

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 17TH DECEMBER 2018, IN THE NEWELL ROOM, FREELAND, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 7.30PM.

PRESENT:	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Robert Crocker
	Councillors:	Tim Webster, Peter Foster, Mary Ann Canning, Matthew Ruddle, Véronique McCoy, Bill Phillips.
	District Councillors:	Alaa Al-Yousuf (from 7.30pm – 8.35pm) Merilyn Davies (from 7.30pm – 8.50pm)
	County Councillor:	Liam Walker (from 7.30pm – 7.45pm)
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No residents were present for this session.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT:

3.1 TO RECEIVE ANY AMENDMENTS TO THE REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

3.2 TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COUNCILLORS FOR MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING

Tim Webster (personal) as having a local business.

Robert Crocker (personal) as a member of Freeland Charitable Foundation (FCF) and as having a local business.

Matthew Ruddle (personal) as a member of the Freeland Scout's Committee.

All of them signed the book accordingly.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 19th November 2018

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 19th November 2018 were approved and signed as a true record of those proceedings.

5. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to report.

As Liam needed to leave early, it was agreed to take item 8 next so he could give his update.

8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

The County Council update from Liam included information about the A40 park and ride plans, with the consultation events finishing on 6th January. The access from Cuckoo Lane wouldn't be included yet as the layout for Cuckoo Lane in relation to the new proposed Garden Village was not yet known. Liam advised Councillors to keep an eye on the OCC website where the plans for the A40 and A44 roads would be published. Work on the Park and Ride site should start at the end of 2019, and an increase in traffic on the A4095 was to be expected.

The broken bollard on the A4095 by the Wroslyn Road junction had been fixed. Whilst chasing up various outstanding issues it had become clear that there were some staff shortages in the Highways Department, so an additional officer was being recruited which would hopefully mean Highways issues would be sorted out much quicker going forward. Liam praised the group who worked to set up the Community Bus project which was now operational. An extra £2K had also been put aside for Community Transport from the Government, meaning there was £2,600 in the total pot.

Liam was thanked for attending and left the meeting at 7.45pm.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 Mobile coverage in Freeland – to receive an update on progress to improve mobile signal and to note response from Waldon Communications re site suggestions for new mast

A brief update was given. Peter had written to Waldon and the Garden of Remembrance site was deemed to be inappropriate. The land by the Telephone Exchange on Wroslyn Road was considered to be a possible option, but Waldon had advised that they were still hopeful of progressing the site at Whitehouse Farm which was still the preferred option above the alternatives. Peter would keep Council updated as to any progress.

Action: Peter to update Council with any progress as above.

6.2 Freeland Methodist Church: To receive an update on future of Methodist Church

A planning application for change of use from a Methodist Church to a domestic dwelling had been received this month and was due to be considered under item 7 (Planning). Alaa confirmed that he had asked for it to be referred to Uplands Committee but no date had been given as yet. Marilyn had also emailed Phil Shaw to ensure the application was referred to Uplands Committee. Marilyn also agreed to review the Community Asset option again, even though it had been refused three times previously. The peaceful demonstration against the planning application had been held and details would be published in the local papers. A recorder concert held in the church had also been a big success and had raised £200 – some of this money would be given back to the church and a note had been placed in the Grapevine.

6.3 GDPR – to update on progress

The Clerk would review any outstanding items in January.

Action: Clerk to continue working on GDPR items.

6.4 Little Free Library – to receive an update on the design proposals and associated costs for a new larger Library

A second design proposal had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and to the Teddy Girls for comments. The new design showed a taller design with a slanting roof, with a double door opening and lower shelves that were easier for children to reach. Councillors liked the design and were happy with the proposals. Matthew advised that he was happy for the new library to be placed by his house and the cost of the new library was within budget and would cost £500. Marilyn advised that it may require planning permission, and this needed to be looked into. It was also reported that £130 had been raised at the chocolate tombola (held at the Christmas tree lighting event at the Village Hall) and this would be put towards a new plastic storage bench that could be placed next to the library. Matthew would keep everyone informed of progress.

