

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND ON THE 20th OF JUNE 2022, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 7.30PM.

PRESENT:

Chairman:	Roger Faulkner
Vice-Chairman:	Mary Ann Canning
Councillors:	Peter Foster, Andrew Bird, Amy Jackson,
District Councillors:	Alaa Al-Yousuf joined 7:45pm departed 9pm
County Councillor:	Not present
Clerk:	Fay Friend

Members of the public: Kenny Wylie

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION (see note below)

One resident was present for this session, Kenny Wylie who wished to listen to the discussions.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received by Liam Walker, William Phillips, Lidia Arciszewska and Perrin Hatwell.

Andy Bain had also sent in a letter of resignation to the chairman and vice-chairman due to personal circumstances. He was thanked for all his hard work over his time served. The council will publish a note out on various platforms for all that wish to be considered to fill the now-vacant role of parish councillor.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT: To receive any Amendments to Register of Members' Interests and Declarations of Interest from Councillors for matters to be considered at the meeting

There were no amendments to the register of Members' Interests.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council and Parish AGM Meeting's held Tuesday 24th May 2022.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting and Parish AGM held on Tuesday 24th May 2022 were approved and signed by the chairman as a true record of those proceedings. The Parish Council have been criticised about the lateness of publishing the draft minutes. According to Standing Orders (Section 12) draft minutes shall be published in a public place no later than one month from the meeting although every effort will be made to ensure that they are published as soon as possible.

5. URGENT BUSINESS - To receive any reports and discuss and agree any action as necessary

There was no urgent business to report or discuss.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

(a) Mobile coverage in Freeland – to receive an update on progress to improve mobile signal.

Peter gave a brief update as there were no changes to report from previous meeting. The contractors are still waiting on CTIL, and planning application hasn't yet been submitted. Peter

will send around the plans once they have been submitted and will keep the Council informed with any updates

(b) Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – to review outcomes and financials –

The Chairman congratulated everyone for all their hard work and efforts for the smooth running of the day with a special thanks was given to Amy and Andy.

Additional funds include £25 kindly donated by the gardening club and £50 donated by the Oxfordshire Yeoman. With all of the money now collected the grand total stands at £1948, including £315 raised independently by the Ukrainian families and their hosts in a cake stall. Over 600 local residences and their families attended despite the weather. It was proposed that the cost code for the event is changed from 'Platinum jubilee' to 'Events' for future events, and an additional £750 added from the general reserves. Due to comments from the residents wanting more social events the council believes this is a good investment. It was agreed that the £1948 should be rounded up to £2000 so that £1000 in total could be contributed in total to each cause.

Action: Clerk to send thanks to Janet and the Oxfordshire Yeoman. Clerk to also give the donations to the Ukrainians and Oxford Children's Hospital Charity.

(c) Oxfordshire Treescapes Project – to receive an update on project-

Mary-Ann spoke briefly but wanted to wait for the village survey to see what the residents wanted and potentially look at setting up a working group. There is an up-and-coming meeting with OALC that Peter Foster is attending before the July meeting where one of the topics is Treescapes. Peter will report back with information from this meeting.

(d) EV charging points- to discuss adding EV points to the Village Hall carpark-
There has been no update on this matter, clerk still waiting to hear back from WODC.

(e) Getting together with Eynsham PC- to discuss meeting with Eynsham for shared common interests and ideas-

Katherine, the Eynsham Parish Council clerk, is in the process of arranging a meeting date with her councillors. Once this has been arranged the dates will be circulated to see which councillors from Freeland can attend. Concern over lack in knowledge with the Salt Cross ongoing works was expressed at the APM. The Parish Council has asked whether it can get the District Council to attend a meeting with residents of Freeland to answer any questions. It was agreed this would now be September

Action: Clerk to contact District Councillors to arrange a talk with Freeland residents.

