

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 16TH MARCH 2015, IN FREELAND HALL, FREELAND, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 8.00PM.

PRESENT:	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Robert Crocker
	Councillors:	Tim Webster, Jane Linnell, Bill Phillips, Janet Dalton, Matthew Ruddle
	District Councillors:	Not present
	County Councillor:	Not present
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

New Councillor Matthew Ruddle was welcomed to the meeting and his Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public were present for this session.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Mary Ann Canning - 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 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 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 16TH FEBRUARY 2015

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

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5.1 Defibrillator for phone box on corner of Parklands – update on progress in installing the equipment

The second defibrillator had been installed but had unfortunately proved to be defective as the light and heater both did not work, plus one of the hinges was broken. A replacement was ordered and this had now been installed by the electrician. An additional charge of £60.00 had been made by the electrician to carry out the swap over and Council noted and approved this expenditure. It was agreed to add this second defibrillator to the list of items to be checked on the play park rota with immediate effect.

5.2 Memorial trees – to discuss any sponsorship requests and to finalise wording for brass plaques

Four sponsorship requests had been received from residents and the Football Club. This was duly noted. After some discussion, the following wording was agreed for the plaques:

"To commemorate

NAME

who gave his life in WW(1/2)" (3 lines).

Action: Clerk to order 15 brass plaques (6" x 4") with the appropriate wording

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

The Clerk had written to Mr Cameron and was awaiting a reply.

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

The fence was beyond repair and the broken piece 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.

5.5 Freeland Methodist Chapel – to receive an update on any meetings that have taken place with the Methodists regarding ways to save the Chapel from closure

The suggestions from the last meeting had been taken to the Village Hall Management Committee who were in support of the need to promote the Chapel and did suggest it as an alternative for potential bookings whenever the Hall was unavailable. However it was noted that only an increase in worshippers would ultimately save the Chapel from closure and it was for the minister and the current Methodists to promote the Chapel and the Methodist circuit. One of the worshippers had agreed to give a talk at the Annual Parish Meeting so it was agreed that nothing further could be done at the current time and therefore to remove this item from the PC agenda.

5.6 Annual Parish Meeting – to confirm date and to finalise arrangements and topics for discussion

The hall had been booked for Friday 24th April and after further discussion the topics for the APM were agreed as:

- The Future of the Methodist Chapel
- How to use the Defibrillators
- A proposed housing development on the A4095
- Memorial trees and tree sponsorship
- Play park development update

The Clerk would produce the flyers and circulate them to Councillors for distribution to all homes in Freeland. Janet agreed to organise the refreshments.

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 were no problems to report. The book was passed to Janet and then on to Matthew. A £380 donation towards the play park had been received from the Teddy Girls from a coffee morning they held on Saturday 14th March. Council were most grateful for their continued support and agreed to send a letter of thanks. It was also reported that unfortunately no parents with children had attended this event, so the Clerk would try and generate some support via a social media page that had been set up for Mums and Dads in Freeland.

Action: Clerk to write letter of thanks and post note on social media page as above.

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

As Mary Ann was not present no update was given. However, as detailed last month the Clerk had posted on the Freeland Mums and Dads social media page asking for letters of support for the plans to develop the play park and 18 letters had so far been received. These would be forwarded on to Mary Ann upon her return from holiday.

Action: Clerk to forward letters of support as above.

6.2.3 Shed on the field – to update on progress in removing the shed and to discuss a request from the Football Club for purchase of a storage container

The Football Club had applied for a grant of up to £1,000 for a new shed via the Football Association which, although a grant of £685 was approved by the local FA, it was ultimately rejected by the central FA as not fitting their strict criteria for eligibility. So, instead, the local FA proposed that the Club apply for a grant to install a metal container and details of this had been circulated to Councillors prior to the PC meeting. The Council discussed this option but agreed that such a 30 foot long metal container was too much like the previously unloved green Portakabin changing rooms and would be very unattractive in this sensitive area. A bespoke lean-to shed to be added onto the existing (newer) storage building was the preferred option and the Clerk would write to the Club to confirm this.

Action: Clerk to write to Club as above.

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

It was agreed that it was too early to decide so Council agreed to postpone this item until next month when a review of the field could be done.

Action: Clerk to place this item on next month's agenda.

6.3 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports

No reports were received.

