

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 20TH APRIL 2015, IN THE NEWELL ROOM, FREELAND, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 7.30PM.

PRESENT:	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Robert Crocker
	Councillors:	Tim Webster (from 8.00pm), Jane Linnell, Bill Phillips, Janet Dalton, Matthew Ruddle, Mary Ann Canning
	District Councillors:	Colin Dingwall
	County Councillor:	Not present
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public were present for this session.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Toby Morris – at another meeting.

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

Mary Ann Canning (personal) as a member of Freeland Charitable Foundation (FCF).

Peter Newell (personal) for items 7.5 and 7.6 – Planning.

All of them signed the book accordingly.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 16TH MARCH 2015

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 16th March 2015 were approved and signed as a true record of those proceedings.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5.1 Memorial trees – to update on order of brass plaques

The brass plaques had been ordered and the Clerk was awaiting an invoice to be sent through.

5.2 Mobile phone coverage in Freeland – update on any response received

A response had been received from David Cameron to advise that he has written immediately to Cornerstone Telecommunications Infrastructure Ltd (CTIL) asking them to consider our proposal. He had also written to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport for an update on how the Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) is helping people in West Oxfordshire.

Mr Cameron had then written again to send a copy of the reply received from CTIL. CTIL advised that the planning of network requirements in the Freeland/Long Hanborough locations is the responsibility of Vodafone, and so our request had been forwarded to Vodafone for their review and response. The Clerk had since received a reply from Vodafone to advise that Freeland could be considered for their Rural Open Sure Signal (ROSS) Programme; however this would mean connecting to residents' broadband supply and would only benefit Vodafone customers. After some discussion, Council **resolved** to write back to Vodafone to see if there was an option available that would benefit all users, not just Vodafone.

Action: Clerk to write letter to Vodafone as above.

5.3 Broken fence between churchyard and pub – update on getting it removed

The fence was beyond repair and the broken piece still needed removing. Tim was in talks with the nuns to try and arrange a replacement.

Action: Tim to continue conversations with nuns re fence as above

5.4 Quote for tree work by 120 Wroslyn Road – to consider quote received for tree trimming

A quote had been received from Elliot Hall, a local tree and garden contractor for the tree trimming by 120 Wroslyn Road. Two options were provided:

Option 1

Trim mixed species mostly, Laurel and Sycamore, back to the boundary line. Remove all debris from site. The cost of this option would be £90.00

Option 2

Trim back to boundary line, re-pollard Sycamores and Ash, reduce over extended branches from laurel. Remove all debris from site. The cost of this option would be £200.00.

Option 2 would be a considerable amount more work, however could save money in the long run. Council **resolved** by vote for option 2, with seven Councillors voting in favour with one against.

The Clerk would arrange for the work to be carried out.

Action: Clerk to arrange tree work and inform resident.

5.5 Annual Parish Meeting – to discuss final arrangements

The agenda for the meeting was circulated and approved. All flyers had been delivered to residents in the village and the Chairman asked everyone to arrive at the Hall by 6.45pm if possible to help set up the room.

5.6 Memorial Bench by Busby Close – to discuss any response received to sponsorship request

Following the Clerk's note in the Grapevine, one resident enquired about the cost of sponsoring the bench. Unfortunately, once the costs involved were known, the resident advised it was too expensive and declined to go forward with the sponsorship.

A suggestion was made about mentioning the new memorial bench at the APM, and it was agreed that the Chairman would include it in his report. The Chairman was also asked to enquire with Mr Daniel as to his background as he was unknown to the village. This was agreed.

Action: Chairman to include details of the memorial bench in his APM report.

6. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS

6.1 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business to report.

6.2 Play areas/Playing Field/Play Equipment Book – to receive any reports

Jane had the book and there was one problem to report. On the wobbly bridge equipment, at the back on the bottom left there were three red bars that were wobbly which meant the fence panel could be rattled. Robert agreed to take a look to see if this could be fixed. The book was passed to Tim.

Action: Robert to look at wobbly bridge play equipment as above.

