

## **FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2017, IN THE VILLAGE HALL, FREELAND, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 8.00PM.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Robert Crocker
	Councillors:	Tim Webster, Matthew Ruddle, Mary Ann Canning, Bill Phillips, Jane Linnell
	District Councillors:	None present
	County Councillor:	Liam Walker
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

#### **1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

4 residents were present for this session. None of them wished to speak. 3 residents left at 8.40pm, and one further resident arrived at 8.45pm.

**2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Peter Foster – away dealing with ill relative, Carol Reynolds - away.

#### **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.

Matthew Ruddle (personal) as a member of Freeland School Society.

Mary Ann Canning (personal) as member of Freeland Charitable Foundation (FCF) and as having a local business.

Robert Crocker (personal) as a member of Freeland Charitable Foundation (FCF) and as having a local business, and as having an interest in item 7 Planning, especially as tenant farmer of Witney Town Charities' field.

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 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017 were approved and signed as a true record of those proceedings.

#### **5. URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business to report.

#### **6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

##### **6.1 Mobile coverage in Freeland – to receive an update on progress to improve mobile signal**

As Peter was not present there was nothing further to report.

##### **6.2 Freeland Methodist Chapel – to receive an update on future of Chapel & to note resubmission of nomination of Chapel as an Asset of Community Value. To also consider approving covering printing costs for questionnaire that will be sent out to residents, approximate cost will be £100**

A second attempt was being made to nominate the Chapel as an Asset of Community Value, after the application was turned down the first time. Additional information had been provided to WODC and the nomination form had been resubmitted. A response could take up to 8 weeks, but a decision was expected by 26<sup>th</sup> November at the latest.

After a brief discussion, Council also approved to cover the printing costs for the questionnaire up to £100 but requested to see the questionnaire before it was sent out to residents.

**Action:** Clerk to inform Colin Smith.

**7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:**

**7.1 Applications Received:**

**17/02891/HHD 109 BROADMARSH LANE, FREELAND.**  
Single storey rear extension, convert existing garage into study, and construct new garage door to existing car port for Mr Glen Pascoe.

**17/03152/HHD 20 OAKLAND CLOSE, FREELAND.**  
Erection of first floor extension for Mr & Mrs Myall.

After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** not to make any objections to the above two applications, but to raise a point about possible overlooking from the rear dormer with the Oakland Close application.

**17/03288/FUL 53 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.**  
Construction of detached dwelling with private garden office (revised scheme) to allow two chimneys, one to each gable, and slightly enlarged garden office footprint (retrospective) for Mr Gary Findlay.

After reviewing the above application, Council **resolved** not to make any objections, but to raise a concern about possible smoke problems for the neighbouring flats following the installation of the two chimneys.

**17/01082/OUT LAND NORTH OF WITNEY ROAD, LONG HANBOROUGH.**  
Erection of up to 170 dwellings with access from Witney Road, open space and associated works for Pye Homes (amended plans – these applications are in or will affect the Millwood End, Long Hanborough).

Council **resolved** to object to the above application, citing the same reasons as previously submitted regarding this application when it was first submitted in outline form (traffic concerns, merging of two parishes, etc). Clerk would submit a letter of objection to WODC.

**17/02996/RES LAND BETWEEN WYCHWOOD HOUSE AND MALVERN VILLAS, WITNEY ROAD, FREELAND**  
Residential development comprising of 41 dwellings together with associated works for Mears New Homes with Sovereign Housing Associates (in relation to previous application 16/01353/OUT Outline application for residential development of up to 41 dwellings - means of access only).

Council **resolved** to object to the above application, citing the same concerns that were raised at the June 2017 meeting when the developers came to present their plans. It appeared that very little had changed since the plans were shown, and so the same concerns were still valid, that of drainage, layout of houses that backed onto properties on Wroslyn Road, and also to object to the street lights that were included in the plans.