(f) Communications: including social media, noticeboards, website and Grapevine- to discuss any updates –

Website: It is believed that communication from the Parish council as a whole need to be improved. There are currently two websites connected to the village. The Hugo Fox platform used for the Parish Council website is problematic due to structural restrictions which mean minimal changes can implemented because of the rigidity of the page set up. It is no longer suits the changing requirements for the Parish Council as it does not support the communication of news and developments and the former Chair Peter Newell remains its editor. Secondly there is the Freeland Oxon that Peter Newell has also developed which is more about local services. OACL have said it is best practice for the council to have full control over its own communication, so it was agreed that FPC should move away from the Hugo Fox platform and investigate creating a new website better suited to its needs, separate from the Freeland Village one which it is presumed will continue independently. It was agreed that FPC would apply for a Gov UK domain, www.freeland-pc.gov.uk. It is to be check that this is still available and the clerk to apply for it from the Government. This will allow information to be easily assessed and published, and will create a more visible and easily accessed website. Photo contributors for the page can requested from the contributors to the Grapevine and the photography group. Amy has done some research and created a draft brief with all that we would like to be available. By using a pre-made template this will help keep the costs down to a minimum. The draft included various different buttons and would include a Facebook feed, news, agendas/minutes, working groups, policies, planning tackers and Contact details. The price being roughly £1.5-£2k, it has been asked if both the clerk and Mary-Ann can get additional quotes from other providers. Andrew Bird is looking into a process for publications onto social media platforms with the chairman/ vice-chairman approving in the interim.

Noticeboard: There is a noticeboard in the village up by the primary school which the owner is currently unknown. The council, instead of adding a new noticeboard across the road again, is looking to replace the current one and include a locked section for Parish Council notices, to reach more residents towards the upper end of the village.

Grapevine: When providing notes for the Grapevine it was discussed that a process needs to be created. It was agreed that the Chairman will have a look at the notes before they are sent to the Grapevine. After contacting the Village Hall management committee they have agreed to swap their meeting dates with the PC, allowing the Parish Council meeting date to be the second Monday on the month instead of the third. This will allow more time for notes to be collated and checked before publication.

Action: Clerk to apply for URL. Clerk and Mary-Ann to get quote for other website providers. Clerk to get quote to replace noticeboard by primary school. Andrew to draft a process for publishing information.

(g) External audit- to be discussed and signed off –
This was reviewed and signed by the Chairman at 8:20pm.

(h) Additional Mowing- to be discussed and approved.

The Councillors have asked if/what WODC and OCC do within Freeland and if any of the additional mowing that has been picked up is part of their scope of works. We currently have 3 contractors in the village that have agreements to mow different sections of the village. Parish online mapping can provide a map of which areas the individuals cover.

Actions: Clerk to email Lidia to check with WODC. Clerk to email Mary-Ann with which areas the 3 contractors cover. Clerk to ask Billy to add the additional section to his list going forward.

(i) Towsery fraud- to be discussed –
Due to the business of this meeting the Chairman wished to move this to the July agenda.

(k) Good Neighbour scheme- to discuss the need and requirement for one in Freeland –
Alaa spoke briefly about Volunteer Link Up, based in Witney, which is a similar scheme and which covers Freeland. It was agreed that instead of setting up what could be seen as a rival scheme splitting the volunteers a note will be published into the Grapevine so residents of the village can use this service when it is required.

Action: Clerk to add note in Grapevine outlining the services.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:

Applications Received:

22/01459/FUL

ELM FARM, THE GREEN, FREELAND.

Conversion of existing field shelter to create home office for domestic use for Mr and Mrs H Whitbread

After a brief discussion the planning group have decided not to make any comments or objections on the planning application.

Applications Approved:

21/03258/FUL

3 CUCKOO WOOD CARAVAN PARK, EYNSHAM ROAD, FREELAND.

Erection of detached building for the garaging of heavy goods vehicles for Mr. Perry Hatwell.

22/00913/HHD

18 PARKLANDS, FREELAND.

Single storey side extension, new porch and gravelled parking area for Mr R Massingham & Ms C Stephens

22/00881/HHD

44 THE GREEN, FREELAND.

Demolition of single store side extension. Erection of a two-storey side extension and single storey rear extension for Mr and Mrs Calcutt.

22/00911/HHD

26 FREELAND GATE, FREELAND.

Proposed detached garage for Mr M O'Callaghan.

Applications Withdrawn:

None.