6.2.2 Play park development – update on progress to develop the park

Mary Ann gave a brief update. Additional information for the WREN grant application was being submitted imminently with the letters of support from the village. Approx. 21 letters had been received. An application had been submitted to Jewsons Building Better Communities Fund, but unfortunately this had been unsuccessful due to them being inundated with applicants. A suggestion was made about the Chill Out Fund from OCC, but this was also no longer available. The outcome of the WREN grant would be known in July.

6.2.3 Shed on the field – to update on progress in removing the shed

Robert had erected some Heras fencing around the shed to ensure it was safe and the Football Club had been asked to make the door more secure. The shed was likely to be demolished once the new one was erected. Three quotes were now required for a lean-to shed. Mary Ann and Robert were

asked to help with producing some drawings for a lean-to shed that could be taken to the Football Club for their consideration, and then the quotes could be obtained.

Action: Mary Ann and Robert to design a lean-to shed as above.

6.2.4 Quotation for field spraying – to consider if field spraying is required this year

Councillors felt that the field did not need spraying at the current time, but agreed to keep this as a rolling agenda item for the next few months so it could be reviewed on a monthly basis.

Action: Clerk to keep this item on the agenda for next few months so condition of field can be monitored.

6.2.5 Pitch cutting – to consider a request from the football club to have one of their acquaintances cut the pitch instead of WODC

Freeland Football Club had enquired whether WODC would be cutting the pitch again this year as they were not too impressed with their work last year as the grass was a bit clumpy. They also advised that they may have a couple of people who would be willing to cut the pitch throughout the summer, saving WODC having to do it. However, this would mean that the gangmowers would require servicing which Councillors were not keen to have done as this in the past had proven expensive. There was also the issue of training and insurance cover for anyone that would use the gangmowers, and Councillors were concerned about who would train the people to use the equipment. After some discussion, Council **resolved** to continue with the WODC contractors who they felt satisfied with, and the Clerk would chase up WODC to ensure the field was cut imminently. The Clerk also reported that there would be a 3.1% increase on the amount charged last year by WODC, which meant the cost of each cut would increase from £66 per cut to £68 per cut. Council approved this increase.

Action: Clerk to chase up WODC to ensure the field was cut imminently and to write to the Football Club with outcome of discussion.

6.2.6 Playing field – request from resident to have the field tidied up outside the rear of their house – lots of tree stumps, stones, dead tree, mounds of earth and metal fencing in area

A request from a resident had been received to see if the Council could assist in tidying up the area on the playing field outside of their back gate which had numerous tree stumps, piles of soil, some metal fencing and stones and a dead tree. The resident was happy to maintain the area but needed some initial assistance. Robert agreed to take a look and see if he could tidy the area and remove the tree stumps, if not it was agreed to obtain a quote to remove the stumps.

Action: Robert to try and improve area.

6.3 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports

One report was received regarding whether a sign could be installed at each entrance to Pigeon House Lane to indicate that the road was unsuitable for HGVs. This was following an articulated lorry getting stuck in Pigeon House Lane this month which took 3 hours resolve. This was the second time since Christmas that a lorry had got stuck in this lane. Council **resolved** to ask Highways about installing a sign – Colin asked the Clerk to copy himself and Louise Chapman into the request so that they could follow this up.

Action: Clerk to contact Highways as above.

6.3.1 New Bus Shelter outside village hall – update on progress with order

The Clerk had received an update from David Bellchamber at OCC to advise that the verbal order had been placed with Littlethorpe last month and that the official OCC order number would follow. However he was still chasing Geoff Barrell for the order number, but our funds were still in his queue of work being processed. According to Geoff, it could take up to a month to wade through all the OCC red tape. David had assured Littlethorpe that the shelter installation is still going ahead, but they have put it on hold until they receive the order number. David confirmed he would let the Clerk know as soon as he had the order number.

6.3.2 Pothole repairs - to update further on response from approved contractor re carrying out minor road repairs (just small potholes)

Robert confirmed he had spoken to the contractor and was hopeful of coming to some arrangement. He was due to meet with the contractor next week and would update the Council further next month.

Action: Robert to meet with contractor and report back at the next meeting.

