

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 19TH JUNE 2017, IN THE VILLAGE HALL, FREELAND, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 8.00PM.

PRESENT:	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Robert Crocker
	Councillors:	Tim Webster, Matthew Ruddle, Peter Foster, Mary Ann Canning
	District Councillors:	Colin Dingwall
	County Councillor:	Liam Walker (from 8.15pm)
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

20 residents were present for this session.

Steve Dalton, from Carlton Design Partnership together with Ross Heriot from Sovereign Housing and Paul Adams, from Mears New Homes were also all present for this session.

Steve Dalton gave a short presentation about plans to amend the layout of the site on the South side of the A4095 that had been granted planning permission for 41 houses with access onto the A4095, previously arranged by Terry Daniel from Daniel Family Homes.

Steve explained that the site layout originally produced by Daniel Family Homes was an indicative plan only and that it had a number of issues which needed to be addressed. These were as follows:

- Some existing rear gardens would be open to public spaces leaving unprotected boundaries;
- The through pedestrian access was not in compliance with Secure by Design standards;
- There was insufficient space/access for easement to connect to the sewer network;
- The gardens to properties on the Southern boundary were exposed to noise nuisance from the Industrial Estate;
- The garage sizes and parking spaces were not in compliance with Local Authority standards;
- There was insufficient SUDS drainage capacity for the development and it was in an unsuitable location adjacent to existing properties and uphill for some new units for which it was designed;
- The natural ecology and native species habitats and foraging routes were compromised by development across the Southern boundary.

Due to the reasons stated above, Steve explained that the site layout had had to be changed. The SUDS drainage had been moved to the Southern boundary of the site (subject to agreement by Thames Water), and this meant that the houses that were situated there had been relocated to the Eastern side of the site. This relocation had also solved the issue of noise nuisance for these gardens as they were no longer situated by the Industrial Estate. Garage sizes and parking spaces had been amended so that they were compliant with Local Authority standards. The through pedestrian access had also been altered to ensure compliance with Secure by Design standards.

A visual display of the new and old plans were available for residents to view at the meeting – these had also been emailed to residents prior to the meeting. Residents were encouraged to give their views to Steve who was keen to hear what they thought about the new plans and advised that they could still be amended as they were not the final plans.

Residents were given the opportunity to ask any questions and a number of concerns were raised including a buffer zone for Great Crested Newts and the Ecology Surveys that had been carried out that were deemed to be totally insufficient; the drainage of the site that was felt to be in the wrong place and concerns about future flooding; concerns about the houses being relocated to the rear of the gardens of properties on Wroslyn Road and the lack of privacy and possible overlooking this would now create;

Councillors also raised concerns re the drainage and asked Steve to come back and state by what percentage their scheme would improve the drainage of the site. Concerns were also raised regarding lack of privacy and closeness of some properties to existing properties, plus the fact that the Ordnance Survey maps that were used to draw up the plans were out of date and did not reflect the current layout of existing properties.

After a lengthy discussion and question and answer session, Steve and his team were thanked for attending the meeting and residents were able to continue their feedback to Steve at the back of the Hall so that the rest of the Parish Council meeting could continue. Residents were encouraged to feedback comments to Steve Dalton either in person or via the Parish Clerk. Steve and residents concerned with this development left the meeting at 8.50pm.

The few remaining residents wished to listen to the Planning Item about the application in Nash Lane – the Chairman therefore brought this item forward so it could be taken next.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:

7.1 Applications Received:

17/01373/FUL

11 NASH LANE, FREELAND.

Erection of detached dwelling for Mr J Dalton.

A number of concerns had been raised by residents about this application. There was a Tree Preservation Order on the oak tree that was situated next to the site, and many concerns had been raised regarding loss of light to number 18 Hurst Lane, potential overlooking, discrepancies over the site measurements, oak tree measurements and those quoted in the plans, loss of privacy, noise disturbance, and the proposed height of the dwelling being out of keeping to the surrounding properties. Residents were given an opportunity to speak at the meeting and reconfirm their concerns. After further discussion, Council **resolved** to object to the application on the grounds quoted above.

Action: Clerk to write objection letter as above.

17/01570/HHD

176 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Erection of single and two storey extensions for Mr James Eaton.

After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** not to make any comments or objections to the above application.

