police Liaison Annual General Meeting

1902 Councillor Trefor-Jones reminded members that the Police Liaison Annual General Meeting was to be held on Thursday 27th November at the Reaside Centre starting at 7.00pm.

Christmas Meal

1903 It was agreed that, in view of the proximity of Christmas, arrangements for the Christmas meal be discussed in the New Year.

PAYMENTS

(A) Business Visa Credit Card

1904 The following Business Visa Credit Card Statements were noted -

(Interleaved documents nos. 7 & 8)

(B) Schedule of Payments

The following Schedule of Payments was submitted -

(Interleaved document no. 9)

It was proposed by Councillor Trefor-Jones, seconded by Councillor Griffiths and –

1905 RESOLVED: That the payments, as set out in the Schedule now submitted, be approved.

LOCAL ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Freedom of Information: Guide to Information

In response to a question from a member of the public, the Clerk confirmed that whilst the majority of documents produced by the Council were open to public inspection, there were some, which because of the confidential nature of the information they contained, were not.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

1906 RESOLVED: That, pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded for the meeting during the consideration of the following -

- Review of the Remuneration of the Clerk

REMUNERATION OF THE CLERK

Hereon, the Clerk explained that despite protracted negotiations, the Employers Side and the Employees' Side had been unable to reach an agreement over the 2008/2009 Pay Rise. The Employers' side had made a final offer of 2.45% which had been rejected by the Employees' Side. The failure to agree had now been referred to arbitration by the Trade Union Side. Given the time that had elapsed since the award was due (1st April 2008), and the likelihood of further delays arising from the arbitration process, the two Sides of the NJC had decided that the Employers' final offer should be implemented, with effect from 1st April 2008.

It was therefore, proposed by Councillor Rogers, seconded by Councillor Griffiths, and –

- 1907 RESOLVED: That, with effect from 1st April 2008, in accordance with the recommendations of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, the salary of the Clerk within Spinal Column Point 38 of Salary Scale LC2 [pro rata] be increased by 2.45%

The meeting ended at 2025hours

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Chairperson

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Chairperson