6.3.3 Speed activated signs – update on progress in application for VAS sign near school

Dave Clack from Highways had given an update to advise that it had been agreed that an extension to the existing flashing poles would allow the new signs to be attached. No date for installation had been given as yet. The Clerk would chase this up if required.

Action: Clerk to chase as appropriate.

6.3.4 Double yellow lines by school – update on progress in application for traffic order change to allow installation of double yellow lines on corner of Parklands

Dave Clack from Highways was chasing this up. He had confirmed that the cost involved would be £5,000 just in legal fees to change the Traffic Regulation Order before any work takes place. Council agreed this was too expensive and to remove this item from the agenda.

6.3.5 Sewage smell in Freeland – to consider a suggestion from a resident to ask Thames Water to divert sewage currently received from North Leigh and East End to by-pass Freeland and pump to Church Hanborough plant separately

A resident had contacted the Clerk with some maps of sewage pipework in the local area to suggest that the Parish Council writes to Thames Water to ask them to divert sewage from Freeland to Church Hanborough. It would appear that sewage from North Leigh and East End villages is also being currently pumped through Freeland. In view of the problems Freeland has experienced with nasty smells etc, the resident believes the Parish Council should push for this sewage to bypass Freeland and pump to Church Hanborough plant separately or join into the main pipes beyond Freeland rather than it all pumping through Freeland. After careful consideration Council decided that it was not appropriate to ask Thames Water to divert the sewage as from previous discussions, it would appear that the problem is with the pumping station near The Green which needs the chemical dosing treatment topped up to avoid the smells. The Council had asked numerous times for this to be done but it was unclear whether this had been carried out as the Clerk had chased Thames Water numerous times without success.

Action: Clerk to write to resident as above.

6.3.6 Potholes at end of Blenheim Lane – to consider offer from resident to fill in potholes if Council can provide some scalplings/crushed stone to be delivered

A resident had contacted the Clerk to offer to fill in the potholes at the end of Blenheim Lane where the road is adopted but is not metalled. The County Council have previously filled in the potholes but despite asking them to do so a number of times over the past year and them agreeing to improve the surface, no action had been taken. The resident advised they would be happy to fill the holes if the Parish Council could arrange for some scalplings or crushed stone to be delivered. It was noted that anyone carrying out any work on the Public Highway required the correct level of Public Liability insurance. In view of this, Council noted the very generous offer from the resident but decided to report the potholes via Highways (and the Clerk to chase up as necessary). Robert would also discuss any possible action with the contractor when he met with them next week.

Action: Clerk to report potholes to Highways and Robert to discuss them with the contractor mentioned in 6.3.2 above. Clerk to also notify resident as above.

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

Mary Ann had the book and there was nothing to report. The book would be passed on to Bill.

6.5 Cemetery – to receive any reports

No reports were received. However the Chairman noted that it would be prudent to start work on the design of the Garden of Remembrance, and Mary Ann agreed to take on this task.

Action: Mary Ann to start design work for Garden of Remembrance.

6.6 Allotments – to receive any reports

A brief report had been received from Martin Shann to advise that the half yearly Allotment Association meeting had been held in late March and there were no animal problems to report. With the agreement of Elm Farm the trees along the southern boundary of the allotments had been trimmed. Permission was needed for greenhouses on plot 1 (8ftX6ft) and plot 27 (10ft X 8ft). There were 4 people on the waiting list, and one plot appears to have been abandoned and it was expected to put a request to the council next month to terminate the tenancy agreement. The Chairman noted that he had just received a phone call from Martin Shann before the meeting telling him that the abandoned plot had now been relinquished voluntarily.

The allotment tenants would also be taking part in the Open Gardens again this year. Council resolved to approve the two requests for greenhouses on plots 1 and 27. The Clerk would inform the Allotment Association accordingly.

Action: Clerk to advise AA re greenhouse permission as above.

6.7 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

A very brief report was given. It was still hoped that Wifi would be available in the Newell Room and this work was ongoing. The cinema nights were proving very successful.

