

**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  
17 September 2001 at 1930 hours.

**Present**

Councillor Eric Carter (In the Chair)

Councillors Linda Banks, David Burton, Shelia Burton, Michael Denny  
Sidney Grey MBE, Paul Kane, Reverend Derek Lewis,  
Kathleen Lewis, Joanna Walker and Geoffrey Williams.

Also in attendance –

Mr Stewart Dobson, Director of Corporate and Democratic  
Services, Birmingham City Council

There were 5 members of the public present.

**APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received on behalf Councillor Karan  
Bolton.

**MINUTES**

- 259 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council  
held on 20 August 2001, having previously been  
circulated, were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

**CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Hereon, in connection with the recent atrocities in New York and  
Washington, Councillor Grey read out a letter of condolence which he  
proposed be sent to President Bush.

(See interleaved document No. 1)

- 260 RESOLVED: That the letter of condolence be signed by all  
members of the Council and sent to President George  
W Bush.

**QUESTIONS**

There were none.

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

The following Minutes of the meeting of the Planning, Environmental, Highways and Public Transport Committee held on 3 September 2001 were submitted –

(See interleaved document No. 2)

- 261 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning, Environmental, Highways and Public Transport Committee held on 3 September 2001, be noted.

ACCOUNTS

The following draft payment list was submitted –

(See interleaved document No. 3)

- 262 RESOLVED: That the payments, as set out in the Draft Payment List as now submitted, be approved.

Hereon, the Chairperson declared a pecuniary interest in the matter to be considered and withdrew from the meeting. The Vice-chairperson took the Chair.

COUNCILLOR BURTON IN THE CHAIR

CHAIRPERSON'S ALLOWANCE

- 263 RESOLVED: That the Chairperson's Allowance of £200 for the forthcoming year, be approved.

Hereon, Councillor Carter returned to the meeting and assumed the Chair.

COUNCILLOR CARTER IN THE CHAIR

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 (PART III) – CONDUCT OF  
LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES

The following letter from Mr Dobson, Director of Corporate and Democratic Services was submitted –

(See interleaved document No. 4)

In introducing his presentation, Mr Dobson referred to the introduction of a New Ethical Framework, the provisions of which were set out in Part III of the Local Government Act 2000. Whilst some of the details were yet to published it was obvious that every Local Authority,

including Parish Councils, would be required to take some action by Christmas. The City Council had to make a choice as to whether to appoint a Standards Committee, which would include one Parish Council member, to deal with both City Council and Parish Council business or, alternatively, to appoint a Standards Committee (including within its membership a Parish Council member) to deal solely with City Council business and then appoint a Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee (again, including within its membership a Parish Council member) to deal solely with Parish Council business.

Mr Dobson then gave the following presentation –

(See interleaved document No. 5)

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr Dobson advised that with regard to the question as to whether the City should appoint a Standards Committee or a Standards Committee and a Sub-Committee, the view of the City Council was that it would prefer to appoint only a Standards Committee that would deal with both City Council and Parish Council business.

On the question of training of Parish Council members, which would be one of the responsibilities of the proposed Standards Committee, it was important that all members were made fully aware of what was expected of them. There was a need to decide as to what would be the most convenient and effective arrangements for the Parish Council members, and in this regard, he would welcome any suggestions from members. He stressed that it was important that all Councillors attended the training sessions so as to be clear what was required of them.

Following a brief discussion, during which Mr Dobson responded to members' questions and comment, it was agreed that the Parish Council support the appointment of a Standards Committee to deal with both City Council and Parish Council business and, upon receipt of a nomination, that Councillor Shelia Burton be nominated to serve as the Parish Council member on the Committee.

- 264 RESOLVED: (i) That Birmingham City Council be advised that this Council supports the appointment of a Standards Committee to deal with both City Council and Parish Council business.
- (ii) That, for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2002, Councillor Shelia Burton be nominated to serve as the Parish Council member on the City Council's Standard Committee.

