

## **FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 19<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 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, Jane Linnell, Matthew Ruddle, Bill Phillips, Janet Dalton, Mary Ann Canning.
District Councillors:	Colin Dingwall
County Councillor:	Not present
Clerk:	Lisa Smith

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

One member of the public (who did not wish to speak at the meeting) was present for this session.

### **2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None.**

### **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, plus item 7 - Planning.

Mary Ann Canning (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 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015**

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015 were approved and signed as a true record of those proceedings

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

#### **5.1 Memorial trees – to receive an update on the installation of the stakes/plaques**

The plaques were being installed in time for Remembrance Day in November. Jane offered to help Robert with unscrewing the brass plaques from the wooden backs to attach them to the stakes.

Action: Robert and Jane to arrange installation of brass plaques.

#### **5.2 Mobile phone coverage in Freeland – update on response received from Vodafone Rural Open Sure Signal**

A response had been received from Vodafone to advise that the request has been passed onto their networks and government affairs team who should be in touch soon. The Clerk will chase again if no response received. A suggestion was also made of visiting the Ofcom website to check mobile coverage in the area: <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/mobile-coverage> .

#### **5.3 Memorial Bench by Busby Close – to receive any updates**

The WI had responded to state they were happy to sponsor a bench and would be arranging some fund raising activities in April 2016. It was agreed to hold off ordering the bench until some funds were received.

#### **5.4 Pond – to receive an update on the bulrush removal**

Robert and Tim had arranged to remove a large amount of the bulrushes, and the base of the pond (with many of the bulrush and tree roots) had been dug out down to the clay, which meant when it

filled up with water it should hold the water for a longer period of time. Council passed on their thanks to Tim and Robert for carrying out this work.

#### **5.5 Old shop site – to receive an update on what is happening with the old shop site**

The Clerk had spoken to John D Wood property agents and there was no further progress to report. The site was still under offer, but no contracts had yet been exchanged. The Clerk would ring back again in a few weeks to get an update on the situation.

**Action:** Clerk to contact property agents for update.

#### **5.6 SSE Funds for Resilience grant – to receive an update on the grant application**

Following the last meeting when it was agreed to apply for a generator for the Village Hall, it appears from the grant forms to be filled that any suggested project needs to be far more advanced than the PC have at present. This could not be done by the deadline of 25 September. The next deadline is April 2016. It was also suggested that Robert consults with the Village Hall Management Committee and get them to obtain details and costs of what can be installed in the way of a back-up generator. Up to £20K is available. Peter agreed to assist with completing the grant application.

**Action:** Robert to obtain quotes for generator, and Peter to assist with grant application.

#### **5.7 Defibrillator training – update on training sessions**

The Clerk was currently trying to arrange a training session in the Hall which would hopefully include CPR training.

### **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**

Peter had the book and there were no problems to report. The book was then passed to Mary Ann.

##### **6.2.1 Play park development – update on progress to develop the park, including selection of contractor to be used**

Mary Ann gave a brief update on the plans to develop the park. A tender evaluation sheet was circulated to all Councillors showing details of four quotes from various companies to supply and install the new play park equipment. The installation charges were shown separately so that the cost of the actual equipment could be accurately compared between the companies. After careful consideration Council resolved to appoint Russell Play to supply the equipment totalling £42,991(exc VAT) and to appoint Sawscape to carry out the installation at a cost of £14,615 (exc VAT), which included the hedgerow removal. It was also suggested contacting RoSPA to check if there would be any increase in the charge for future inspections once the extra equipment was installed. The Clerk would contact RoSPA to confirm.

**Action:** Clerk to contact RoSPA as above.

##### **6.2.2 Design of the new shed on the playing field – to receive an update on the initial designs for the new shed**

The plans for the new shed were nearly complete and would hopefully be ready for the next meeting.

##### **6.2.3 Multi-play with bridge equipment – to note a resident's concern that a screw was loose on the bridge**

A resident had contacted the Clerk to express concern that a screw had become loose on the wobbly bridge – this had now been fixed using a nut and bolt as a more secure replacement.

##### **6.2.4 Junior slide – to receive an update on the de-rusting/painting of the slide**

The slide had been reviewed and needed de-rusting and painting, but Councillors felt that the quote from a local contractor for £600 was rather expensive. It was agreed that Tim and Robert would carry out the work in the Spring.

##### **6.2.5 Hopscotch area by The Blowings – to receive an update on tidying up the area**

The Clerk had asked a local contractor to cut tidy up the area and this would be done shortly.

#### **6.2.6 Amenity Area – to update on meeting with resident to discuss their tree trimming requirements near Broadmarsh Lane amenity area**

The new residents of 46 Broadmarsh Lane had contacted the Clerk to trim the trees in and around their property. They had the trees recently appraised and the reports they received stated that some work is required. The residents were keen not to upset any neighbours and asked if a member of the Parish Council could meet with them to discuss if what they are proposing to do is agreeable. Tim has met with the resident and was happy with their proposal and the work has now been carried out.

#### **6.3 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports**

No reports were received.