**Action:** Clerk to submit letters/comments as above.

**7.2 Applications Approved: None.**

**7.3 Applications Refused: None.**

**7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.**

**7.5 50- year plan for Freeland – to discuss proposal to set up a Parish Council working party to look at a potential future plan for Freeland in terms of planning/development needs (as an alternative to a Neighbourhood Plan)**

The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Tim and Mary Ann had met with Astrid Harvey, Community Planning Officer at WODC to discuss the possibility of producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Freeland and if it was possible to allocate an area of the village as a Conservation Area. The Neighbourhood Plan was

likely to take approx. 3-4 years to complete, and then, a whole village referendum was required to sign it off, where it could potentially be rejected. Meanwhile, speculative developments could still be approved whilst the Neighbourhood Plan was being produced. After a brief discussion it was felt that the Neighbourhood Plan would be too time consuming to complete with no firm guarantees at the end that the village would accept it, therefore it would not be commenced. It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

#### **7.6 Conservation area – to discuss whether and how it is possible to have part of Freeland allocated as a Conservation Area**

The meeting with Astrid Harvey also helped to inform that to try and get part of Freeland allocated as a Conservation Area was not currently possible at present, as WODC (who process such requests) are unable to consider Freeland's case as a priority for the foreseeable future due to constraints of available manpower. Council agreed not to pursue this any further at the current time.

#### **7.7 Possible development of Chapel Field - to discuss plans to build 100+ houses in Freeland on the Chapel Field**

The Council had been made aware of plans to build approx. 100 houses in the field opposite the Chapel on the corner of Pigeon House Lane. Witney Town Charities were working with Spitfire Homes to produce some plans to develop this field, although no plans had yet been seen and no formal planning application had been made. It was evident that ecology surveys were being carried out, and it was noted there was an abundance of wildlife present in this field, including grass snakes and adders. Council agreed there was little action to be taken at this time until more information was known about the development proposals.

#### **7.8 Barnard Gate Garden Village – to consider request to send letter of support for Barnard Gate Garden Village development**

A request had been received from Curtin & Co, the publicity company representing Gladman Developments to submit a letter of support for the Barnard Gate Garden Village. The details of the benefits that had been emailed over from Curtin & Co were read out and had been emailed around to the Councillors prior to the meeting. After a brief discussion, Council approved the submission of a succinct letter of support regarding the Barnard Gate Garden Village. It was agreed that the Clerk and Chairman would work together to produce the letter.

**Action:** Clerk and Chairman to produce letter of support as above.

#### **7.9 Possible development of Pye's field on Wroslyn Road – to discuss plans to build approximately 44 houses on land adjoining, and set behind properties fronting Wroslyn Road**

Representatives from West Waddy, on behalf of Pye Homes, had approached the Parish Council last month to request an informal meeting with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to discuss some plans to build around 44 houses on land adjoining and set behind properties on Wroslyn Road. A date was arranged but West Waddy were not able to make the date, so a new date was due to be rescheduled, although nothing had yet been arranged. As no formal application had yet been made, and no site plans had been seen, Council agreed there was little action to be taken at this time until more information was known about the development proposals.

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

A very brief update was given. A consultation about increasing the speed limit along the A4095 for a further 76 metres had gone out to parishes for comments and the Highways engineers were also reviewing the details. Liam had asked for an extension to the number 11 bus service with the S106 money from the housing development on the A4095. He agreed to also chase up the request for zig zag lines by the school, a request for a zebra crossing on the A4095 and the broken sign by the nursing home. He would also chase up the missing chevron that had been reported last month, and the requests about the VAS signs. A request was made to see if the 30mph signs through the village could be made bigger, especially on the hill approaching Freeland from the A40 – Liam agreed to look at this.

**Action:** Liam to chase up items as above.

## **9. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **9.1 Presentation of the monthly financial report - to note some changes to report re income following Scribe Training Day**

The monthly financial report was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017 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.