POOR T V RECEPTION AROUND STRONSAY CLOSE/DEVON ROAD

The following letters from the Local Housing Officer were submitted –

(See interleaved documents Nos. 6 & 7)

The Chairperson reported that the matter had arisen following a complaint from an elderly lady in Stronsay Close of poor TV reception that, it was believed, was caused by the adjacent tall trees. Over the years she had tried various methods to solve the problem, such as signal boosters, but all had been unsuccessful. On her behalf he had approached the City Council to get the trees lopped but had been told that it was not the Council policy to trim healthy trees because of problems with TV reception or lack of sunlight. The lady had then taken her complaint to Mr Burden MP and eventually, following a lengthy exchange of letters, the Housing Department had agreed to get the trees lopped. The cost of reducing the height of the trees that it was thought were causing the problem was quoted as £600 and the Local Housing Manager was now seeking a contribution towards the cost from the Parish Council.

In response to a question from Councillor Kane, the Chairperson advised that forms had been distributed to houses in the area and, from the responses received, it had appeared that at least 16 houses were affected.

Councillor Grey felt that the problem of trees was one that needed to be addressed right across the Estate and that a survey should be carried out to ascertain the extent of the problem. Unfortunately, the Housing Department had no funds with which to carry out the required remedial work.

However, Councillor Denny felt that by inviting residents to complain the Parish Council would be inundated with complaints about trees. He was also concerned that, by agreeing to contribute towards the cost of lopping the trees, it could create a precedent and that it could be difficult to refuse future requests.

Hereon Councillor Grey proposed that the Parish Council contribute £300 towards the cost of lopping the trees.

As an amendment, Councillor Denny proposed that, whilst agreeing to the contribution of £300, the Council request that the Housing Department consider carrying out a joint survey to establish the extent of the problem trees were causing on the Frankley Estate.

The amendment, upon being put to the meeting, was carried and it was therefore –

- 265 RESOLVED: (i) That the Council, in accordance with its powers under Sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, agree to 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: £300 as a contribution towards the cost of reducing the height of trees around Stronsay Close/Devon Road which were thought to be affecting TV Reception in the area.
- (ii) That the Housing Department be requested to consider carrying out, jointly with the Council, a survey to establish the extent of the problem of trees on the Frankley Estate.

Hereon, as officers of the Management Committee of the Frankley Neighbourhood Forum, Councillors Burton, Shelia Burton and Grey declared a non-pecuniary interest in the matter to be considered and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

#### APPLICATION FOR A GRANT – FRANKLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

The following application for a grant was submitted –

(See interleaved document No. 8)

- 266 RESOLVED: That the Council, in accordance with its powers under Sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, agree to 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: £80 for the reimbursement of the hire of a lorry during the Parish Council's Green Refuse collection on 23/24 June 2001.

#### HOUSING POLICY IN FRANKLEY

Councillor Grey reported that he had recently received a letter from a single mother living on the estate expressing her concerns that a neighbouring property had recently been let to tenants of a questionable nature. This was not the first complaint that he had received of this nature as a number of residents had contacted him to express their view that the Frankley Estate was being downgraded to an estate where tenants from the redevelopment areas in the south of the City were being relocated – some with questionable records. He had attempted to raise these issues with the Housing Liaison Board

so that the Board would take up these concerns with the Housing Department, only to be told that the Housing Department were not prepared to consider the circumstances of individual cases. Councillor Grey considered that, given that approximately 50% of the properties on the Estate were now owner-occupied, the Housing Department should consider owner-occupiers before re-housing problem tenants on the Estate.

With regard to repairs to Municipal properties he was aware that some tenants had been waiting for over two years for windows to be repaired. Other tenants were being given dates by the repairs contractor when the outstanding repairs were scheduled to be carried out and the appointments were not being kept. Additionally, because of the system of only being able to report repairs via the telephone, tenants were no longer able to have face-to-face contact with the officers as they did in the past. Tenants were going to the Neighbourhood Office to request a repair only to be told that the Housing Staff could not deal with the request and that the tenant would have to telephone the repair centre – often from the Neighbourhood Office.

Councillor Grey requested, and it was agreed, that these concerns be brought to the attention of the Director of Housing.

- 266 RESOLVED: That the Director of Housing, Birmingham City Council be advised of this Council's concerns in relation to lack of consideration to owner-occupiers when re-housing tenants on the Estate and the difficulties in getting repairs carried out.