6.3.1 New Bus Shelter outside village hall – to approve quote for bus shelter base and update on progress with order

The new bus shelter had now been ordered via OCC and would take approx. 6 weeks to be delivered. Robert agreed to provide a quote for the base and the Clerk would forward him the ground plan from the bus shelter company.

Action: Clerk to forward ground plan to Robert.

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

£1,500 had been received from OCC to help towards the cost of minor road repairs. Only potholes less than 40mm deep were allowed to be repaired, anything above this needed to be reported via OCC Highways in the normal way. Robert had spoken to the tarmac contractor who was willing to assist with fixing the smaller potholes. Robert would be back in contact with him again shortly.

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

There was nothing further to report currently. The Clerk had spoken to the Highways Area Steward and he would be getting back to her shortly.

Action: Clerk to chase Highways if no response.

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

The Clerk was chasing up the Highways Area Steward and would report back next month. The Clerk had also spoken to the school who were willing to support a letter being sent to the parents asking for support but this would have to come from the Parish Council rather than the school.

Action: Clerk to chase up Highways.

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

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

6.5 Cemetery – to receive any reports

No reports were received.

6.5.1 Report by the Chairman following investigations into above ground mausoleums

A report had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting regarding some investigations into above ground mausoleums. The Chairman was thanked for carrying out the investigation work which would have taken some considerable time to gather all of the information. After some discussions, Council voted unanimously that the above ground mausoleums were an unsuitable option for Freeland cemetery due to the concerns raised in the report regarding expense, leaking issues and the need to employ staff to maintain them.

6.5.2 Appointment of a Councillor to the Cemetery Working Group to replace Martin Shann

The Chairman asked for a volunteer to join the Cemetery Working Group to replace Martin. Matthew volunteered and was unanimously voted to be appointed to this group.

6.6 Allotments – to receive any reports

A brief report had been received to advise of a change in tenant on one of the plots, and that rat treatment had been carried out on the allotments successfully. The half-yearly plot holders' meeting was due to take place this month.

6.7 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

A very brief report was given. The AGM had been held and all officers had been reappointed. It was still hoped that Wifi would be available in the Newell Room and this work was ongoing. It was also noted that tonight's parish council meeting had had to be moved to the Hall due to the heating not working in the Newell Room, and this would be investigated.

6.8 Pond – to consider if any work is required around the pond area (from previous discussions this was to be reviewed in the Spring)

It was agreed that some maintenance work was required to remove about 50% of the bulrushes in the pond. The Clerk would obtain a quote for this work.

Action: Clerk to obtain quote for bulrush removal.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions

7.1 Applications Received:

15/00425/HHD BOLVEAN, BROADMARSH LANE, FREELAND.

Two storey side extension incorporating existing single storey extension for Mr & Mrs James.

Council agreed unanimously that there were no comments or objections to the above proposals that they wished to raise.

7.2 Applications Approved: None.

7.3 Applications Refused:

14/1234/P/OP LAND SOUTH OF WITNEY ROAD, LONG HANBOROUGH.

Erection of up to 169 dwellings including new access, open spaces and associated works for Mr G Flint.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn:

15/00094/HHD 19 OAKLAND CLOSE, FREELAND.

Erection of two storey rear extension for Mr & Mrs P & S Gilford.

7.5 To note any update following planning refusal in July 2014 for an extractor system at unit 17 on Wroslyn Road Industrial Estate

A letter had been received from Giles Hughes dated 6 March to advise that the extractor unit would be removed and re-sited on the south wall "imminently". This had not yet taken place, but Councillors agreed to monitor the situation and contact WODC if this was not carried out.

7.6 To note and discuss an approach by an individual developer (Daniel Family Homes) to all village residents regarding a suggested development on open land on South side of A4095 between Broadgate and Lawrence House, and also to note a number of concerns raised by residents about the proposal.

The Parish Council had been made aware of an approach made to Freeland residents by an individual developer called Daniel Family Homes who was suggesting a development on open land on the south side of the A4095. The letter appeared to have been sent to all (or at least most) residents in the village. It suggested building 14 affordable homes - called "social houses", (although the total number of houses to be built was not indicated in the letter), plus a cemetery. Residents were asked for their views.