7.2 Applications Approved: None.

7.3 Applications Refused:

16/03948/OUT

LAND WEST OF CHURCH ROAD, LONG HANBOROUGH.

Residential development comprising 94 dwellings, including starter homes for Cantay Estates Ltd.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.

7.5 West Oxfordshire Local Plan Examination Update — to discuss any feedback received from the hearing updates

Mary Ann and Robert had both attended the hearings and gave a brief update. Council thanked Mary Ann for producing the Stage 3 Hearing Statement that had been submitted to WODC in readiness for the next hearing in July. A suggestion was made of setting up a working party to discuss what residents would like to see in Freeland in terms of development over the next 50 years so that a plan could be drawn up, rather than waiting for developers to put forward potential unwanted plans. It was agreed that Robert would come up with a plan of how to do this for the next meeting.

Action: Robert to propose a way forward to setting up a working party as above.

7.6 11 Nash Lane application – to note various concerns raised from residents about this application

A number of objections and concerns had been received from residents and these had been circulated to Councillors and were duly noted. Most of the concerns were regarding overlooking, loss of light, noise disturbance, the discrepancies regarding the measurements of the site plans and of the size of the oak tree and concerns regarding the height of the proposed dwelling and damage to the tree that had a Tree Preservation Order attached to it.

7.7 5 year housing land supply – to note information submitted to WODC regarding 5 year land supply for Freeland

The Parish Council had been made aware of additional sites that had been submitted to WODC regarding the 5-year housing land supply. These sites included the Wroslyn Road Industrial Estate, the Garden Centre site and pockets of land around this area, the nursing home site, land to the East of Wroslyn Road behind Woodlands, plus land on the corner of Pigeon House Lane. None of these sites had been finalised as they had not been included in the 2014 SHLAA, and only 2 of them had been included in the updated 2016 SHELAA. Colin encouraged Councillors to make comments on these sites for the Local Plan Inspector to review.

The rest of the agenda was then taken in order.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Bill Phillips – away, Jane Linnell – at another meeting, 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.

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 Annual Meeting held on Monday 15th May 2017

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 15th May 2017 were approved and signed as a true record of those proceedings.

4.2 To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 15th May 2017

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 15th May 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

A brief update was given. It has been reported last month that the site near Millwood End in Long Hanborough was currently on hold, however WODC had now lodged an objection so this was likely to put this on hold for a longer period. In the meantime, contact had been made by Harlequin, who were working on behalf of CTIL to discuss the possibility of any new sites in the local area that may be interested in having a mast on their site. CTIL had liaised with radio planners and had moved their search area further south, so it now included Church Hanborough and the centre of Pigeon House Lane in Freeland. If anyone knew of any landowners in this area that would be interested in having a mobile mast Peter asked them to make contact with him.

6.2 Community Speedwatch Scheme – to update on progress and to approve purchase of Dictaphone

The Speedwatch Scheme was now up and running with 4 residents trained to participate in the scheme. Reports were being provided to the local Police of any vehicles caught speeding, and a

copy of the report was being given to the Clerk. In order to assess how many vehicles were being monitored each time, plus for ease of recording the vehicle details, Council **resolved** to approve the purchase of a dictaphone and a clicker for the Speedwatch team.

Action: Clerk to order Dictaphone and clicker.

6.3 The Big Lunch – to receive an update after the event

The event was a success with approximately 70 people in attendance. Matthew passed on his thanks to everyone who had helped at the event, and the Councillors passed on their thanks to Matthew for organising the event.

6.4 Freeland Methodist Chapel – to receive an update on future of Chapel

A brief update was given. A meeting had been arranged in the Village Hall on 6th July to see if there was enough community support to explore the possibility of buying the Chapel for community use. This meeting was due to be advertised in the next Grapevine.

8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

A very brief update was given regarding doorstep crime, leisure centre contracts and Community Facilities Grants. A suggestion was being made to relax the rules a little on the grant conditions as only £120K of grants had been given out so far, leaving £80K of grant money still available.

A response had finally been obtained from Martin Sutton at Stagecoach regarding the community bus idea, although he had not had chance to even look at the idea yet. Liam was hoping to arrange for a representative from Freeland and Hanborough to get together to take this forward and to meet with Martin. He would continue to chase this up.

