

**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, 16 August 2004 at 1930 hours.

Present

Councillor Eric Carter (In the Chair)

Councillors Linda Banks, Ian Bruckshaw, Sidney Grey MBE, Gareth Griffiths, Bill Hollis, Geoffrey Stephenson, Stephen Trefor-Jones, Joanna Walker and Geoffrey Williams

Councillor Randal Brew	Chair, Northfield District and Northfield Ward Councillor
Ms Rachael Goodman	Safer Neighbourhood Officer, Birmingham City Council
Chris Smith	Project Manager, Frankley Youth Affairs Forum

There were 3 members of the public present.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none.

**MINUTES**

- 966 The Clerk reported that during the printing of the Agenda and supporting papers, in error, a number of pages of the Minutes of the last meeting had become mixed up and a page omitted. As the Council could not therefore approve the Minutes he recommended that the approval of the Minutes of the meeting on 19 July 2004, be deferred until the next meeting. This was agreed.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 967 There were no declarations of Interests.

**CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none

## **QUESTIONS**

There were none.

## **APPLICATION FOR GRANT AID**

Frankley Youth Affairs Forum

The following application for Grant Aid was submitted –

(see interleaved document no. 1)

In response to questions from Members concerning the project, Mr Smith stated that at least 20 of the 24 teenagers would be from the Frankley area. He added that each was expected to contribute £10 towards the cost of the weekend but, if that contribution proved difficult, then the Forum would consider offering financial assistance. Because the costs of the professional staff accompanying the teenagers had to be met, some of the funding would go towards meeting those costs but the majority of the staffing costs would be met by the Forum.

Mr Smith agreed to submit a report to a future meeting regarding the outcomes of the project.

It was therefore proposed by the Chairperson, seconded by Councillor Trefor-Jones and –

- 968 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 of its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure; a grant of £1,500 towards the cost of taking 24 young persons on two weekend camps.

## **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2003/2004**

A Annual Return – Section One – The Statement of Accounts

The following Statement of Accounts was submitted –

(see interleaved document no. 2)

The Clerk reported that the figures in the Statement had been taken from the Parish Council's Accounts for 2003/2004 approved earlier in the year.

It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Hollis, and  
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- 969 RESOLVED: That the Annual Return – Section One - Statement of  
Accounts, as now submitted, be approved.

B Annual Return – Section Two – Statement of Assurance

The following Statement of Assurance was submitted –

(see interleaved document no. 3)

It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Hollis, and  
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- 970 RESOLVED: That the Annual Return – Section Two – Statement of  
Assurance, as now submitted, be approved.

**GUIDANCE FOR COUNCILLORS WHEN ASKED TO GIVE THEIR VIEW**

The following report of the Clerk was submitted –

(see interleaved document no. 4)

In introducing the report, the Clerk stated that he had received advice from the Warwickshire and West Midlands Association recommending that the Council adopt a policy regarding actions of Councillors outside meetings of the Council. Whilst Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 prohibited a single Councillor taking action on behalf of the Council, the question of how a Councillor should act when representing the Council needed guidance.

During a lengthy discussion which ensued, Councillor Grey felt that the proposed policy would inhibit a Councillor from taking an active part in the discussions at meeting of organisations to which s/he had been appointed. However, the Clerk advised that providing the Member made it clear that s/he was expressing his/her opinion which was not necessarily that of the Council and did not commit the Council to financial expenditure or to any course of action which had not been previously considered and agreed by the Council, the Councillor was able to take a part in the meeting. Additionally, in dealing with residents, as long as the Councillor did not exercise a function of the Council, commit the Council to expenditure or to any course of action which had not previously been considered and agreed by the Council, the Councillor was free to offer any assistance which was required. The Clerk added that, in his opinion a policy such as that now submitted was needed in order to protect both the Councillors and the

Council. However, if it was felt that the policy was too restrictive and preventing Councillors from undertaking their duties effectively, the policy could be revisited.

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

971 RESOLVED: That the following policy be adopted with immediate effect –

- That the Clerk, as Proper Officer of the Council, shall be responsible for all official correspondence in connection with the business of the Council;
- That, during the course of their duties, when communicating with individuals/organisations, Councillors must make it clear that any view expressed both verbally or in writing is that of the individual Councillor and that, accordingly, they are unable to commit the Council to any course of action not previously considered and authorised by the Council. If the Councillor considers that the matter warrants consideration of the Council, then the matter to be referred to the Clerk for inclusion on the Agenda for the next meeting;
- That should the Council suffer financial loss as a result of a Member failing to adhere to the above policy, that Member will be considered personally liable for the loss incurred.

### **TRAINING**

There was nothing to report.

### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

There were none.

### **DECISIONS MADE ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

There were none

### **FRANKLEY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT**

972 The Clerk reported that a newsletter regarding the regeneration was to be circulated with the current edition of the Neighbourhood News.

Councillor Grey considered that the process was not moving quickly

enough and that despite an agreed timetable submitted during the tendering process, it appeared that slippage of the programme was occurring. He was also concerned that the retail development proposed at Longbridge would effect any regeneration proposals for Frankley and, therefore, the two schemes should be linked. Additionally, he believed that in the foreseeable future, the land between Frankley and the M5 would be developed and there would be a need for Frankley to be redeveloped in order to provide the necessary infrastructure for such a development.

