

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 17TH SEPTEMBER 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, Matthew Ruddle, Bill Phillips, Véronique McCoy.
	District Councillors:	Merilyn Davies (till 9.35pm), Alaa Al-Yousuf (from 7.40pm)
	County Councillor:	Liam Walker (from 8.30pm)
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

New Parish Councillor Véronique McCoy was welcomed to the meeting.

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No residents were present for this session.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Peter Foster & Mary Ann Canning - both 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.

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.

Véronique McCoy (personal) as a member of the Freeland Village Hub 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 16th July 2018

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 16th July 2018 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 and to note response from Waldon Communications and to consider their request for alternative site suggestions for new mobile mast

Unfortunately, following the Clerk contacting Waldon regarding an installation date for the new mobile mast, she had been informed that the site at Whitehouse Farm was no longer able to be progressed any further and other site location suggestions had been requested. This was due to new legislation that meant that the Phone Operators only needed to offer current use value for a site rather than what was market value for a mast site. As a consequence, new terms were unable to be agreed with the landowner, and whilst the Phone Operator had the option of compulsorily acquiring the land, they did not appear to want to go down that route. Suggestions for a new location were the Garden of Remembrance, either on the right-hand side by the trees near the entrance, or on the left-hand side near the hedgerow. It was agreed that the Clerk would check if these were felt to be viable options with Peter F, and if so, she would write to Waldon to suggest these.

Action: Clerk to ask Peter F re site suggestions as above and to contact Waldon if felt to be viable options.

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

There was nothing further to report, the Village Hub Group were currently working on a number of initiatives and there was still no further news yet on the sale of the Church.

6.3 GDPR – to update on progress and to update on Councillor email addresses

A brief update was given. All Parish Councillors had set up separate Parish Council email addresses, for which they were thanked. Other information was still required, and the Clerk was working on the remaining documents required.

Action: Clerk to work on remaining documents/information required for GDPR.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:

7.1 Applications Received: None.

7.2 Applications Approved:

18/01953/HHD 19 CHURCH VIEW, FREELAND.

Construction of single and first floor rear extensions and erection of front porch for Mr and Mrs Hunt.

18/01838/HHD 59 BROADMARSH LANE, FREELAND.

Erection of two storey front extension for Mr Anthony Whitlock

18/01414/HHD 102 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Alterations to include raising of existing roof height to enlarge first floor living space and replace existing conservatory with new rear extension for Mr Andrew Smith.

18/01448/HHD 16 NASH LANE, FREELAND.

Rear extension and alterations to roof to increase height and provide first floor living accommodation with dormer windows to front and windows to rear. Construction of front porch for HillBrook Homes Ltd.

7.3 Applications Refused: None.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.

7.5 WODC - Preliminary consultation on the West Eynsham Strategic Development Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – to consider if any response is to be made to consultation – details emailed around

Details of the above consultation had been emailed around prior to the meeting. Council agreed no response would be made.

Plus additional item:

7.6 Spitfire Homes – request for further meeting to discuss possible development of Chapel Field

A request for a further meeting had been received from Spitfire Homes after the meeting papers had been circulated. They wished to meet with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to further discuss the possible development of the Chapel Field. The meeting was provisionally booked for Weds 3rd October, and the Council would be updated after the meeting. A query was raised about whether this site was likely to get approved bearing in mind that the Local Plan had been accepted by the Planning Inspector and was due to hopefully be formally adopted by WODC later this month, and this site had not been included in the Local Plan for development. However, it was suggested that if Spitfire could prove deliverability and the site could be commenced very quickly, then there was a good chance it would still be approved, despite not being included in the Local Plan. This was duly noted.

8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

The District Councillors gave an update on their ongoing casework which included information about the Pye North Planning Appeal.

The Pye North planning appeal was due to be heard on 19th February 2019 and details regarding the appeal and how WODC were going to fight it with the assistance of Hanborough Action Group (HAG) were given.

Merilyn and Alaa were then thanked and Merilyn left the meeting at 9.30pm.