#### OFFICE ACCOMMODATION FOR THE COUNCIL

The following report of the Clerk was submitted –

(See interleaved document No. 9)

Following a brief discussion, the Terms and Conditions, as set out in the Appendix to the report submitted, were approved. Members were however, concerned that, in accordance with the terms and conditions, the Council would take on the premises in its present condition and would be responsible for ‘... putting and keeping the interior of the premises plus all fixtures and fittings, both internally and externally (including the shop front, windows and doors, fences and gates) in good and substantial repair.’ The premises had been empty for a number of years and it was known that, during that time, there had been a water leak, a number of ceiling tiles were missing and it was not know whether the roller shutter at the front of the shop worked. However, it was agreed that, as there were no other suitable premises in the Frankley area, the Clerk be authorised to proceed. The Clerk indicated that he would write to Mrs Middlemas conveying

the Council's decision but would also request that Property Services give consideration to a rent-free period and arrange for members to view the premises. Should any further problems emerge he would consult the Chairperson before proceeding further.

- 268 RESOLVED: (i) That the Terms and Conditions as set out in the letter appended to the report now submitted, be approved and that the Clerk be authorised to write to Property Services confirming the Council's acceptance.
- (ii) That the Clerk, as Proper Officer of the Council, be authorised to sign the Lease Agreement on behalf of the Council.

#### PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were none

#### ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

##### A Frankley Centre Development

- 269 Councillor Grey reported that Councillor Coulson, the City's Cabinet Member for Regeneration, had recently convened a meeting with City Council officers to discuss the Frankley Centre Development, the outcome of which was that the Developer's deadline, originally 1 October had now been extended to the end of the year. He was drafting a letter to Councillor Coulson in which he was setting out the history of the site. He was still concerned that Mr Buckenham, Principal Planning Officer, had not agreed to meet the Developer and members of the Parish Council to discuss the Developer's plans nor had the Planning Department consulted the Parish Council on the plans that had been submitted. It appeared that the problem with the plans submitted by the Developer was the siting of the Units in relation to the Car Parking and Service Roads. He considered that it was important in order to resolve the problem that a site meeting be organised at which Planning Officers, the Developer and members of the Parish Council could thrash out the whole problem. He advised that the Chairperson, Councillor Burton and himself would be meeting the developer the next day to discuss the situation concerning the development.

##### B Cross City Extension

- 270 Councillor Grey referred to the recent article in the Evening Mail which had reported the submission of bids which would fund the extension of the Cross City line – possibly to Frankley. He had also received a letter from the Railway Development Society confirming that the bids had been submitted to fund an extension to Frankley.

REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN ON ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS  
OF THE PUBLIC

The following report of the Clerk was submitted –

(See interleaved document No. 10)

The following actions were agreed.

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|----------------|--|
| Minute No. 106 | Councillor Burton to check with the Housing Department to ascertain what equipment was needed. In view of the continuing delay by City Supplies to sort out the problem of the invoices for the original wet weather gear, and the onset of winter, it was agreed that a separate order be raised for the requirements.                    |
| Minute No. 149 | The Bus Shelter had now been erected and therefore this item could be discharged.  |
| Minute No. 154 | The Clerk to write to Centro to obtain the up-to-date position.  |
| Minute No. 155 | The Clerk to write to the Local Housing Manager to ascertain the up-to-date position.  |
| Minute No. 183 | The Clerk to write to Tariq Mahmood, Transportation Departments to ascertain the up-to-date position.  |
| Minute No. 184 | The Clerk to write to the Local Housing Manager to ascertain the up-to-date position.  |
| Minute No. 186 | Councillor Burton reported that the work in question had been carried out – therefore the item could be discharged.  |
| Minute No. 225 | Councillor Burton has passed the list of Potholes to the Transportation Department.  |
| Minute No. 277 | The Stickers had now been supplied and were available to members. With regard to the provision of dog excrement bins, Councillor Burton reported that the Environmental Services Department required a site plan indicating where the bins were to be located. Additionally, residents adjacent to potential sites needed to be consulted. |