### **CROSS CITY LINE EXTENSION**

The following letter from Mr Brown, Strategic Rail Authority, was submitted –

(see interleaved document no. 4)

Although the Clerk had suggested on the Agenda that the Council write to Rt Hon Alistair Darling, Secretary of State for Transport, given the content of Mr Brown's letter the Clerk suggested that the Council write to Advantage West Midlands which would be responsible for undertaking the review referred to in Mr Brown's letter.

Councillor Grey was concerned that in his letter Mr Brown mentioned a time scale of a further 5 to 20 years before a decision as to whether to build the extension was made. The continuing uncertainty was, in his opinion, unacceptable and stated that a decision to either build the extension or scrap the proposal should be made. However, he continued that, in his opinion it was essential for the economic wellbeing of Frankley that the extension was approved which would provide access to employment in those areas of Birmingham still with traditional jobs. Whilst the employment prospects offered by high tech firms in the A38 corridor were to be welcomed, they would not provide employment opportunities for the workforce on Frankley who depended on the more traditional forms of employment.

It was agreed to write to Advantage West Midlands and the new Chair of CENTRO.

- 973 RESOLVED: That the Clerk write to Advantage west Midlands and the Chair of CENTRO.

### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

#### **Replacement Street Lighting**

- 974 The Chairperson advised that he was in discussions with Ms Veronica Coleman, the Ward Support Officer, regarding the possibility of replacing

the old street lighting units in Old Stone Close, Rea Fordway, High Timbers and Quarry House Close with new, more efficient, units. The estimated cost to replace the units was in the region of £70,000 but Ms Coleman had indicated that there might be funding available from the City Clean and Safe as well as the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Once an accurate estimate of the cost had been obtained by Ms Coleman and the indicative funding requirement, a report would be submitted to the Council seeking approval for the remainder.

### Bus Shelters

- 975 The Chairperson reported that the Clerk had written to CENTRO requesting that it provide bus shelters on Ormond Road. Unfortunately, CENTRO had advised that the budget for the provision of bus shelters for the current year had been allocated. However, it was hoped that, subject to a similar budget being available in the next financial year, the shelters would be provided during 2005/2006.

### Safe and Clean City

- 976 Ms Rachael Goodman, Safer Neighbourhoods Office for Frankley introduced herself. She stated that although she had only been in post for 4 weeks she was starting to get a feel for the issues which affected Frankley residents. She was currently undertaking a random survey of residents in order to find out what concerned them most. Once the survey was completed she hoped to set up a steering group to examine the information gained from the survey in order to come up with suggestions to make the neighbourhood safer.

The Chairperson said that, when setting up the steering group he hoped that a cross-section of residents would be invited as well as a representative from the Parish Council.

### Caldy Walk

- 977 Councillor Stephenson stated that he had recently had been advised by a City Council worker who was undertaking work on Caldly Walk, that the Walk had been adopted by the City Council. As this meant its maintenance would become the responsibility of the City's Highways rather than Housing it was agreed that the Clerk write to Highways to clarify the situation.

## **PAYMENTS**

The following Schedule of Payments was submitted -

(see interleaved document no. 6)

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

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

### **LOCAL ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

At 2028 hours the meeting adjourned so as to enable the Members of the Public to raise issues of concern.

#### Cross City Line Extension

Mr Arthur Davis, Chair of the Rubery Lane Residents Association, felt that instead of trying to obtain funding for the Cross City Line extension, it would probably be more successful, because it would be a cheaper option, to lobby for funds to improve the bus rail link between Frankley and Longbridge. If the old Rover Road could be used as a bus only road, the service would be not affected by the congestion on the Bristol Road and would be a reliable and speedy service.

However, Councillor Grey pointed out that CENTRO had investigated the possibility of establishing a bus rail link but had rejected the proposal as a long term solution due to the fact that the total journey cost (bus fare + rail fare) would be more than the direct bus fare to the City centre. Additionally, it was the view of CENTRO officers and himself that, once a passenger had boarded a bus in Frankley, it was more likely that that passenger would remain on the bus to the City centre than get off and wait for a train. There were also the problems associated with congestion on the Bristol Road in Northfield/Selly Oak which, at the moment made the upgrading of the bus route to the City centre unlikely. Councillor Grey emphasised that it was necessary to improve transportation links between Frankley and those areas of the City where traditional industries still existed. CENTRO had investigated all the options but had ultimately concluded that a bus rail link was not feasible although once congestion problem had been addressed on the Bristol Road an express bus route to the centre was an option to may be considered. With regard to using the present 49A route as a bus rail link because of its current starting and finishing times there would be a need to provide an earlier service in the morning to accommodate workers on the early shift and to finish later to accommodate those on the late shift. Currently, the 49A service did not cater for shift workers.

While Mr Davis accepted that there was a need to improve transport links between Frankley and the City Centre, he felt that the provision of bus routes should be further investigated as they were more flexible and reliable and the journey times faster

The meeting was reconvened at 2042 hours

**EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

- 979 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
Review of Clerk's Salary	Confidential Information relating to an employee of the Council

**SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS HELD IN PRIVATE**

(Minute No. 980)

**SALARY AWARD FOR LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS**

Hereon, the Clerk withdrew from the meeting during the discussion of this item. Upon his return he was advised that it had been to increase his salary in line with the recommendations of National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

The meeting ended at 2045 hours.

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Chairperson