6.5 Disconnection of power to the Parklands Defibrillator box - To update on progress on getting this reconnected and to note recent death of resident in woods

The Clerk had chased this up a couple of times with no action being taken by BT. However, the Clerk had been notified recently of a very unfortunate and tragic situation in which a resident had collapsed and died in the woods at the end of Parklands. The Clerk had notified BT of this incident and the fact that the defibrillator had not been available for use, and Powertek had now reconnected the defibrillator, but only as far as the inside fuse/junction box. A local electrician completed the connection to the second junction box over the weekend and an invoice for the work had been received. It was also noted that there was a red flashing light on the defibrillator which had been queried with the manufacturer in case this was a fault, but they had reassured the Council that this light meant that the equipment was fully operational. No further action was now required.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:

7.1 Applications Received:

18/03336/HHD 18 BLENHEIM LANE, FREELAND.
Two storey side extension with insertion of roof lights for Mr And Mrs Blackmore.

18/03385/FUL LAND ADJOINING 1 PARKLANDS, FREELAND.
Construction of two detached 4-bedroom houses together with associated parking, amenity and landscaping. Alterations to access for Mr Lawrence.

18/03486/HHD 2 HURST LANE, FREELAND.

Construction of oak framed garden room for Mr & Mrs Rogers.

After reviewing the plans for the above three applications, Council agreed there were no objections or comments that they wished to make on the proposed changes to the properties.

18/03423/FUL **FREELAND METHODIST CHURCH, WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.**
Change of use of Chapel to Dwelling for Witney And Faringdon Methodist Church.

A proposed response had been drafted by Mary Ann regarding the Methodist Church and had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to submit the response to the WODC Planning Officers which raised concerns about the conversion of a listed building, access concerns and loss of a community facility.

18/03056/HHD **115 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.**
Erection of single and two storey extensions and conversion of loft for Mr Damian Smith (amended plans).

After reviewing the amended plans for 115 Wroslyn Road (which had not been updated on the WODC website) Councillors agreed that these plans were preferable over the original plans viewed last month. However, they did still have a few concerns about the impact on the neighbouring property and local street scene and agreed to just highlight this to the planning officer, but not to make any objections.

18/03456/HHD **97 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.**
Erection of first floor front and side extensions with first floor rear balcony to new master bedroom. Single storey extension to front and rear for Mr & Mrs White.

After reviewing the application for 97 Wroslyn Road, Council raised concerns about overdevelopment of the site, the overbearing nature of the proposed extension as it was extremely close to the property boundary and loss of light to the neighbouring property at 95 Wroslyn Road. Council **resolved** therefore to object to the application on the above grounds. The Clerk would submit a response to WODC Planners.

Action: Clerk to submit planning responses as above.

7.2 Applications Approved:

18/02102/HHD **9 PIGEON HOUSE LANE, FREELAND.**
Alterations and erection of two storey extension & workshop for Mr Andy Murray.

7.3 Applications Refused:

18/02992/HHD **97 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.**
Construction of a detached timber garden room for Mr & Mrs White.

It was also reported that the Fruitlands site in Eynsham that was discussed last month had been refused permission again, so the proposed new managed woodland in Freeland would not be going ahead for the time being, although the application could still go to appeal.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.

8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

Merilyn had nothing further to report, and Alaa gave a brief update about the dog bins not being emptied regularly and about a vandalised bike that had been left by the white gates in Hanborough.

Alaa and Merilyn were then thanked for attending.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

9.1 Review of Budget/Precept Requirement for 2019/20

It was reported at the meeting that the Precept amount set for the Clerk's salary last month was insufficient to cover her increase in hours to 18 per week as the amount allocated was based on her previous 12 hours per week. Therefore, this would need amending. Also, as the Clerk's salary was now above £10,000 this meant that the Parish Council would now have to enrol her in a pension scheme and pay employer contributions.

So, the Clerk's annual increase from 1st April 2019 at SCP25 would be increased by 3.1% (not the 2.5% budgeted for) to £11,595 pa. This was £3,495 higher than budgeted for in the Precept (£8,100).

Pension contributions - With the suggested Government's NEST Pension Scheme, from April 2019, the employer's contribution would be 3% of everything above £6,032. This worked out as follows:

$$(\text{£}11,595 - \text{£}6,032) \times 3\%$$

$$\text{which} = \text{£}5,563 \times 3\% = \text{£}167 \text{ pa.}$$

To cope with these increases it was proposed reducing the amount put into general reserves from £5K to £2K, and the £3K could go towards the Clerk's salary.