The County update included information about extra funding being provided for Highways repairs, with 3 dragon patchers now in place. Cuckoo Lane was noted as needing considerable pothole repairs, so Liam would take this forward, and the Broadmarsh Lane road surface repairs had recently been completed. Details were also given about the Fit for Futures programme which would aim to reduce back office staff rather than front line services, although this sadly would ultimately mean some job losses. Liam also agreed to chase up the zig zag lines by the school to be repainted and the missing chevron sign on Eynsham Road. Information was also given about the Junior Citizen's school trip that was funded by OCC for all year 6 children.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

9.1 Presentation of the monthly financial report

The monthly financial report was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 31st July 2018 and 31st August 2018 and the receipts and payments received or paid out in the last two months. The bank statements were checked 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:

The following invoices were paid between meetings as agreed at the July PC meeting:			
Cheque number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
102485	DVLA	Registration fee for new tractor	£55.00
102486	Came & Company Ltd	Additional motor policy to insure tractor for use on public highway	£201.60
		Total:	£5,092.70
The following invoices are requested to be approved for payment:			
Cheque Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
102487	Elliot Hall	Tree trimming in play park and VH garden	£300.00
102488	WODC	Field mowing 06.07.18	£88.09
102489	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 17.09.18	£12.50
102490	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary September 2018*	£767.80
102491	HMRC	Employer's NI contributions Q1 Apr - June	£2.17
102492	CHEQUE CANCELLED - WRONG AMOUNT WRITTEN IN ERROR!		£0.00
102493	HMRC	Employer's NI contributions Q2 Jul - Sept	£181.83
102494	George Brown's Ltd	New set of keys for tractor	£5.32
		Total:	£1,357.71
*Reduced salary amount to ensure employee NI contributions are paid and up to date. £169.14 owing, this has been deducted from normal monthly salary of £936.94. This covers April - Sept.			

9.3 Parish Council Insurance Renewal - approval of the insurance renewal premium - to include review of level of Fidelity Guarantee cover

Details of the insurance renewal documentation had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The insurance premium was due for renewal on 1st October 2018 and the previous long-term agreement was due to expire and a quote for a new long-term agreement had been provided. The current provider, Came & Company had provided 3 separate quotes for a new insurance policy, with their recommended option being the policy from Inspire. The Inspire renewal premium quoted was for 12 months' cover at £2,250.93 (an increase from £2,019.79 last year) and was based on the sums insured and cover detailed in the 2017/18 schedule. The Council had the option to take out a new 3-year long-term agreement which would reduce the premium to £2,140.88. The Policy excess remained at £250 for each and every claim and the Fidelity Guarantee cover was currently insured at a level of £250,000.

Council **resolved** to approve the insurance renewal premium as detailed above and to take the advantage of a new 3-year long-term agreement, and to keep the Fidelity Guarantee cover at £250,000 which was felt to be adequate. The Clerk would arrange payment.

Action: Clerk to pay insurance premium.

9.4 Annual audit – update on progress

The Clerk gave a brief update on the audit. All information had been submitted to the new external audit provider and the outcome was awaited. The auditors had raised some queries regarding the figures provided, and the Clerk was working on the additional information to be provided, which would be submitted to them shortly.

9.5 Any other financial business – None.

10. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS

10.1 Play areas/Playing Field – to receive any reports: None.

10.1.1 Play equipment book – to receive any reports

Robert had the book and would pass it to Bill. The broken gate latch had been replaced.

10.1.2 Playing field mowing - to receive an update on new equipment and training

The new tractor and mower had been delivered and were currently being stored at Freeland Garden Centre. The following people had received training and were covered on the insurance policy to use the new equipment:

Peter Newell, Tim Webster, Simon Hole, Graham Walker, Phil Panting, Ben Symonds, Sam Walker, Jon Langford, Liam Harris, Sam Symonds, Matt Longford, Billy Rendell.

The Council was required to pay for a new motor insurance policy costing £201.60 following advice from the DVLA and the Police that the tractor had to be registered in order to use it on the public highway, even for a short distance. The Clerk had got a cheque signed between meetings to ensure the users had insurance cover in place straight away. The Clerk had completed all necessary paperwork and there was also a £55 registration fee payable. However, there was still some additional information required from Kubota/George Browns which was being forwarded on to the Clerk and it was hoped to have this sorted out shortly.