##### **6.3.1 Minor pothole repairs - to update on whether a different contractor is able to assist**

Robert had spoken to the local contractor and had asked them to provide a quote for how much time it would take to repair various points on Wroslyn Road. A response was awaited.

##### **6.3.2 Notice boards by Village Hall – to discuss and approve quote to purchase a new wooden notice board**

The Clerk had obtained two quotes for the notice boards, and was waiting on a third. The Council agreed to wait for the third quote before making a decision.

##### **6.3.4 Dog waste bin – to consider installing an additional dog waste bin at the end of Parklands by entrance to woods**

Council agreed to consider installing an additional bin – Jane would ask around various dog walkers to find out the best location to site the bin.

**Action:** Jane to speak to dog walkers about location of bin.

##### **6.3.5 Response to the long term strategy for A40 consultation – to receive an update on the OCC consultation meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September and to discuss an appropriate response**

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the possible long term solutions to the problem of traffic congestion on the A40. Mary Ann had attended the consultation event on 25<sup>th</sup> September and the various options and costings information had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It was agreed that a far sighted solution for the whole of Oxford was required. After a long discussion, it was agreed that Councillors would submit their comments to the consultation individually.

**Action:** Councillors to respond to the A40 consultation individually.

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

Janet had the book and there was only the broken latch on the gate on BR2 to the left of Vincent's Wood to report. Robert agreed to take a look at the gate. The book was passed on to Jane. It was also reported that the tree overhanging the road by 2 Church View had now been removed.

##### **6.4.1 Rabbit shooting - concerns raised from resident re rabbit shooting in field behind Walkers Close**

A very concerned resident contacted the Clerk to express their anger and concern over a gun being fired in the field behind Walkers Close. The resident was clearly shocked that rabbit shooting was being carried out in the field. From further investigations, the shooter did have a licence and was carrying out pest control for a local farmer. The Clerk had responded to the resident and advised that it was permissible. Council noted the concerns and agreed no further action was necessary.

#### **6.5 Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports**

No reports were received.

##### **6.5.1 To receive an update on the initial plans for the design of the Garden of Remembrance**

There was nothing further to report, but it was still the intention to present the plans at the December PC meeting.

## **6.6 Allotments – to receive any reports**

A brief report had been received from the Freeland Allotment Association to advise that the first Allotment Committee meeting after the AGM was held on 13th October. A new Chair had been appointed, Tina Hollis, a new Treasurer, Sue Hooper and James Bugg continued as Secretary.

## **6.7 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports**

A brief report was given. The gutters on the Hall had all been fixed so that the water in them ran in the right direction. A big discussion had been held at the last Committee meeting about car parking and it was noted that this was not an easy problem to solve. Consideration was also being given to having cycle racks installed outside of the Hall. The Newell Room needed to have the Wi-Fi code displayed in the Room - this would be done shortly. There were still ongoing problems with the heating and water system in the Newell Room. Sam Walker had been appointed as the Sports Club Liaison Officer role and it was hoped to have an all-weather pitch at the far end of the playing field.

## **7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions**

The applications below were shown on the projector and Councillors discussed the details of the proposed changes.

### **7.1 Applications Received:**

#### **15/03447/HHD 33 CHURCH VIEW, FREELAND.**

Erection of single storey rear and first floor side extensions for Mr & Mrs A Lonsdale.

#### **15/03708/HHD 2 HURST LANE, FREELAND.**

Single storey extension for Mr Mrs S Rogers.

After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** not to make any objections to the proposed changes to the above two properties.

### **7.2 Applications Approved:**

#### **15/02135/OUT**

##### **LAND BETWEEN WYCHWOOD HOUSE AND MALVERN VILLAS, WITNEY ROAD, FREELAND.**

Outline planning application for residential development of up to 29 dwellings for Daniel Family Homes (means of access only).

#### **15/02722/FUL**

##### **LAND EAST OF WILLOUGHBY FIELDS, WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.**

Revised scheme for change of use from commercial to residential, demolish garage and erect 1 dwelling with associated environmental works for Mr Gary Findlay.

#### **15/03011/FUL**

##### **PLOT 2 WITNEY ROAD FREELAND**

Pair Of Semi-detached Dwellings (re-submission Of 14/01447/FUL) for Mr & Mrs S Ainsley.

#### **15/02842/FUL**

##### **LAND SOUTH OF 23 BROADMARSH LANE, FREELAND.**

Erection of 2 storey 3 bedroom dwelling for Mr D Hobley.

### **7.3 Applications Refused: None.**

### **7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.**

The Chairman gave a brief update on his attendance at the WODC Uplands Planning Committee Meeting where the Daniel Family Homes and Willoughby Fields applications were discussed. The WODC Planning Officer's report recommended approval of the application and a decision had been deferred from last month until a site visit had taken place. The Chairman and a local resident both spoke against the Daniel Homes application (with another resident speaking in favour) but the reasons given against the application were dismissed by the Planning Officers and the application was approved by the Committee.