Applications Refused:

21/02627/OUT

LAND OFF THE WEST SIDE OF WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Outline planning application for the erection of a retirement community of up to 160 extra care units (C2 use class) with associated communal facilities and open space, with access from Wroslyn Road, (all matters reserved except access) and retention of veterinary practice in the coach house for Inspired Villages. (Awaiting news of a potential appeal)

22/00848/HHD

23 OAKLANDS CLOSE, FREELAND.

Proposed single storey rear extension. Proposed new hard landscaping to the front of the property for Mr and Mrs Clark

It was noted that the Oaklands Close application had been refused by WODC planning committee.

Applications Awaiting Decision:

20/01734/OUT

LAND NORTH OF A40, A40 SECTION FROM BARNARD GATE TO EYNHAM ROUNDABOUT, EYNHAM (NEIGHBOURING PARISH)

Outline application with means of access for a mixed-use Garden Village, comprising residential, retail, food and drink, health and community facilities, hotel, class B1, B2 and B8 employment uses, education provision, burial ground, public open space with sports pitches together with ancillary facilities, landscaping and associated infrastructure and works for Grosvenor Developments Ltd.

21/00961/FUL

LAND SOUTH OF SHASTON, THE GREEN, FREELAND.

New Build Chalet Bungalow with detached double Garage for Mr & Mrs Neil and Catherine Tregear.

The Parish Council submitted its objection last June and Councillors agreed that there were no further comments to submit. It was noted that a document and a site plan on WODC's planning portal for this application claim that the agent for the applicant served notice on the Parish Council last June with regard to a Deed of Easement for access to the site via the Green. Councillors expressed concern about this as such a document was never received and, moreover, the path is public and not owned by the Parish Council. It was agreed to write to the planning case officer, Sarah Hegerty, to obtain the full document and seek clarification.

22/01047/FUL

34 FREELAND GATE, FREELAND.

Change of use of land to extend private garden of both Plot 34 and Plot 35 for Mears New Homes with Sovereign Housing Associates

22/01330/OUT: Land North Of Witney Road Long Hanborough Oxfordshire

It was agreed to comment on this application as a neighbouring Parish Council especially since, if approved, the development would join the two villages. In 2017 the Parish Council objected to an application on this site and Mary-Ann has agreed to circulate that submission. It was agreed to contact Hanborough Parish Council and the campaign group HAG that was set up in 2016 and that has sprung into action again to get their views.

- Inspired Villages planning application – to receive an update Alaa, Lidia and Amy (on behalf of Friends of Freeland) all spoke all spoke against the application at the Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee meeting on 30 May. Minutes of that meeting can be viewed on WODC's website. The case officer recommended refusal of the application in accordance with the Local Plan. A councillor noted that Thames Water's comments were concerning while another thought that the Parish Council's comments were well-thought out.

Councillors agreed to write to Mike Gilbert, a planning consultant and Freeland resident, to thank him for his work in preparing the Parish Council's comments on the application. Etc.

- Salt Cross Garden Village AAP –to receive update- retirement provisions
The Parish Council are arranging a meeting with Eynsham Parish Council to share knowledge.
- Local plan- to receive update- currently there is no changes to the local plan, but it is due to be updated in November 2022. Alaa will keep the council updated if there are any changes.

8. **REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Alaa had no updates for the parish council and left at 9pm.

9. **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

(a) Presentation of the monthly financial report

The monthly financial report for May was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 31st May 2022 and the receipts and payments received or paid out in the last month. The bank statement was checked as agreeing with the figures on the finance sheet and was signed by Mary-Ann.

(b) Approval of invoices for payment-

The Council approved invoices for payment as listed on the invoices for payment sheet distributed with the meeting. Proposer was Amy seconded by Peter and vote was unanimous. These invoices would all be paid by BACS online. Council therefore **resolved** to approve all of the following invoices for payment:

The following invoices are requested to be approved for payment:			
BACS Ref Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
BACS 165	Fay Friend- Salary	Clerk's salary - May	744.84
BACS 166	Summit trees	GOR fallen branch	120.00
BACS 167	rendall garden services	grass cutting	70.00
BACS 168	natalie stearn	first aid	200.00
BACS 169	village hall	June meeting	12.50
BACS 170	Grapevine	donation	TBC
BACS 171	Grapvine	centerfold addition	85.00
BACS 172	Mary-ann Canning	Jubilee expenses	218.75
BACS 173	Amy Jackson	jubilee and survey expenses	168.86
BACS 174	nigel green	mowing village hall march, april may and hedge cutting	320.00
BACS 175	nigel green	Mowing GOR march april may	230.00
BACS 176	OALC	Training	132.00
BACS 177	Allied Westminster	Village Hall insurance	1,306.31
Total:			3,608.26