A new trampoline park was going to be built in West Oxfordshire, although the location for this had not yet been finalised.

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 28th April 2017 and the receipts and payments received or paid out in the last month. A new section showing the General Reserve Funds had been added and the VAT refunds would be allocated into this fund. The bank statement was checked as agreeing with the figures on the finance sheet and signed by Bill.

9.2 Freeland Pre-school Lighting Appeal – to consider request for donation towards lighting appeal

A request had been received from the Committee Chair of Freeland Preschool to request a donation towards the preschool lighting appeal. They needed to raise £1,000 in funds for a new lighting system as they were currently running from a temporary system that needed replacing. After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to donate £100.00 to the Preschool lighting appeal.

Action: Clerk to forward cheque to Preschool.

9.3 Village Hall Insurance Renewal – to approve the insurance renewal premium for the Village Hall & CRF – details emailed around

Allied Westminster had confirmed the insurance renewal premium for the Village Hall and CRF to be £1,196.30. The current long-term agreement had expired and the renewal premium quoted included a discount for the policy being subject to a new 3-year long-term agreement being taken out.

The Clerk had also obtained a quote from Norris and Fisher for the insurance renewal and they were slightly cheaper at £1,000.21 for the year.

After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to approve the insurance renewal premium from Allied Westminster, and to enter into a further 3-year long-term agreement. The Clerk had also scanned the insurance renewal documents and sent them to the Village Hall Management Committee Chairman and Treasurer to confirm that the indemnity limits and contents cover were adequate – confirmation had been received that the current cover did not need to be amended.

Action: Clerk to renew insurance policy as above.

9.4 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 all of the following invoices for payment:

Cheque Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
102379	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary June 2017	£612.38
102380	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 19.06.17 & 04.06.17 (Big Lunch)	£80.00
102381	WODC	Grass cutting April 2017	£170.23
102382	Matthew Ruddle	Refund Big Lunch refreshment expenses	£9.76
102383	Lawn Science (Oxford) Ltd	Lawn treatment at Village Hall	£37.50
102384	Hanborough Day Centre	Annual donation	£80.00
102385	Freeland Grapevine	Annual donation	£100.00
102386	Freeland Parochial Church Council	Annual donation	£500.00
102387	Parish Online	Annual subscription	£33.60
102388	Freeland Preschool	Donation towards lighting appeal	£100.00
102389	Allied Westminster	Village Hall Insurance Renewal 2017-18	£1,196.30
		Total:	£2,919.77

9.4 Annual Return - approval of sections 1 and 2 of annual return – to be circulated at meeting

Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Council **resolved** to approve firstly Section 1 and then Section 2 of the Annual Return and these were signed by the Chairman. The Internal Auditor had inspected the accounts and signed off his section on the annual return. The Clerk was currently working on the explanations of the significant variances in the accounts prior to forwarding it all to the external auditors.

9.5 Any other financial business – None.

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

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

10.1.2 Broken rung on Multiplay – to approve quote for repair work

No quote had been obtained as yet. It was suggested asking the Village Hall Maintenance Worker to provide a quote to do the work – Robert agreed to ask him.

Action: Robert to obtain quote as above.

10.1.3 Cycle racks on Blenheim Lane – to update on removal of overgrown bushes

This had now been done and Councillors passed on their thanks to Tim for completing this work. A resident had also passed on their thanks for the work being completed.

10.1.4 Area around shed on field - to discuss how to improve the area of the playing field next to the shed

It was noted that the area around the shed had become very overgrown and was in need of some clearance work to remove the old cricket shields and rubbish. Tim and Robert agreed to take a look and see what they could do.

Action: Tim and Robert to see if they can tidy area or report back at next meeting.

10.1.5 New path on field - to discuss and agree ongoing maintenance of the area next to the new path on the playing field

It was also noted that the spring walkway area had also become very overgrown with weeds and nettles and needed clearing. Robert advised that he would be strimming this area the following day.

Action: Robert to strim area as above.

10.2 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports:

Overgrown hedge Bumpy Lane, overhanging willow tree opposite 47 Broadmarsh Lane, broken sign by nursing home, overgrown bushes in gardens/by paths

Overgrown hedge in Bumpy Lane -this had been cut back;

Overhanging willow tree on bend opposite 47 Broadmarsh Lane – this needed reviewing and would be discussed next month;

Broken sign by nursing home – sign had come off post and was not visible due to length of grass – the Clerk would report this to Highways;

Overgrown plants in gardens/by paths – concern raised by post ladies as difficulty getting to some properties – agreed to place a note in next Grapevine.

