

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, New Street, Frankley on 20 November 2000 at 1934 hours.

Present Councillor Sidney Grey (in the Chair)

Councillors Linda Banks, Karan Bolton, David Burton, Sheila Burton, Eric Carter, Paul Kane, Reverend Derek Lewis, Kathleen Lewis, Joanna Walker and Geoffrey Williams.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

MINUTES

79 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 October 2000, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and confirmed and signed.

CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

80 The Chairperson circulated to members the latest Longbridge ward unemployment briefing from the City Council which indicated that the current figure for the ward as 9.6% compared to an average for the City of 11.6%.

(see interleaved document no. 1)

81 The Chairperson reported on two items of interest to the Council from the recent Longbridge Ward Advisory Board meeting –

- (i) the Advisory Board intended to invite this Council to nominate a representative member to sit on Board;
- (ii) the street lighting programme for 2001-02 included Mitton Avenue and Gannow Manor Gardens. In future years, roads with old Birmingham Housing Department lighting which had not yet been upgraded to modern standards would be in the street lighting programmes.

QUESTIONS

None.

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING ENVIRONMENTAL, HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

The following Minutes of the Planning, Environmental, Highways and Public Transport Committee were submitted:

(see interleaved document No. 2)

- 82 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Environmental, Highways and Public Transport Committee held on 30 October 2000, be noted.

ACCOUNTS

The following draft payment list was submitted:

(see interleaved document No. 3)

Councillor Carter asked why bills for room hire went to both Holly Hill school and St. Christopher's Church centre. The Clerk explained that the large hall, used for Council meetings, was rented out by the school, and the small room used for Planning Committee meetings was rented out by the Church Centre. If, as happened often in practice, Planning Committee meetings were diverted to the large hall, the Council was still only charged for the hire of the small room.

It was moved, seconded, and:

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

FINANCIAL STATEMENT TO 31 OCTOBER 2000

The following financial statement was submitted:

(see interleaved document no. 4)

The Clerk explained the current financial situation, stressing that there was a considerable underspend against the current year's year's budget.

It was moved by Councillor Denny, seconded and:

- 84 RESOLVED: That the Financial Statement to 31 October 2000 be noted.

COUNCIL BUDGET 2001-02: TIMETABLE

The following report was submitted:

(see interleaved document no. 5)

There was a discussion about the best date to convene a meeting to consult residents on the Council's proposed budget. It was moved by the Chairperson, seconded, and:

- 85 RESOLVED: (i) That the timetable, as set out in the report now submitted, be accepted;
- (ii) that a Parish Meeting be held on Monday, 8 January 2000 at 1945 hours for the purpose of consulting with residents about the Council's proposed budget for 2001-02; further, that the Planning Committee scheduled for that day do now meet at 1900 hours

COUNCIL BUDGET 2001-02: DRAFT BUDGET

The following first version of the Council's proposed budget for the forthcoming year was submitted:

(see interleaved document no. 6)

In introducing the budget the Clerk explained that it was assumed that the Council would acquire its own premises during the next financial year, and that the costings for that were based on a City Council tenants' hall such as the Reaside Centre. It was also assumed that the Council would pursue projects on tree cutting, green refuse collection, and also make some grants to local bodies. The contingency fund would allow the Council to meet the costs of a bye-election and also a parish poll should either be necessary.

The Chairperson opened the discussion by explaining that the Council had proceeded carefully until now to ensure that the first year's budget was not overspent. He felt that the Council could now start to provide services for the benefit of local residents.

Councillor Denny asked for care to be taken, if grants were given to such organisations as the Frankley Community News,

that the Council was not seen to take them over. This was generally agreed, but it was pointed out that the Community News was always in need of grants.

Councillor Kane suggested that the Council should seek outside funding from the Lottery, charities and other grant-making bodies to supplement the money raised from local residents. The Chairperson agreed, but pointed out that Lottery funding was for specific projects and was only given after a lengthy application process. He believed that the Council needed to look for opportunities to gain matching funding for its work.

Councillor Denny commented that if the Reaside Centre were to be taken over by this Council, the matter must be discussed and approved by the Council. It was pointed out that the figures were only being used for budgetary purposes and any such decision would have to be made by the Council after due notice had been given.

After further discussion, it was moved, seconded and:

86

RESOLVED: That the draft budget be noted.

PUBLIC FOOTPATH BETWEEN NEW STREET AND PRINCESS DIANA WALK

The following report was submitted:

(see interleaved document no. 7)

At this point Councillor Williams declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Governor of Frankley Community High School.

With the consent of the Council, Mrs. Sue Baker, a resident of Lysander Close, was allowed to address the meeting.