6.8 Pond – to consider quote for bulrush treatment at pond

Unfortunately no quote for the bulrush work had yet been received. The Clerk would chase up the pond man.

Action: Clerk to follow up as above.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions

The three applications were shown on the projector and each one was discussed in turn. It was noted that the Hurst Lane application had since been withdrawn. The Chairman also declared an interest (as a neighbouring resident) in the two items regarding the Wroslyn Road Industrial Estate and had signed the book accordingly.

7.1 Applications Received:

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|---------------------|--|
| 15/00722/FUL | LAND EAST OF WILLOUGHBY FIELDS, WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.
Change of use from Builders storage yard to residential site, demolition of commercial garage, erection of a detached dwelling and private garage for Mr Gary Findlay. |
| 15/00939/HHD | 19 OAKLAND CLOSE, FREELAND.
Single story rear extension for Mr P & S Gilford. |
| 15/00986/HHD | 24 CHURCH VIEW, FREELAND.
Single storey rear extension for Mr & Mrs B Hunt. |
| 15/01001/HHD | 2 HURST LANE, FREELAND.
Erection of single and two storey rear extensions for Mr Stephen Rogers.
<u>This application had been withdrawn.</u> |

Council agreed unanimously that there were no comments or objections that they wished to raise for the Oakland Close and Church View applications. However concerns were raised about the Willoughby Fields application. As well as concerns about overlooking and the problem of parking, it was noted that the original planning application for the Willoughby Fields development showed the rear area being an open shared communal garden with the existing garages to be removed on completion of the site. These garages had never been removed nor the rear area made into a communal garden and the current planning application detailed above now meant that the applicant has no intention of fulfilling the original agreement. Council **resolved** to write to WODC to point out these concerns.

Action: Clerk to write to WODC Planners as above.

7.2 Applications Approved: None.

7.3 Applications Refused: None.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn:

15/01001/HHD 2 HURST LANE, FREELAND.
Erection of single and two storey rear extensions for Mr Stephen Rogers.

7.5 To note any update following planning refusal in July 2014 for an extractor system at unit 17 on Wroslyn Road Industrial Estate. Plus to note numerous breaches of planning conditions at this unit and to consider a suggestion from a resident to write to the letting agents of the Industrial Estate to advise them of the planning conditions in place for the units.

A resident had expressed their disappointment to the Clerk that no action had yet been taken with Unit 17's extractor fan. The residents are beginning to lose faith in the system, especially noting how Unit 17 apparently operated an extractor since February 2014, had retrospective planning refused in July '14 and yet is only now being enforced due to an error by WODC chasing the wrong tenant. They also advised that when WODC visited the site recently, there were 4 other breaches of planning or conditions of the original 1979 approval. They suggest the Parish Council writes to the letting agents (Koopmans) to ensure they are aware of the restrictive conditions that apply to the site so that they can ensure the units are let to appropriate tenants.

Council **resolved** to write to the letting agents to remind them of their obligations with ensuring tenants are aware of the site conditions from the start of the let to prevent aggravation on both sides (residents and tenants).

Action: Clerk to write to letting agents as above.

7.6 To note any update regarding resident's complaint re noise and smell from extractor fan at unit 2 on Wroslyn Road Industrial Estate

The resident who raised concerns regarding the extractor fan at Unit 2 had emailed the Clerk to give an update on the current situation. Andrew Ward (WODC Environmental Health Officer) visited the site on 9th April to take noise measurements. The resident decided to contact the tenant direct and arranged a meeting with him later that afternoon at his premises. The tenant was genuinely surprised at the level of noise when he was invited to visit the resident's garden and immediately agreed to resolve the issue. The tenant has ordered the necessary equipment to run the extractor back to the south elevation and has advised Mr Ward and Mr Mynehan accordingly. Council noted this update and were pleased that the situation appeared to be almost resolved.

7.7 To discuss any response received from Daniel Family Homes to letter sent inviting him to APM and urging him to hold an open village meeting

The Clerk reported that Terry Daniel had confirmed his attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting and he would be bringing along the plans to present to the residents. A 30 minute slot had been provided for this presentation, and the residents who had contacted the Council had all been informed of his attendance.