The Precept would then be £60,665 + £495 + £167 = **£61,327**. The increase would be £2.44% rather than the 1.33% previously calculated. Council **resolved** to accept the above suggestion and make the proposed changes to the Precept allocation for the Clerk's salary and to reduce the amount put into general reserves as above.

Action: Clerk to make above changes to precept allocation.

9.2 Presentation of the monthly financial report

The monthly financial report was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 30th November 2018 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 signed by Bill. It was also agreed to transfer the £350 allotment track donation money into the general GOR development fund, as it had already been spent on the track but this was not showing on the report. Council also agreed to move the £1,000 donation given to the school from the donations budget to the tree work budget. The Clerk would make these changes in the Scribe system for next month.

Action: Clerk to make changes in Scribe as above.

9.3 Approval of invoices for payment

The Council approved invoices for payment as listed on the invoices sheet distributed with the meeting papers. Council therefore **resolved** to approve all of the following invoices for payment:

Cheque Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
102512	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 17.12.18	£12.50
102513	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary December 2018	£908.75
102514	Lawnsience (Oxford) Ltd	Lawn treatment village hall	£38.75
102515	Josh Purple	Willow tree pollarding x 3 by pond	£475.00
102516	Andrew Booth	Defibrillator reconnection by Parklands	£60.00
		Total:	£1,495.00

9.4 The Pensions Regulator – to receive an update on what needs to be done to meet legal duty to assess and re-enrol eligible staff to pension scheme if required (note timescales and key steps, plus re-declaration of compliance)

Notification had been received from the Pensions Regulator to advise that the Parish Council, as an employer, had a legal duty to assess and re-enrol eligible staff who have left the workplace pension scheme or who were now eligible and complete a re-declaration of compliance. As noted in item 9.1 above, as the Clerk was now eligible to join a pension scheme, the Parish Council would need to provide one. Council **resolved** to provide a scheme that the Clerk could join – the Government's NEST scheme would be set up. The Clerk would look at what is required and would take the necessary action.

Action: Clerk to review and take any necessary action.

9.7 To receive an update on the review of the effectiveness of internal audit process (to include review of financial system)

Matthew and Mary Ann were due to carry out the review this year, which needed to be done by the end of January 2019. They would arrange a date to meet with the Clerk in January.

Action: Matthew and Mary Ann to arrange to meet Clerk to carry out review.

9.6 Any other financial business – None.

10. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS

10.1 Play areas/Playing Field – to receive any reports:

10.1.1 Play area reports – trampoline tile needs gluing, weeds coming through safety surface under large wooden climber plus broken glass found around equipment

Mary Ann would chase Stewart at Sawscapes re what type of adhesive to use on the trampoline tile. The broken glass found around some of the equipment had been cleared and Tim was due to clear the weeds that were coming through the safety surface under the climber shortly.

A quote had been received from Summit Trees for the pollarding of the willow trees by the pond and to clear the elm saplings on the playing field. Council approved the quote for £475 for the willow trees (to come out of the pond budget) and approved the £495 quote for the elm trees - the Clerk would contact the contractor to arrange the work.

Robert agreed to clear the pile of debris left on the field after some clearance work had been done by a local resident. It was also noted that there was some barbed wire at the back of the field behind the basketball courts that needed clearing – Robert agreed to look at this and get it removed.

The Clerk had the pink book and had produced a new rota for the next 6 months, the book would be passed to Tim.

Action: Robert to remove pile of debris on field, and to look at removing barbed wire, Clerk to arrange tree work with contractor, Mary Ann to contact Sawscapes and Tim to clear weeds on safety surfacing.

10.1.2 Playing field mowing: to receive an update on tractor registration

The Clerk was still trying to sort out the tractor registration which was proving incredibly challenging. The information had now been received from Kubota regarding the VIN and the documents had been sent off again to DVLA to complete the registration.

Action: Clerk to continue chasing to get tractor registration completed.

10.1.3 New storage building on field – to update on progress from working group

There was nothing further to report on this. Robert would contact Eynsham Park Sawmill to arrange a quote for a wooden-cladded building.