### **9.2 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:

<b>Cheque Number</b>	<b>To whom paid</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
102405	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary October 2017	£612.38
102406	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 16.10.17	£25.00
102407	WODC	Dog bin emptying 01.04.17 - 30.09.17	£94.34
102408	Ubico	Litter bin emptying on field 01.04.17 - 30.09.17	£205.10
102409	Lawnsience Oxford Ltd	Autumn lawn treatment, Village Hall	£37.50
102410	Lisa Smith	Refund - wheelie bin speed stickers	£220.00
102411	BDO	Audit fee 2016/17	£480.00
102412	Barlow & Sons (Hermitage) Ltd	Garden of Remembrance materials	£57.84
102413	WODC	Field mowing Aug 2017	£85.12
102414	Bill Phillips	Litter picking July/Aug/Sept 2017	£250.00
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>£2,067.28</b>

### **9.3 Conclusion of audit – to consider any actions from Issues Arising Report**

The Clerk gave a brief update about the audit. The annual return had now been received from the external auditors and had been signed off. A qualified issue had been raised regarding the recording of Fixed Assets, where an incorrect figure was entered at box 9. The Clerk understood the reasons behind this issue being raised, and would ensure this would not be repeated. It was due to double counting when re-stating the previous year's fixed assets due to having to recalculate and restate the amount included for the bus shelter that was paid partly by the parish council and partly via a grant from OCC.

Council accepted and approved the audited annual return and the notice of conclusion of audit would be posted on the notice boards for 14 days. Council thanked the Clerk for her work on the audit.

### **9.4 Review of the effectiveness of internal audit process (to include review of financial system)**

It was agreed that the Chairman and Jane would carry out this review this year which needed to be completed by the end of January. They would arrange to meet with the Clerk to go through the necessary process.

**Action:** Chairman and Jane to arrange to meet Clerk to carry out review.

### **9.5 To consider future expenses/projects over the coming year ahead of the precept meeting in November**

Councillors were asked to give some thought to any future projects or expenses in preparation for the Precept meeting in November. This was duly noted.

### **9.6 Any other financial business – Storage of Parish Council documents – to discuss the ongoing storage of Parish Council documentation**

The Clerk was currently storing a 4-drawer filing cabinet plus many folders belonging to the Parish Council, either in the home office or in the loft. The Clerk now needed some of this space back to be able to convert the office into a larger bedroom for her son. Consideration therefore needed to be given as to where the filing cabinet could be stored. The paperwork within it was rarely used, and could either be rehoused elsewhere, or boxed up and put into storage. Councillors were asked to give some thought as to whether they would be willing to pay for storage elsewhere, or to pay for storage boxes/archive boxes.

As a rough guide, archive boxes were available on Amazon at a price of approximately £20 for a pack of 10 lidded boxes (each box being able to hold approx.10 lever arch folders).

After a brief discussion, it was suggested rehousing the filing cabinet in the Village Hall storage cage, although this required agreement by the Hall Management Committee. The Clerk would email Robert to take the suggestion to the next Hall Management Committee meeting for approval.

**Action:** Clerk to email suggestion to Robert for next FHMC meeting.

## **10. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS**

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

No reports had been received.

#### **10.1.1 Play equipment book – to receive any reports**

The Chairman had the book and had passed it to Mary Ann. There were no problems to report.

#### **10.1.2 Basket swing – update on getting bird repellent strips installed on top of basket swing**

The basket swing had been cleaned. A piece of guttering protector to attach the bird repellent brush had been ordered and should arrive within the next week. The bird repellent brushes would then be attached to the top rung. Robert and Tim agreed to carry out this work.

**Action:** Tim and Robert to install bird repellent brush.

#### **10.1.3 Tree planting by cricket nets – to further discuss a suggestion of planting a tree near the cricket nets to provide some much-needed shade for spectators following meeting between Councillors about positioning of tree**

No meeting had yet taken place to agree a suitable position for the tree. This would be done shortly, and the group would report back next month.