A number of residents had already contacted the Parish Council to express their initial concerns at this proposal, the main ones being the impact on the A4095 in terms of traffic, noise and pollution, the impact on the local services including the GP surgery and schools, that the site not being suitable for a cemetery due to the water table being too high and that the site was closing a green open space which many wished to retain. The lack of detail in the proposals and there being no mention of holding an open exhibition was also noted by several people. One resident had also expressed their support for the proposals (via a telephone conversation) because of the need in the Village for affordable houses.

After some discussion, Council agreed to write to Mr Daniel to summarise the main concerns that had been raised by the residents and to strongly urge him to hold a public exhibition that residents could

attend to view his proposals and offer their comments. It was also agreed to send him copies of all of the letters received to date and to invite him to come to the Annual Parish Meeting. The development proposal had been placed on the APM agenda and it would be good if he could attend and present more details of his plans for the site. The Clerk would write to Mr Daniel and send him copies of all of the letters received to date.

Action: Clerk to write to Mr Daniel as above.

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 27th February 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.

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 (£)
102176	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary March 2015	£600.42
102177	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 16.03.15	£12.50
102178	Freeland Football Club	Tractor fuel	£20.00
102179	Andrew Booth	Defibrillator installation	£186.30
102180	Robert Crocker	Memorial trees x 15 plus stakes	£1,068.84
102181	Nigel Green	Mowing/hedge trimming Jan/Feb/Mar	£625.00
102182	Lisa Smith	Petty cash refund	£187.91
102183	Thames Water	Water bill for allotments	£83.34
102184	Andrew Booth	Defibrillator swap over	£60.00
102185	Elliot Hall	Tree lopping in BML amenity area	£110.00
		Total:	£2,954.31

8.3 Any other financial business – It was agreed that a new signatory for the bank account was required to replace Martin Shann. Council agreed to appoint Matthew as the new signatory and the Clerk would contact the bank to arrange this.

Action: Clerk to contact bank to arrange new signatory as above.

9. To consider a proposal to change the start time of all future parish council meetings to 7.30pm rather than 8.00pm

After a brief discussion that meetings were finishing late, it was agreed unanimously to change the start time of all future parish council meetings to 7.30pm rather than 8.00pm. This would take effect immediately.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

The following were received, noted and/or considered:

- (a) ORCC March Bulletin – details had been emailed round for information.
- (b) OALC – members update February – details had been emailed round for information.
- (c) Tree trimming – request from resident to have trees trimmed on unadopted land by 120 Wroslyn Road – Council agreed to obtain a quote for the work. The Clerk would contact Elliot Hall to obtain a quote, plus it was agreed to also obtain a quote to have the large laurel hedge cut back along the straight section of Broadmarsh Lane.

Action: Clerk to arrange quotes as above.

- (d) OPFA Newsletter Winter 2015 – details had been emailed round for information.

Plus additional items received since agenda papers circulated:

- (e) Witney Road development proposal – numerous emails raising concerns re development proposal on A4095 – details had been emailed round for information.
- (f) Reusing old graves – Email received from PCC re query about reusing old graves – details had been emailed round for information. The PCC had discussed reusing old graves but in view of the fact that the church is less than 150 years old they thought it very possible that, should they reuse

spaces, the grandchildren of the original occupant of the space or even children might still be alive and could be very distressed at the reuse of the space. They therefore decided that not to seek to reuse spaces in the Freeland churchyard. Councillors noted and supported this decision.

(g) Oxford Memorial Benches – quote received from OMB for new bench by Busby Close. The quote was for a standard Oxford style bench, 1.8m long with a straight back and standard arm – this would cost £892 but Oxford Memorial Benches were willing to give a special discount of £100 as their contribution to the bench sponsorship. The Clerk would advise the resident who had enquired about sponsoring the bench.

(h) ROAR – invite to rally in Wantage on 12th April – details had been emailed round for information – no-one wished to attend.

11. CIRCULATION

March circulation – out at meeting.

February circulation – none.

January circulation – still out.

12. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

As no District or County Councillors were present there was nothing to report.

13. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

A brief update was given regarding World Book Day and an author visit to the school.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

Litter – On behalf of the Council and Village residents, Councillors thanked Bill Phillips for carrying out litter picking duties on the Council's behalf. The village was looking lovely and his efforts in keeping the village free of litter were much appreciated.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 20th April 2015, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.13pm.