The application for housing development on (what should have been) an amenity area at the rear of Willoughby Fields was also discussed at the Planning Meeting and was approved. Planning Officers advised that they could not enforce anything about laying out of the amenity area as no time limit had

been stipulated in the planning conditions. It was recognised that in future there needed to be time limits attached to amenity areas being completed before the properties became occupied to avoid a repeat of the Willoughby Fields situation. Colin agreed to take this up with the Planners to ensure that time limits were imposed on communal areas going forward.

## **8. CRF USAGE REPORT – TO NOTE THE LATEST CRF USAGE REPORT SUBMITTED TO SPORT ENGLAND**

Sport England required a usage report on the CRF changing rooms to be submitted every 6 months for 5 years as part of the grant conditions. The Chairman summarised the latest report (at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year) that he had submitted which showed that the CRF usage targets originally proposed with the grant application had been exceeded. This was due to the substantial rise in coaching sessions and matches for the youth football teams and youth cricket teams. The Chairman passed on his thanks to Matthew Hardy and Simon Brown for their efforts in providing the usage data and to the coaching staff for their valued work involved in the youth coaching sessions in the Village.

## **9. CLOSURE OF RECYCLING CENTRES – TO DISCUSS THE OCC PROPOSAL TO CLOSE SOME RECYCLING CENTRES, INCLUDING DIX PIT AT STANTON HARCOURT**

Councillors had been made aware of the OCC consultation in which it was proposed to close some recycling centres, including Dix Pit at Stanton Harcourt. Councillors were extremely concerned that if this site closed, there would be no recycling centre in the whole of West Oxfordshire which councillors feared would increase the number of fly tipping incidents. Many Councillors had already written in to OCC with their concerns so an outcome of the consultation was now awaited.

## **10. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **10.1 Presentation of the monthly financial report**

The monthly financial report was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 30<sup>th</sup> September 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.

### **10.2 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 all of the following invoices for payment:

<b>Cheque Number</b>	<b>To whom paid</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
102233	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary Oct 2015	£600.42
102234	Bill Phillips	Litter picking July/Aug/Sept	£250.00
102235	Matthew Ruddle	Refund expenses for LF Library Launch party	£22.33
102236	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 19.10.15	£12.50
102237	Lawnsience (Oxford) Ltd	Lawn Treatment at Village Hall	£35.50
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>£920.75</b>

### **10.3 To receive an update on the new pension regulations and the action required to be taken before staging date**

The Clerk had been in touch The Pensions Regulator to see if a scheme had to be provided where the Clerk (being the only employee) did not wish to join. The staging date set for Freeland is 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016, and this cannot be changed. The Pensions Regulator advised the following:

*“For those employers that do not have any workers that meet the automatic enrolment criteria, there is no requirement for them to have a pension scheme in place. The workers that do not meet the automatic enrolment criteria however, have a right to opt in/join a pension scheme if they choose.”*

The automatic enrolment criteria are as follows:

- They are aged 22-SPA (state pension age)
- They earn above £833 a month (£192 weekly)
- They work or ordinarily work in the UK

As the Clerk does not fit with the automatic enrolment criteria, there is no requirement to have a scheme in place. The Clerk will need to write to herself about auto-enrolment and her rights, and

complete the declaration of compliance, both of which need to be done after 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016. This has been diarised.

**Action:** Clerk to write letter and complete Declaration of Compliance as above.

#### **10.4 Update on review of the effectiveness of internal audit process (to include review of financial system)**

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

**Action:** Matthew and Bill to arrange to meet Clerk to carry out review.

#### **10.5 Any other financial business:**

- Review of VAT reclaim – The VAT reclaim for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 that had been produced from Scribe was reviewed and accepted.
- To consider setting aside some funds for 2<sup>nd</sup> VAS sign at other end of school – approx. £4K – Councillors were asked to consider in advance for the next meeting (November Precept Meeting) whether to set aside some funds for a 2<sup>nd</sup> VAS sign to be installed the other end of the school which would cost around £4K. It was agreed to give some consideration to this suggestion.

#### **11. CORRESPONDENCE**

The following were received, noted and/or considered:

(a) OALC – members update October – details had been emailed round.

Plus additional items received since agenda papers circulated:

(b) OCC – Invitation to stakeholder briefing on OCC changes to budget proposals – to be held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November, 7.00pm – 8.30pm at Matthew Arnold School, Oxford – the Chairman agreed to attend.

#### **12. CIRCULATION**

No October circulation.

September circulation – still out.

July circulation – returned.

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

A brief update was given. All District Councils in Oxfordshire had been asked to put in devolution bids to have a say on how money is spent in their district. A positive response had been received so far, and this was work in progress. As it was the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday next year, it was likely there would be some money that could be given out for local projects, this was still in the planning stages. The planning application for 150 houses by Hanborough Station had been submitted with an entrance to the site being situated before the railway bridge off the A4095. Councillors were encouraged to submit their comments.

#### **14. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

A brief update about the school was given including the recent review of the school standards and details of the Harvest Service.

#### **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY**

Road signs – a suggestion was made of getting hold of some “20's Plenty” plastic road signs to erect along Pigeon House Lane. The Clerk would contact Highways to see if they had some.

**Action:** Clerk to contact Highways.

#### **16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.**

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.54pm.