Mrs. Bates gave an account of her attempts to explain to the City Council and others that the footpath was a public right of way.

Councillor Carter reported that he had walked round the area in the last week and the gates to the path were locked. Councillor Banks said that this might not be the only public path in the area which was obstructed.

Councillor Denny expressed concern about a confrontation with the Community High School. He suggested that a deputation from the Council should meet with the school governors. In the past there had been tensions between the High School and the Neighbourhood Forum, but we were all part of one community.

After a number of other points had been made, it was moved, seconded, and:

87

RESOLVED: That the Council:

1. Make formal representations to the City Council as Highway Authority, under Section 130 of the Highways Act 1980, about the obstruction of the footpath between New Street and Princess Diana Walk, Frankley.
2. Make representations to the City Council as highway authority about the misleading sign at the New Street end of the path, and the lack of signing of the public right of way at either end.
3. Write to the Governors of the Community High School asking for a meeting to discuss a solution to the problem of the obstructed footpath.

TREE PRUNING WORK IN FRANKLEY AND GREEN REFUSE COLLECTION

The Clerk apologised for the slightly misleading title of this item on the agenda.

The following document was submitted:

(see interleaved report no. 8)

The Chairperson, as an addition to the circulated report, laid an extra paper on the table:

(see interleaved report no. 9)

The Chairperson explained the proposals to designate collection points for green refuse and the possibility of expanding the project in the future to include tree and hedge pruning. He suggested that the Council run a pilot project in January aimed at Christmas trees and other green recyclable material left after

Christmas. He emphasised that only recyclable tree and garden refuse material could be collected. He was aware of the problem of uncontrolled dumping on the sites and was looking into the possibility of help from outside agencies with removing stray black bags of domestic refuse etc. The cost of a pilot project, based on the quotation he had received from the City Council, would be roughly £300, assuming that 2 van loads of refuse were taken away. He hoped to obtain a firm quotation soon.

88 Councillor Sheila Burton suggested an extra collection site in Boleyn Road on the green by the corner of Gannow Manor Crescent. The Chairperson agreed to contact the City Council officers who would control the collections to see if this site could be included.

89 Arising out of this item, Councillor Derek Lewis raised the matter of the lumps of concrete which had been dumped on the corner of New Street and Holly Hill. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the City Council's Environmental Services Department to ask that these be removed.

The Chairperson explained the idea of provision of composters which was fully explained in the additional paper he had laid on the table. They would be brought to the parish on a lorry and sold directly off the lorry to residents. There was no possibility of financial assistance from the City Council, but it might be possible to get help from landfill tax agencies.

A discussion followed in which it was generally agreed that this idea was a good idea to pilot, and might be an example in the City of the way of dealing with this kind of refuse.

90 Councillor Derek Lewis asked if the Council would consider a project to recycle plastic bottles. It was agreed that the Clerk would look into this matter and contact the City Council's Environmental Services Department.

After further discussion, it was moved, seconded, and:

91

RESOLVED: That the Council:

1. Pursue a pilot project for recycling trees, bushes and other green refuse in January 2001, and report on the financial provision necessary to the December meeting of the Council.
2. Investigate the direct provision of composters to residents and that a further report be submitted to the December meeting of the Council.

FLOOD PREVENTION - PURCHASE OF PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

The Chairperson explained that local rivers were being monitored by volunteers organised by the City Council's Flood Prevention Task Force. The maximum number of volunteers turning out at any one time was six. The work involved wading into flooded watercourses which could be polluted, and he felt it was a reasonable use of Council funds to purchase protective clothing, which would remain the Council's property, to be used by volunteers undertaking this work.

Councillor Carter said that he had enquired about prices and the cost of six sets of waterproof jackets, overtrousers and waders would be approximately £500.

The Clerk pointed out that the Council did not have specific statutory power to provide this service and that it would have to be done with the "free resource", under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

After further discussion, it was moved, seconded, and:

92

RESOLVED: That the Council, in accordance with its powers under Sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure, which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure:
£500 on protective clothing for volunteer flood monitors.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications to consider.

At 2118 hours, on the proposition of the Chairperson, the meeting was adjourned in order to allow members of the public to raise local issues.

LOCAL ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(A) Parish Website

- 93 Mr. Stephenson reported that the website is now at newfrankley@lineone.net. There was some discussion and it was agreed that the Clerk should liaise with Mr. Stephenson about further developments of the website and report back to the Council when necessary.

(B) Training certificates

- 94 Councillor Sheila Burton asked whether the certificates had been received after the training course which several councillors had recently attended on local councils.

The Clerk agreed to pursue this matter with Mr. Thompson and/or Cheltenham and Gloucester College.

The meeting ended at 2124 hours.

Signed

Chairperson