(c) Any other financial business –

Circulation was shared about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund – West Oxfordshire consultation webinar which Mary-Ann will try to attend on the council's behalf. She will update after the webinar.

d) Donation request for Grapevine-

After a brief discussion it was proposed by Mary-Ann that the council would donate £150 for the continuing information that it provides for all the villagers. This was seconded by Peter with the vote being unanimous. Thanks was given to the ongoing support the grapevine provides for the village.

(e) Increase of Jubilee cost code and change for future events-

This matter was covered about under section 6.

10. **PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS:**

(a) **Play Areas/Playing Field/Play Equipment Book** – to receive any reports plus: **Reports:**

- **Play Park signage-** to receive update on signage –

The signage has arrived and been given to Andrew who kindly offered to put them up.

- **Storage Shed** – to discuss the locking system and sand storage –

There is an ongoing issue with the lock on the shed where we only have 5 keys, currently we cannot obtain replacements. A new lock is being looked into with an outside key lockbox in which the key could be stored. Sand is being stored in the shed for the new play equipment. Additionally, a long term solution is required to stop the high loss rate of the sand keeping in mind that the point of the design was to make it accessible to all users.

(b) Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports:

- **Traffic calming measures** – to receive an update from Traffic Calming Working Group

No update has been provided.

- **Speedwatch** – to receive an update from Speedwatch group –

Thames Valley Police have stated that 3 operatives are required for ongoing Speedwatch sessions. This means that either there needs to be a 3rd person, or the speed gun needs to be on a mounted tripod. Comments have been raised with Thames valley Police and are being taken to their next management meeting.

(c) Footpath & Bridleway matters/Footpath Book – to receive any reports: Footpath signage on BR1 needs attention – this has been logged with OCC.

There has been no change or update on this item.

(d) Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports plus:

- **S106 Public Art funds** – to receive update on sculpture cost-

Due to the original artist that was approached now moving out of the area the council are having to look into alternative to designer and complete the works.

(e) Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports-

Renewal of the Village Hall insurance is due this week and has been approved to pay in the payment section earlier in the agenda. As Bill was unable to attend the meeting, he has written an update following their committee meeting the previous week. Bill has written following:

'Following on from the Jubilee event, I raised three problems

1. the tree sockets
2. the clock on the outside of the CRF
3. disabled parking bays in the carpark

All of these have been actioned.

Concern was expressed about the insurance of the VH.

Usually, Lisa deals with this and passes it to Dot but Dot hasn't received anything yet.

The VHMC were happy to change Mondays so the PC can meet on the 2nd Monday of the month starting in September.'

With the Village Hall Management Committee's approval, the dates for the Parish Council meetings have officially been moved from the third Monday of the month to the second Monday of the month. All the new meeting dates are to be circulated by the clerk to all the relevant parties. Issues were raised in the meeting about the lack in WIFI in the Newell Room, this needs to be addressed by the VHMC.

Actions: Clerk to contact James reference the ongoing WIFI issues and confirm with Village Hall that the bookings have been swapped.

(f) Village Hall sustainability- to receive update

After their first official meeting last month Peter gave an update to the councillors. Currently the group are exploring the ideas around solar panels, air pump system and ground source heating. The location of the solar panels would be to the right side by the car park. This is so the imagine of the front of the village hall is kept clear and pristine. Air and ground source heating both have benefits and drawbacks, including noise disturbance for the air system. This is because it would require the system to be located on the side of the building. The location for these will be key as residents are on both sides of the Village Hall. With the ground source heating, this would inhibit the use of the playing fields while the work is carried out. Whichever is chosen there will be a huge cost implication possibly in the region of £25,000+. The group have been in contact with OALC, Low Carbon Hub and Community First Oxon seeking advice. Once all the information has been gathered the ideas will be taken to the Village Hall Management Committee for their consideration.