Action: Robert to arrange quote as above.

10.1.4 Tree planting by cricket nets – to update on progress

A cheque for £150 towards a new tree had been received from the Gardening Club and the Clerk had written to them to thank for them for this donation. Robert would arrange the tree planting next year.

Action: Clerk to write to Gardening Club and Robert to plant trees.

10.2 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports plus:

10.2.1 Highways reports – to receive any reports

No reports were received.

10.2.2 To update on getting overhanging trees and shrubs cut back on Eynsham Road

The Clerk had made some progress and had spoken to Savills who manage the Estate on behalf of Eynsham Park. They confirmed they would review the area concerned and arrange for any necessary work to be carried out.

10.2.3 VAS Signs - to update on progress in getting two new VAS signs purchased

The post for the VAS sign near 41 Wroslyn Road had been installed but with the wrong type of post. This had since been replaced with the correct post, and another post installed for the VAS at the southern end of the Village. It now required the power to be connected and although no date had yet been confirmed it was hoped this would be done shortly.

10.2.4 Missing chevron sign on Eynsham Road bend – update on progress

Highways had confirmed that a new sign would be ordered, but to date this had not been installed.

10.2.5 Playing field signs – to update on progress on ordering 2 new signs to attach to Blenheim Lane nameplate

WODC had confirmed that the signs would require planning permission but suggested asking permission from Highways. They advised that if Highways were willing to give consent, then no further planning permission would be required. The Clerk had contacted Highways and was awaiting a response.

10.2.6 White line painting by Primary School – to receive an update on the repainting of white lines by the school

The repainting had not yet been done and Liam advised that generally line painting was not carried out in the winter. This would probably not now be done until the Spring.

Action: Clerk to chase up as necessary.

10.2.7 To note response from Highways re request for single white lines to be painted across residents' driveways on Wroslyn Road

The Clerk had made a request to Highways and a response was awaited, although it was noted that the same issue applied in item 10.2.6 in that it was not the time of year for line painting to be carried out. This was duly noted and the Clerk would chase up a response as necessary.

Action: Clerk to chase up as necessary.

10.2.8 To discuss and approve quote for village bench maintenance work

A quote for some village bench maintenance work had been received which covered 15 benches in total. Council agreed to getting the bench by Parklands repaired at a cost of £465, as this was the most urgent, and then spreading out the remainder of the work over the next 2 years, so doing half this financial year and half next year. The Clerk would arrange this with the contractor.

Action: Clerk to organise bench work.

10.2.9 Telegraph poles in Freeland – to note any response from SSE re state of telegraph poles and electricity supply in village, especially with regards to mobility scooter use in Freeland

The Clerk had contacted SSE regarding the above and a response had been received to say that it had been passed on to the relevant department would be getting in touch shortly. A further response was awaited.

Action: Clerk to chase up as necessary.

10.2.10 Speedwatch – to receive an update regarding Speedwatch activity in Freeland

A number of emails had been circulated from the Speedwatch team that showed a meeting had taken place with Inspector Hookham regarding some static devices that could be used instead of the Bushnell Speed gun. However, members of the Speedwatch team were not happy about not having the police backing and it was left to the team to decide next steps.

10.2.11 Parking near the Church – to discuss resident's concerns about dangerous parking around the area of the Church and the Pub

A resident had expressed their concerns about the ongoing issue of parking around the area of the Church and pub, especially when the village hall car park has often been empty or has had spaces available. A local resident had approached the church who had agreed to erect notices inside the Church wall to ask people not to park there, and these signs had now been installed. Councillors recognised this was not an easy problem to solve. It was suggested writing to Witney Town Charities to see if it would be possible for the Parish Council to lease the top corner of their field (an area of about a ¼ of an acre, space for about 40 cars) to be used as a car park for a temporary period of time (say 10 years), with access either from Pigeon House Lane or Wroslyn Road. It was also suggested asking the church for their support in this matter as it was often on church service days when parking became more of a problem, especially if there was also an event on at the Hall at the same time. Council agreed to both suggestions and the Clerk would write to both parties.

Action: Clerk to write to Witney Town Charities and local church as above.