Action: Clerk to contact Highways and put article in Grapevine as above.

10.2.1 Witney-Eynsham shuttle bus idea – to note any response received from Stagecoach regarding this proposal

The Clerk had chased up a response from Stagecoach numerous times but to date no response had been received. Liam had been in touch with Martin Sutton, and he responded to apologise for the lack of response and to advise that he had not had time to look at the proposal as yet. As noted in item 8, Liam hoped to arrange for a representative from Freeland and Hanborough to get together to take this forward and to meet with Martin. He would continue to chase this up.

Action: Liam to chase up a response and arrange meeting with Freeland and Hanborough.

10.2.2 Cuckoo Lane – to discuss making a request to have some minor alterations made to Cuckoo Lane before Garden Village is established – plan to be circulated

No plan had yet been circulated. Mary Ann agreed to work with Robert to produce the plan that could hopefully be discussed next month.

Action: Robert and Mary Ann to produce and circulate plan for minor alterations to Cuckoo Lane for discussion at the next meeting.

10.2.3 Double Yellow Lines – update on progress on getting a quotation from OCC Highways

A quotation had been obtained from Highways which was approximately £1,700. However, this was just for actually doing the physical work and in addition there was the fee for consultation of £2,600 which Highways had to carry out. This involved consulting the Police, posting notices at all the sites involved and putting notices in the local paper. A meeting would then be held at which all parties could express their opinions, including all householders affected. It was stressed that it was very important the Parish Council made sure that the Village were in full agreement *before* this consultation period as, if there were any significant number of objections, the scheme would not be approved and the Parish Council would still have to pay the £2,600 fee. It was also mentioned that, if the scheme were approved in principle but needed anything but very minor tweaking, it would need to go around the consultation cycle again - with another fee involved.

When concerns were expressed at the prospect of getting *all* the Village to agree to the proposals it was noted that the extensive scheme was indeed a problem, but without strong local approval and very few objections it would not get passed.

So, the cost of the scheme would be about £4,300 (if there was just one consultation cycle).

Some concerns were expressed by Councillors in getting this scheme approved. However, after further discussion, it was agreed to write to the households who would be affected by the double yellow lines in the three main affected areas on Wroslyn Road (near the School, the bend leading southwards to the Church and the area north of Willoughby Fields) to see if they would agree in principle to the idea.

It was also suggested that cars parked at night in a built-up area on an unlit road had to have their side lights on – it was unclear if this was legally enforceable so it was agreed to ask Highways or the Police if this was the case.

Action: Clerk to write to households who would be affected by double yellow lines and to contact Highways/Police as above.

10.2.4 Zebra Crossing – to discuss resident's request for zebra crossing on Wroslyn Road

A request had been received from a resident to have a zebra crossing installed somewhere along Wroslyn Road so that children could cross the road safely. It was felt that this may not be possible as the amount of traffic on this road may not be sufficient to warrant the expenditure of a crossing which would cost in the region of £17K. After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to make a request to Highways to see if a crossing could be installed.

Action: Clerk to make request to Highways for zebra crossing as above.

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

Mary Ann had the book and would pass it on to Bill. There were no problems to report.

10.2 Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports

No reports were received.

10.3.1 To receive an update on the progress for the Garden of Remembrance

A brief update was given. It was still too hot to plant the trees and plants, so these were being cared for at Tim's nursery. Some additional soil was being delivered to level up the ground, and this would be done imminently. It was hoped to carry out the seeding in August.

10.3.2 Maintenance - to consider approving schedule of work for gardener's role

The schedule had been circulated just prior to the meeting so this would be carried forward to next month, once Councillors had had a chance to look at it in detail.

10.3.3 Wooden entrance gates – to consider and approve quotes for painting the gates

Two quotes had been obtained for the painting of the gate, one from Whites Cleaning and the other from Richard Buck a local contractor. The quote from Whites Cleaning was for £545 for 3 days' work and this included all materials. The quote from Mr Buck was for £360 and did not include the cost of any materials, the cost of which was not provided. After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to approve the £545 quote from White's Cleaning. The Clerk would arrange the painting of the gates.

