

NEW FRANKLEY IN BIRMINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Planning, Environmental, Highways and Public Transport Committee held on Monday, 30 October 2000, at 1930 hours at St Christopher's Church Centre, Holly Hill, New Street, Frankley.

Present Councillor Eric Carter (In the Chair)

Councillors Sidney Grey, Paul Kane, Joanna Walker and Geoffrey Williams.

APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor David Burton who was on holiday.

MINUTES

- 14 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning, Environmental, Highways and Public Transport Committee held on 2 October 2000, having previously been circulated, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications to consider.

The Clerk reported that he had written to the City Council's Planning Department and to Bromsgrove District Council asking that this Council be consulted on planning applications for development adjacent to its boundaries. He had received no reply from Bromsgrove. Regarding the City, he had spoken to Mrs. Cox, the Area Planning Officer, who had suggested treating the Council on the same terms as a residents' association regarding consultation on planning applications outside the parish but adjacent to its boundaries. It was agreed that this was a reasonable way to proceed and after some discussion it was proposed by Councillor Grey, seconded, and:

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RESOLVED: That the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Council and the Chairperson of this Committee, do determine the area within which the Council will ask the City Council's Planning Department to consult it on planning applications, and notify the Planning Department accordingly.

DECISIONS MADE ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No decisions had been made on applications reported to the Committee.

FLOODING IN THE FRANKLEY AREA

The Chairperson reported on the Flood Management Task Force meetings held on 13 and 30 October, and the latest Flood Management Plan that had been circulated with the agenda.

(See interleaved document No. 1)

The Chairperson expressed disappointment over the lack of progress on items concerning the Frankley area adding that, amongst the members of the Task Force representing the West Northfield Area there was a general feeling of disappointment over the perceived lack of effort of the City Council to tackle the problem of flooding. As far as he was concerned, the only actions that had been taken were the appointment of the Flood Co-ordinator, and the provision of doorstoppers, which he now understood had been delivered, and would be installed, starting in Northfield during the current week. No date had been set for the Task Force's Finance Committee to meet the Leader of the City Council, although Richard Burden MP would be contacting the Leader to action this. At the 13 October meeting both he and Councillor Burton had complained strongly about the lack of action on inspecting and cleaning out drains in the Frankley area as they were both of the opinion that, if the drains in the area were inspected and the causes of the blockages removed, then further flooding, in many instances, could be prevented. He was also concerned that the City Council's Transportation and Housing Departments were each claiming that the problem was the other's responsibility. A suggestion had been made at the meeting that, if no action was taken by the City Council to prevent further flooding then the City Council should be taken to court for abatement of the nuisance, and he thought that the idea was worth consideration.

A discussion ensued in which the following points were made -

- (i) There was a real, persistent flooding problem in parts of the parish;
- (ii) The soakaways which had been provided when the houses were built could no longer cope with the volume of water;
- (iii) The bricking up of the sides of paths and concreting over of driveways had meant that flood water was increasingly flowing into house porches, and there was less open ground for water to soak away in;
- (iv) There was a problem with the different treatment of tenants and owner-occupiers because the funding for doorstoppers was coming from the Housing Department that would only provide them for owner-occupiers where the effect of a flood in the house would potentially damage Housing Department properties.

It was proposed by Councillor Grey, seconded and:

- 16 RESOLVED: That a letter be sent to the Leader of the City Council, with a copy to Richard Burden MP, expressing this Council's serious concern at the lack of progress on flood management measures in the parish.

FRANKLEY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

- 17 Councillor Grey reported that the revised site map of the proposals had not yet arrived. He had sent copies of the previous map to the City Council's cabinet member for Regeneration, Councillor Andrew Coulson, and to Richard Burden MP. Mr Burden had replied that he thought the proposals to be "quite imaginative", but that there was a need to consider what regeneration vehicle would be most appropriate for them. He thought it might be worth contacting the Castle Vale Housing Action Trust, and suggested involving the West Northfield Community Development Trust.

In response to a question from the Chairperson as to whether the West Northfield CDT should become involved, Councillor Grey said that the Frankley centre site was within their designated area, so this could happen.

Councillor Walker asked whether the proposed development depended on the extension of the Cross City line to Frankley. Councillor Grey replied that the development could go ahead

without the railway line extension, but it might not be as successful without it. He added that if the railway were not built, the land that was reserved for it might be used for industrial development, or for extra housing. There was a mistaken belief in the local community that it would remain as open space; that was not true, as it was zoned for development.

EXTENSION OF THE CROSS CITY LINE TO FRANKLEY

- 18 In response to a question from the Chairperson, Councillor Grey reported that he had received a copy of a letter from Chris Haynes in the City Council's Transportation Department to Alan Bevan of the Railway Development Society. It stated that Railtrack's current problems with their network might delay the planning of the scheme. A more detailed environmental and economic assessment was being made and there would be further consultations when this was complete, sometime in the New Year.

A discussion followed during which Councillor Grey emphasised that what was needed was an open debate on the issues with everyone involved and all the facts on the table.

The meeting ended at 2013 hours.

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Chairperson