**Action:** Robert, Mary Ann and Jane to meet as above and Jane to talk to Cricket Club Chair.

#### **10.1.4 Zip wire – damaged safety mats – to note that some of the safety matting underneath the zip wire has been damaged by the mowing of the field and to decide if any action is required, plus to note that the zip wire is not running as fast as usual and to consider if any action is required**

The cable for the zip wire had been tightened and Councillors thanked Robert for getting this done. The safety mats had not yet been replaced, this would be done shortly.

**Action:** Robert to repair/replace mats.

#### **10.1.5 Field mowing – to consider increasing the frequency of field mowing throughout the football season**

The Football Club had been in touch expressing concerns regarding the length of the grass on the playing field. From communication with WODC, it transpired that the field was on a 3-weekly rota for mowing, which the Football Club had advised was not sufficient and requested a weekly cut for the duration of the football season. Current price was £70 + VAT per cut. After a brief discussion, Council approved to have fortnightly mowing carried out throughout May and June, and throughout September and October. The Clerk would contact WODC to arrange this.

**Action:** Clerk to contact WODC as above and to inform Football Club of decision.

### **10.2 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports:**

#### **10.2.1 Highways reports: Dangerous trees by school; concerns about tree removal by Chapel field.**

Two residents had been in touch to raise concerns about a dead oak tree by the school that had lots of loose branches hanging down which could cause injury to anyone walking underneath. This had been reported to Highways, but no response had yet been received apart from a log number. The Clerk has already chased this up on 2nd October, but no response received so would chase again.

Concerns were also raised this month about the real possibility that a developer was planning on felling some trees in the Chapel field to enable their design for housing to be implementable. This had been reported to WODC but again no response had been received. This was currently being chased up. Councillors were asked to be vigilant and to report any suspicious activity.

**Action:** Clerk to chase up WODC as above.

**10.2.2 To note any response received from Highways re: suggested Cuckoo Lane junction alterations; new VAS sign on Wroslyn Road, and relocation of existing VAS sign; request for zebra crossing on Wroslyn Road.**

No response from Highways had been received regarding the above items (apart from a log number), so Liam agreed to chase these up and report back.

**Action:** Liam to chase up above outstanding items.

**10.2.3 Grass verge opposite Willoughby Fields – update on progress in getting this cut, especially around bus stop area**

The grass had been cut and the hedge was due to be cut next week.

**10.2.4 Wheelie bin stickers – to update on order and to arrange distribution to residents**

The stickers had been ordered and were awaiting delivery. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to suggest that residents along Wroslyn Road placed the stickers on the new blue lidded recycling bins. The Clerk would make the stickers available on the two notice boards, and would place a note in the Grapevine to inform residents.

**Action:** Clerk to place note in Grapevine and to place stickers on notice boards.

**10.2.5 Letter from the Office of the Traffic Commissioner – to note approval granted to Cuckoo Wood Farm to act as an operating centre for Crockett Haulage Ltd**

A letter from the Office of the Traffic Commissioner had been received to advise that, as the Parish Council were not landowners or occupiers of the land in the vicinity of the site, then our letter of objection had been ruled invalid. They went on to advise that *“the legislation does not allow for representors to make opposition in respect of the technical suitability of a proposed operating centre.”* The site had therefore been granted permission as an operating centre with the attached condition: *“Vehicles authorised under this licence using Cuckoo Wood Farm, Eynsham Road, Freeland, Witney, OX29 8AD as an operating centre will be rigid only.”*

This condition was intended to alleviate the road safety issues raised. The above conditions related only to vehicles authorised to the operator licence holder named above. The Traffic Commissioner could only attach conditions to a particular operative licence, and did not have the power to look at the use of a site in general. In addition, the Traffic Commissioner had no jurisdiction over any visiting vehicles (eg delivery or collection vehicles) which come to the operating centre during the course of their work. This was disappointing but duly noted by the Councillors.