8. FINANCIAL MATTERS

8.1 Presentation of the monthly financial report

The monthly financial report was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 31st March 2015 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 noted that some tweaking was still required with the new Scribe accounts system as the current balance budget figure did not appear to make sense. The Clerk was working with the designer of the software package to iron out the queries and hoped to have this done by the next meeting. It was also noted that some budgets were showing negative balances, and it was agreed for these to be reviewed to try and remove the negative balances where possible by transfer of funds from reserves.

Action: Clerk and Chairman to meet to resolve negative balances and to discuss the tweaks required in the Scribe accounts system.

8.2 Approval of invoices for payment

The Council approved invoices for payment as listed on the invoices sheet distributed with the meeting papers.

Council **resolved** to approve the following invoices for payment:

Cheque Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
102186	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary April 2015	£600.42
102187	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 20.04.15	£12.50
102188	Bill Phillips	Litter picking Jan/Feb/March	£250.00
102189	WODC	Grass cutting invoices x 3	£633.60
102190	OALC	Annual sub 2015-16	£288.07
102191	ORCC	Annual sub 2015-16	£65.00
		Total:	£1,849.59

8.3 Draft Statement of Receipts and Payments 01.04.14 - 31.03.15 for approval

A draft receipts and payments statement for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 had been prepared and circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting and the statement was accepted.

8.4 Review of VAT reclaim

Council reviewed and approved the VAT reclaim for the period 1st January 2015 – 31st March 2015 and it was signed by the Clerk.

8.5 Any other financial business – none.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The following were received, noted and/or considered:

(a) WODC – Pre-submission Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 plus West Oxfordshire Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule – details had been emailed round for information.

(b) OALC – members update March – details had been emailed round for information.

(c) Old shop site – to consider a suggestion from a resident to set up a co-operative to sell shares to purchase the old shop site.

A resident had contacted the Clerk to see if the Council can float the idea of forming a co-operative at the Annual Parish Meeting to purchase the old shop site plot of land (currently on sale for £600K).

The resident suggests selling shares at approx. £50 each, with a need to sell about 12,000 shares - but villagers (only) could purchase more than one share and perhaps not be allowed to sell for the first 5 years.

After some discussion, Councillors didn't feel this was a feasible option. Whilst they noted the point about villagers being able to purchase more than one share, it would ultimately mean that every house in Freeland would be asked to spend approx. £1,000 each to buy the land alone and this would not include solicitor's fees and then building costs on top. The Clerk would inform the resident accordingly.

Action: Clerk to inform resident as above.

Plus additional items received since agenda papers circulated:

(d) Little Free Library – a request had been received to set up a little free library outside a resident's house on Wroslyn Road. Details of a little free library had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting which basically was a small box filled with books that residents could access to take and book and return a book free of charge. It encouraged community spirit and Councillors were happy for this request to be pursued.

(e) Playing field query – this item had already been dealt with under item 6(b).

(f) OALC – details sent round re a project about war memorials – to record the condition of the war memorial and look at ways to preserve and protect it. It was agreed to forward this information to the Parochial Church Council in case it was of interest to them.

Action: Clerk to forward details to PCC.

(g) WODC Community Activities Grant – information had been received noting the application deadline of 30th April. It was agreed to apply for a grant to cover the cost of the Little Free Library box. Mathew would complete the application.

Action: Matthew to complete and submit grant application.

(h) Vodafone Rural Open Sure Signal – an invitation had been received to submit details in case a space comes up in the programme. This has already been discussed under item 5.2.

10. CIRCULATION

April circulation – out at meeting.

February circulation – none.

January and March circulation – still out.

11. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

Although Colin was present it was decided he would update everyone at the Annual Parish Meeting on Friday.

12. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

A brief update was given that there was a new temporary headteacher, Miss Sarah Kerswell as Mrs McGilvray had resigned (although she would remain in post until the end of August). Mrs McGilvray was currently off on long term compassionate leave following the death of her husband.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

None.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING (TO INCLUDE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL): Monday 18th May 2015, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.

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