It was suggested passing a tractor key to Jon Langford so that it could be made readily available to the Football Club users. It was also suggested and agreed that the Clerk would write to the Football and Cricket Club to advise them that the Parish Council intended to terminate the mowing contract with WODC and the responsibility of the maintenance of the playing field would pass back to the Sports Clubs as it had been in previous years.

Action: Clerk to pass key to JL, and write to Sport Clubs re field maintenance, and to finalise tractor registration.

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 steel framed building.

Action: Robert to obtain quote as above.

10.1.4 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 – plan to be circulated re position of tree

A plan had been circulated for a suggested location for the tree, but Councillors had not had enough chance to look at the position. It was agreed to discuss this further next month.

Action: Clerk to carry forward item for discussion next month.

10.2 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports:

10.2.1 Highways reports: possible water leak on Wroslyn Road near entrance to Church View; unsatisfactory amount of rubble left on The Green by contractor

The Clerk had reported the water leak to Highways which appeared to be a blocked drain. The Clerk had also written to Thames Water regarding the rubble on the Green, and they were due to return in a week's time to complete the work.

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

This had not yet been done but should be done very soon.

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

The Clerk had contacted Alan Cockbill to check on progress and was advised that it was hoped to have the posts installed in a month's time, then the units would be attached. However, the Chairman also advised Alan about the Thames Water work that Alan was unaware of, so this was likely to delay the VAS signs until the water main work had been completed.

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

As already reported last month, Liam confirmed that the missing chevron had been added to the programme of works list so would be done in due course, although this would not be a high priority. Liam would chase this up again to try and get it resolved.

10.2.5 Winter salt - to consider if Council wish to take up OCC's offer of salt bags and winter salt

OCC were offering free bags of winter salt to parish councils. Council **resolved** to request one bag of salt that would be delivered to Freeland Garden Centre for residents to help themselves. The Clerk would place a note in the Grapevine informing residents about when the salt would be available.

Action: Clerk to order salt bag and place note in Grapevine as above.

10.2.6 Overhanging trees and hedges – to consider two requests from residents re cutting back trees and writing to residents to request hedges are cut back to property boundary line

The resident at no 120 Wroslyn Road (on the corner of Broadmarsh Lane) had asked if the trees next to their property can be trimmed back. These were done a few years back, and the trees are located on unowned amenity land. Council approved this request and asked for the Clerk to contact the same contractor who was used last time and approved expenditure to a similar amount as previously.

The other request was from a resident who would like to improve the pavements for disabled users and had asked whether the Parish Council would write to the residents at 165, 167, and 169 Wroslyn Road to ask for their hedges to be cut back to the property boundary line to make the pavement wider and easier for those with mobility scooters to use. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that as the residents in 165 and 167 had mobility issues, then the Parish Council would offer financial assistance in getting this work completed, and Alaa offered to speak with the residents concerned. The Clerk knew the residents at 169 and would have a look at their hedge and speak to them if necessary.

Action: Clerk to contact residents as above and tree contractor, Alaa to speak to residents re hedge.

10.2.7 Playing field signs – to approve costs for 2 x new signs to be erected on Wroslyn Road each side of village hall

It was reported at the June meeting that some residents in Blenheim Lane had asked if it was possible to have some clearer signs erected on Wroslyn Road to direct people to the playing field.

The Clerk had made some enquiries with Highways, and they advised that the Parish Council needed to fund this. Highways could provide a quote to supply and erect the signs, but with their current workload this would not receive a high priority and would take many months to organise.

The Clerk had obtained a quote from Morelock Signs with a price of £85.54 for the 2 signs, including clamps and brackets and delivery (excluding VAT). There would also be a £25 charge on top as this is a small order charge (under £500!). Details of the signs had been circulated by email. Councillors felt the signs were perhaps a little too wide, and also noted that the chevron could only be used at the actual entrance rather than indicating the direction of the entrance (which required an arrow) so it was suggested asking to have an arrow placed on the sign, rather than the chevron, and to make the sign a little narrower. The Clerk would contact Morelock to see if this could be done. The Clerk had also asked Highways to see if permission would be needed to erect the signs and was awaiting a response. Liam agreed to chase this up.