(g) Village Pond – to receive any reports- lack in water.

The water in the pond is covered in growth and needs a clear out. Peter offered to speak to Rob about getting it cleared but if he couldn't to let the Council know what needs to be done so alternative arrangements can be made.

Action: Peter to approach Rob

(h) Amenity area – to receive any reports –

There is currently a dead tree in the amenity area, council have granted permission for it to be removed. In addition, there were three silver birch trees that were planted to replace the ash tree that was taken down last year. Unfortunately, two these trees have not survived. Council have asked that planting of 2 new trees to be added to the agenda in September.

Action: clerk to add new trees to the September agenda.

(I) Little Free Library – to receive update- request for donation.

After a brief discussion the councillors agreed that both the little free libraries provided a great benefit to the community. A request for maintenance and improvements had been received. It was proposed by Amy, seconded by Peter, that the Council would provide up to £200 to meet these costs. Vote - unanimous.

Action: Clerk to advise Matthew Ruddle

(J) Village trees – to receive any updates-

The small piece of land outside 120 Wroslyn Road is getting rather overgrown and needs cutting back. A quote has been received by a local contactor to complete the works. Amy proposed, Mary-Ann seconded, and it was unanimously agreed to go ahead. Also, it has been highlighted that by the Garden of Remembrance towards the Green there is a dead elm tree and a couple of ash trees that aren't looking their best. Clerk to check with Lidia to see if this is something WODC would have a look at.

Action: Clerk to contact Lidia and check previous records.

(K) Neighbourhood/ Community Plan – to review next steps in relation to village survey outcomes-

Thanks was given to all those who participated in the village survey. The names of the winners of the prize draw will be announced to the August Grapevine due to extension of the survey the deadline for the July edition was missed. Around 150 survey responses were able to be analysed. Slightly more than half the survey respondents were over 55 but that could reflect the demographic of the village. High level outcomes for the questions concerning peoples' thoughts on what is good and bad about living in Freeland, and also their hopes and fears. The overwhelming comments concerning what people like most about Freeland are its friendliness, and the peaceful rural environment/access to countryside. The least-liked aspects are lack of amenities and public transport, and also traffic volume, inconsiderate parking and speeding. Fears are predominantly about overdevelopment or merging with the surrounding villages and the loss of rurality that would bring, as well as the impact of overdevelopment and Salt Cross on traffic and the increasing use of Freeland as a rat run. Loss of existing amenities, and lack of social opportunities, isolation and loneliness were also common themes. Hopes were chiefly for a stronger community and for things to not change too much, but many also wanted improved amenities and transport links, and better ways to be 'green' such as cycling or walking paths. There is also a small but significant need for downsize/starter housing (e.g., one or two-bed homes). It would be worth picking out our three priorities to concentrate on first. Initial thoughts are trafficcalming, volume, speeding and parking; development, including digging deeper to understand what housing Freeland does and doesn't need; sustainability, including greener transport, nature recovery and ways to reduce carbon footprints; and social issues, such as amenities, activities and events. Amy suggested that the data should be analysed by others to see if they can find useful information we could use – three people were suggested and will be approached by Amy. More than 30 survey respondents said they'd be willing to be involved in a follow up to the survey, so a session is to be planned later in the year where these people and others who are interested can be invited to hear more about the survey outcomes, and plan how the main issues and opportunities can be addressed.

Action: Amy to speak to data analysis contacts

11. CORRESPONDENCE – To discuss and agree any actions arising from:

(a) OALC May update – details emailed around

(b) Broken tractor- a message was sent to the clerk about issues with the tractor and it not working. Billy and Robert are trying to mend and resolve the issues to get it working again. An invoice for repairs will be sent in once resolution has been found.

(c) BLM trees- to discuss the quote – this agenda item was moved to section 10 subcategory j

12. CIRCULATION

13. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL-

The Councillors decided that this item no longer needs to be on the agenda and will be removed from next month.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS - for preliminary discussion only

Amy raised a point that if any of the stakes from the jubilee could be kept for future usage and if the price breakdown for all the expenditure for the jubilee could be circulated.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 18th July 2022, 7.30pm, in the NEWELL ROOM. There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.18pm.