10.3 Footpath & Bridleway matters/Footpath Book – to receive any reports plus:

The Clerk was holding onto the book until the rota restarted again in March.

10.3.1 Footpath reports: fallen tree on BR2 has been reported to OCC

It was not clear if this tree had been moved. Councillors to check.

10.3.2 To receive an update on any response received from OCC re footpath signage issues on FP8, FP9, & BR1.

No site visit from the Footpath Officer had taken place to discuss signage problems at FP8, FP9 and BR1. The Clerk had contacted Sarah Aldous at OCC to request a site meeting, but no response had been received. The Clerk would chase this up.

Action: Clerk to contact Footpath Officer as above.

10.4 Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports

No reports had been received.

10.4.1 To receive an update on the progress for the Garden of Remembrance to include update on order and installation of archway

The archway was still in the progress of being made and an installation date was yet to be confirmed. Mary Ann was working on producing a brochure containing useful information about the GOR that could be handed out to people to take away with them after visiting the Registrar. Mary Ann was also investigating some sculptures by a local artist that could be placed in the GOR – she would report back her findings next month.

Action: Mary Ann to work on production of brochure, to chase up archway and report back findings re sculptures.

10.5 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

A brief update was given. The Christmas Tree lighting event had been very successful, well attended and very much enjoyed by all those who came along. The maintenance budget was hopefully going to be increased for the Hall to ensure all the maintenance repair work could be attended to.

10.5.1 To update on whether tarmacking the gravelled area of the village hall car park is possible

Council were open to the idea of having the rear area of the car park tarmacked and marking out the car parking spaces. It was thought possible that S106 funds could be used to cover the costs as this part of the car park was playing field related as it was used by people using the changing rooms. In the meantime, it was noted that the top layer of shingle may need to be scraped off and new shingle re-applied. Robert agreed to take a look and assess what needed doing.

Action: Robert to assess work required.

10.5.2 To update on whether bike racks in Blenheim Lane are moveable to the Village Hall

This had not been looked at yet, Robert would have a look next year.

Action: Robert to look at bike racks to see if they would be moveable to the village hall.

11. THE BIG LUNCH 2018 – TO DISCUSS WHETHER THE PARISH COUNCIL WISH TO ORGANISE THE BIG LUNCH AGAIN NEXT YEAR AND IF SO, TO DECIDE ON A SUITABLE DATE (EITHER 1ST OR 2ND JUNE 2019)

Council agreed to organise this event again next year. Matthew had confirmed that he was happy to arrange it and had confirmed that the official dates were 1st or 2nd June, which was also the last weekend of half term.

Matthew had suggested maybe holding it the week after half term as a lot of people tended to go away, so his suggested date was **Sunday 9th June** – this was agreed. The Clerk would arrange booking the Village Hall.

Action: Clerk to book Hall as above.

12. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING- TO CONFIRM DATE AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Possible date for the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) was suggested as Friday 26th April. The Clerk would check the availability of the Hall. Possible topics for discussion would be discussed next month, but Councillors were asked to consider topics for discussion.

Action: All Councillors to consider topics for discussion at APM, Clerk to book Village Hall.

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

- (a) OALC update November – details had been emailed around.
- (b) WODC – Notes from the Water Day held on 4th October – details had been emailed around.
- (c) OALC – Salary scales for 2019/20 – details had been emailed around.

Plus additional items received since agenda sent out:

- (d) WODC – invite to Town & Parish Council meeting 7th March 2019, 7.30pm, WODC offices, Witney- details had been emailed around.

14. CIRCULATION

No December circulation.

November circulation – still out.

No September or October circulation.

July circulation – still out.

15. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

A brief update was given by the Clerk. A very successful Christmas Fayre had been held, thanks were passed to Robert for driving Father Christmas to the school on his tractor, and to Tim for donations of chutneys for the hampers. Freeland School had also just heard that they were the top school in Oxfordshire for end of Key Stage 2 assessments.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

Blenheim Bursary – a suggestion was made of applying to Blenheim for a bursary, as they had £50K of funds that they could give out each year. Councillors were asked to think about something that could be applied for, as the closing date for applications was 31st January 2019.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Next meeting would be Monday 21st January 2019, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.47pm.