Action: Clerk to contact sign company and Liam to check whether permission needed to erect signs.

10.2.8 Freeland Speedwatch – to receive an update on Speedwatch team activity and to note any response from Thames Valley Police re speed gun query

Following on from last month, the Speedwatch Team were still required to have a PCSO present in order to carry out their checks. No further response had been received from Inspector Hookham. Liam explained that North Leigh were still operating Speedwatch using their Bushnell speed gun - but using it without linking it to the police. It was suggested that a way forward might be for the Freeland

Speedwatch team (like North Leigh) to use the device privately. Councillors were informed that in the North Leigh scheme they count the number of cars speeding but without making any record of the number plates or occupants nor communicating any information to the Police. Personal insurance would need to be investigated. Although this was clearly not the strong deterrent as used in conjunction with the Police (as no letters to speeders would be written), it would gather valuable data about when and where speeding was occurring (which would be useful to the Parish Council) and just the presence of an active Speedwatch team might still be a good deterrent. The Councillors felt this was possibly the best way forward for the current time as it was important that the team were seen as active and visible in the community and asked the Clerk to contact the Speedwatch team (via Roger Faulkner) to ask them to consider this option and feedback their thoughts.

Action: Clerk to write to Speedwatch team as above.

10.2.9 Complaint from resident re parking and event noise from village hall events – to consider points raised in complaint and to consider a suitable response

A complaint about inconsiderate car parking and the excessive noises levels from the village hall had been received from residents who lived near the village hall. A complaint had also been received from a resident earlier in the month regarding noise from the Hall, and this had been sent to the Village Hall Management Committee who had responded.

Councillors were sympathetic to the concerns raised, but also noted and recognized that this was not an easily solved problem.

Robert confirmed at the meeting that the Hall Management Committee had discussed the problems of noise and car parking around the Hall at great lengths at their last meeting but again didn't have any easy answers.

The conditions of hire of the Hall did stipulate that where there is regulated entertainment being provided, all external windows and doors should be kept shut, and noise levels should be effectively inaudible inside neighbouring properties after 11.00pm. However, this year in particular had seen a very unusually hot summer, with temperatures exceeding 30 degrees, and to require users of the Hall to keep the doors and windows shut during these extreme temperatures was felt to be unrealistic.

Robert also confirmed that the Hall Management Committee were going to great lengths now to ensure that the last thing that was communicated to all hirers of the Hall was to be considerate to neighbours and to keep noise levels to a minimum, especially late at night and when vacating the premises. There were also now a couple of signs that had been erected in the Hall car park about asking people to be quiet when leaving the Hall.

Air conditioning in the Hall had been investigated when the Hall was first built but was unfortunately deemed way too expensive to have installed. A substantial amount of sound proofing had been installed in the Hall, but that only worked if the doors and windows were kept shut.

With regards to the ongoing and recognized parking problems, a suggestion of moving the bollard at the back of the Hall car park by the field to extend the car parking spaces was considered but this was felt to not be of huge benefit because this would only allow space for 1 or 2 additional cars before encroaching onto the football pitch. It was noted that there had not been any loss of car parking spaces when the new Hall was built. The same amount of car parking spaces had been provided to users as previously, just down the side of the Hall, rather than in front of it.

The Parish Council also noted their attempt at getting some double yellow lines painted by properties near the church on the blind bend, but due to some objections from residents Highways had advised that this could not go ahead. Councillors did recognize that when big events were going on at the Hall or at the pub/playing field, then a lot cars were often parked each side of Wroslyn Road and caused a hazard. On the flip side, it was also suggested that this did force cars to slow down as visibility wasn't great.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman were due to meet with Spitfire Homes shortly regarding developing the Chapel field, and the provision of extra car parking would be explored.

Another suggestion was to use the Garden of Remembrance car park as an overflow car park and whilst it was recognized this is a short walk away, it was felt to be the best option and Robert

confirmed he would ask the Hall Management Committee to add this into the conditions of hiring the Hall to get hirers to use this car park for a large amount of guests. The Clerk would also add a note to the Grapevine asking people to be mindful about noise levels around the Hall and to remind everyone to park considerately.