Action: Clerk to arrange painting of gates.

10.3.4 To approve quote for 2 additional benches to be placed in Garden of Remembrance

The quote for 2 additional benches for £1,540 had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. Council **resolved** to approve the quote for the 2 extra benches.

10.4 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

A brief report was given. There had been an ongoing problem with the fire alarm which had now been rectified. The internal lights and ceiling had been cleaned, and all of the high-level sensors had been replaced. A suggestion had been made to have a flat screen TV installed in the Newell Room for the photography group (and others), to eliminate the need for projectors. It was agreed to see if they could fundraise for half of the cost of the TV.

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

- (a) OALC – members update May & invite to AGM – details had been emailed around.
- (b) Broadmarsh Lane Amenity Area – to discuss and approve removal of poplar trees – two poplar trees required removal as they were rotten and causing a hazard – Council **resolved** to approve their removal. This was being paid for by a resident who was building a dwelling next to the amenity area.
- (c) West Oxfordshire Citizen's Advice Bureau – invite to AGM on Weds 2nd August at 7.30pm at Corn Exchange, Witney – details had been emailed around.
- (d) Community First Oxfordshire – Summer Newsletter – details had been emailed around.
- (e) St Mary's Church Flower Festival – request for display for weekend of 1st & 2nd July – details emailed around. Unfortunately, no one was available to do a display.

Plus additional items received since agenda sent out:

- (f) Allotments – Numerous emails received regarding item 12 and the circumstances surrounding the allotment tenancy termination – details had been emailed around.
- (g) Pond – query raised from resident re making more of the pond – making it more accessible/highlighting it as a community asset etc?. It was agreed to discuss this further next month but in the meantime to ask our local contractor to mow the grass steps around the pond.

Action: Clerk to ask contractor to mow grass steps as above.

12. TERMINATION OF ALLOTMENT TENANCY – TO NOTE AND DISCUSS A RECENT TERMINATION OF AN ALLOTMENT TENANCY, THE ASSOCIATED TERMS OF THE TERMINATION AND THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE TERMINATION

A difficult situation and dispute at the allotments had arisen over the past few months which had ultimately come to a head in the past week. This had resulted in the termination of a tenancy by the

Allotment Committee due to allegations of bullying, harassment, intimidation and threatening behaviour. The terms of the termination caused some concerns amongst the Councillors so this was investigated by the Chairman and the Clerk.

The Chairman and Clerk had spoken to three of the people involved in the dispute, and from initial discussions it appeared that there had been a clash of personalities between at least 2 members, possibly more.

When reviewing the Tenancy Agreement and Allotment Agreement, it appeared that the Allotment Committee had acted outside of their remit and powers in terminating the tenancy on the grounds they cited: the 3-letter rule had not been followed regarding termination of plot tenancies, and it was far from certain as to whether the Association could legally enforce this decision. It was also not clear under which powers the Association had dismissed the plot holder from the Committee, as it appeared they had acted outside of the adopted Constitution and it was uncertain as to whether the dismissal process followed would be legally defensible.

The Parish Council did not wish to take sides, and after some discussion, Council **resolved** to send a letter to the Allotment Committee to encourage them to find a fair and legally supportable resolution to prevent the situation becoming increasingly unpleasant with the possibility of legal challenges and their associated costs. It was suggested that the Association take a step back and put the termination in abeyance whilst investigating with all members the serious allegations made against the plot holder, and then to attempt a fair resolution.

Action: Clerk to send letter to Allotment Committee.

13. CIRCULATION

No June circulation.

May circulation – out at meeting.

No April circulation.

March circulation – still out.

14. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

A brief update about the school was given by the Clerk. Recent Ofsted inspection resulted in a 'Good' rating for the school, and plans were already in place to work towards achieving 'Outstanding' over the next few years. Freeland School's first festival would be taking place on Saturday 8th July from 12.00 – 10.00pm. There would be live bands, various stalls, open mic, BBQ, hog roast, bar and lots of activities for the children.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

Conservation area – it was suggested having a discussion next meeting about how to make part of Freeland a Conservation Area. This would be placed on the next agenda.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Monday 17th July, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 11.00pm.