**10.3 Footpath & Bridleway Matters/Footpath Book – to receive any reports**

Robert had the book and would pass it on to Matthew. There were no problems to report.

**10.4 Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports**

No reports were received.

**10.4.1 To receive an update on the progress for the Garden of Remembrance**

A brief update was given. The grass seed and wild flower planting had been carried out, and hedges had also been planted. The lavenders would be planted in the spring. Council passed on their thanks to Tim and Mary Ann for carrying out this planting.

**10.4.2 To note £641.60 donation received from Teddy Girls' Coffee Morning/sale towards Garden of Remembrance**

A £641.60 donation had been received from the Teddy Girl's from funds raised at their coffee morning/sale on 7<sup>th</sup> October towards the Garden of Remembrance. The Councillors were very appreciative of this donation and a letter of thanks had been sent.

**10.5 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports**

A very brief report was given. A new decorator had been taken on - Adie Buckingham to carry out painting in the afternoons. A 5 year electrical safety check had been carried out on the Hall, and the safety certificate would be forwarded to the Clerk to send on to the Hall insurance company. The CRF would also require this check to be carried out in 2 years' time.

**Action:** Robert to forward copy of electrical certificate to Clerk when available.

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

- (a) OALC – members update September – details emailed around
- (b) Open Spaces Society – Rights of Way training days – details emailed around
- (c) Poppies in Freeland – to consider and approve a suggestion to have a line of hand-made poppies laid between the memorial trees in November 2018 – these would be made by the Craft Club – Council were happy to approve this request.
- (d) WODC – Town & Parish Council's meeting – details emailed around
- (e) Transfer of WODC services to Publica – details emailed around plus to note concerns raised by a Parish Council regarding these changes
- (f) CFO – Invite to AGM – details emailed around
- (g) Weaveley Arboretum Natural Burial Cemetery – to discuss a proposal to add a crematorium to the above site – details emailed around. After a brief discussion, Council agreed to write a letter in support of this proposal.

**Action:** Clerk to write letter of support.

- (h) OALC – Community Resilience Innovation Fund – to consider whether Council wishes to apply for a grant - details emailed around

- (i) OCC – Emergency Community Plans, Survey and Resilience Workshops – details emailed around

- (j) West Oxfordshire Citizen's Advice Bureau – to consider request for donation received – Council **resolved** to approve a donation of £100 to the Citizen's Advice Bureau. The Clerk would arrange a cheque to be signed next month.

**Action:** Clerk to arrange cheque as above.

Plus additional items received since agenda sent out:

- (k) OCC – Consultation on reducing the speed limit on the A4095 from 40mph to 30mph for 76 metres up to the Police House – details emailed around – response required by 10<sup>th</sup> November. Council agreed not to make any comments or concerns.

- (l) OALC – Introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations – details emailed around – need to discuss and approve next month. A resident present agreed to send some information about the new GDPR to the Clerk.

**12. CIRCULATION**

No October circulation.

September circulation – still out.

July circulation – still out.

No June circulation.

May circulation – returned.

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

A brief update about the school was given by the Clerk. A children's author, Paul Geraghty had visited the school on 20<sup>th</sup> October, and been available for book signing, and this had been very well received by the children. The School Development Plan was on the school website, and areas identified for improvement were spelling, punctuation and grammar, plus attendance (to get all pupils above the national average of 96%). The Harvest Festival had just taken place this week, with a huge amount of goods being donated to Besom, the local charity to help the homeless. A whole school trip to the Cotswold Wildlife Park was due to take place in November from funds raised by the School Society.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY**

Freeland Charitable Foundation – it was reported by Robert that there was £780.16 of funds left in the FCF. It was suggested placing a note in the Grapevine to inform residents about this available funding to see if there were any projects that could benefit from this money.

**Action:** Robert to consider placing note in Grapevine as above.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.**

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.05pm.