Councillors asked the Clerk to respond including all of the above points and recognised there was no easy solution.

Action: Clerk to reply to residents as above.

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

10.3.1 Footpath reports: To note BR2 has a fallen tree blocking the path, plus broken stile on footpath by Nash Lane and Broadmarsh Woods

Robert had the book and would pass it onto Matthew.

The Clerk needed to check with Mary Ann if the Footpath Officer from OCC had attended a site visit to discuss the signage problems at FP8, FP9 and BR1. The Clerk would report the fallen tree on BR2 which was located about half way down the bridleway. With regards to the broken stile, after a brief discussion, Councillors agreed to ask a local contractor to remove the stile as a temporary health and safety precaution.

Action: Mary Ann to chase up Footpath Officer site visit.

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

No response had been received. Mary Ann would chase this up (as above).

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 to include update on order and installation of signs

It was reported that the signs had been installed and the base for the archway and the disabled ramp had also been done. Mary Ann had asked the contractor to finish off a couple of things relating to the ramp as there was currently a trip hazard, this would be done shortly. It was hoped to have the Garden ready for use in October. Councillors passed on their thanks to Tim for keeping the trees well-watered during the prolonged hot weather.

The Clerk had ordered the new records of cremations book and would also order the fountain pen and special ink.

Councillors were also advised that Freeland House Nursing Home were planning on installing a Garden of Reflection in their grounds in March 2019 and a representative may be in touch to discuss how the Freeland GOR was planned.

10.4.2 To receive an update on installation of ramp

See item 10.4.1.

10.4.3 To update on any response from Allotment Association re the possible use of water from the Allotments for the GOR

Lots of water had been used from the Allotments, and the Allotment Association Treasurer was aware of this usage. At some point the Parish Council would need to contribute to the water bill, and the Clerk had emailed the Association to ask for a copy of their latest bill, but no response as yet had been received. Council were informed that the Allotment Association had just received their latest water bill so it was likely the Parish Council would be hearing from them in the near future for a contribution towards the bill.

10.5 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

A brief report was given. The complaint about noise and car parking had been duly noted but this was not an easy problem to solve. Velux blinds were being installed shortly, and the cinema would be returning to the Hall in the winter, with the first film being shown in November. The gutters were still a big problem due to a design fault, and the plan was to take them all off, and then reattach them in a better position.

12. LITTLE FREE LIBRARY – to receive an update on fundraising for a new larger library, and to consider suggestion of using the old telephone box outside the village hall as a library, and to discuss suitable locations.

Matthew had been approached by the Teddy Girls which wished to help fundraise for a new larger library. A sale was being held on 29th September from 10-12 in the village hall. A local resident had offered to build a library box, possibly with sliding doors for just the cost of the materials with no labour charge. Councillors approved the idea of having a larger library and recognised that the current box was starting to warp and showing signs and wear and tear, plus it was not big enough for the volume of books that passed through it.

A resident had also suggested using the old telephone box by the village hall as a library, but Councillors felt this would look too urban for the village and would end up cramped and messy.

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

- (a) OALC update July & August – details had been emailed around.
- (b) OPFA – Summer Newsletter – details had been emailed around.
- (c) WODC – ‘Water Day’ - to be held on Thursday 4th October – details had been emailed around.

Plus additional items received since agenda sent out:

- (d) Freeland House Nursing Home – invite to view plans for new 45 bed dementia unit (work commencing 17th September) – details had been emailed around.

14. CIRCULATION

September circulation – out at meeting.

May & July circulations – still out.

No June circulation.

15. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

The School Harvest Festival was due to be held at church on 11th October. The School had introduced a “mind to be kind” initiative exploring acts of kindness and how it makes the children feel when they are kind. Last year’s academic results had been released and the school continued to perform well above the National and Oxfordshire trends for reading, writing, maths, phonics, SPAG and science. Councillors asked the Clerk to write to the school headteacher to congratulate them on their results.

Action: Clerk to write to school as above.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

None.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Next meeting would be Monday 15th October 2018, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.55pm.