

## FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 16<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2015, IN THE NEWELL ROOM, FREELAND, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 7.30PM.

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Robert Crocker
	Councillors:	Tim Webster, Bill Phillips, Janet Dalton, Mary Ann Canning.
	District Councillors:	Not present
	County Councillor:	Not present
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

#### 1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No-one was present for this session.

**2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Jane Linnell (childcare), Matthew Ruddle (childcare), Colin Dingwall (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, plus item 7 - Planning.

Mary Ann Canning (personal) as member of Freeland Charitable Foundation (FCF) and as having a local business.

Bill Phillips (personal) – item 8 – Litter picking.

Peter Newell (personal) – item 7 – Planning.

All of them signed the book accordingly.

#### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### 4.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 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 now installed and Councillors were pleased with the results. Thanks were passed on to Robert for carrying out this work.

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

The Clerk had chased a response from Vodafone but had yet heard nothing. Council agreed to write to David Cameron MP to report such unsatisfactory correspondence to date from Vodafone and to see if there was anything he could do to assist.

**Action:** Clerk to write to David Cameron as above.

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

There was nothing further to report at the present time so it was agreed to remove this item from the agenda until there was some progress to report.

##### 5.4 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. It was hoped the contracts

would be exchanged this week with a view to completing before Christmas. 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.

#### **5.5 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. As Christmas was fast approaching, and the Hall was extremely booked up on weekday evenings, it was agreed to try and arrange some sessions over the February half term when the Hall should have better availability.

**Action:** Clerk to arrange training for a date in February half term 2016.

### **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**

Janet had the book and has passed it to Matthew. There was some water in the hanging tyres which could be there because the tyres had become blocked with leaves. There was also a large amount of dogs mess on the playing field – it was agreed that the Clerk would place a note in the Grapevine.

**Action:** Clerk to place note in the Grapevine as above. Next person on play park rota to check tyre for leaves and remove them.

**RoSPA Inspections** – Details of another play park inspection company had been passed to the Clerk to obtain a quote. Details of the quote were read out at the meeting and the new company were very competitive in terms of pricing compared to RoSPA, and many Parish Councils were now using them for their play area inspections. It was agreed to place this item on the next agenda with a view to changing to the new company.

**Action:** Clerk to place item on next agenda.

#### **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 and passed round some amended plans for the play park. Mary Ann had met with the contractor who will be carrying out the supply and installation of the new equipment. A few concerns were raised about the closeness of the zip wire to the hedge, so this had been repositioned, along with a few other items of equipment. Council **resolved** to approve the amended plans.

#### **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.

**Action:** Robert to bring plans for shed to December meeting.

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

Some work had already been carried out by a local contractor to tidy up the hopscotch area. However, the hedge on the left hand side of the path was believed to belong to the residents at 149 Wroslyn Road. Council agreed to write to the residents to see if they could cut back this hedge.

**Action:** Clerk to write letter as above.

#### **6.2.4 Road safety signs – update on obtaining signs from Highways**

The Clerk had obtained some new road safety signs from OCC Highways and showed them to the Councillors. It was agreed to place these signs along Pigeon House Lane and near the school. The advice from OCC was to move them around from time to time to ensure they didn't become stale.

**Action:** Robert to erect signs as above.

#### **6.2.5 Grass cutting – To discuss and approve a replacement contractor for Nigel Green while he is recuperating from surgery.**

Nigel was due to have an operation next month and was likely to be out of action for a few months. He had arranged cover with another local contractor in the village who would carry out some general work if needed. Council were happy with this arrangement.

### **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**

Unfortunately the local contractor was unable to assist at the current time due to not having the necessary insurances in place. The Clerk had contact OCC for a list of approved contractors but nothing had been received so far– this would be chased up and it was agreed to copy in Ian Hudspeth.

Action: Clerk to chase up response from Highways as above.

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

Three quotes for the notice boards had been obtained and these had been circulated prior to the meeting. Council **resolved** to approve the cheapest quote which was from a local carpenter in Eynsham. It was also agreed to have only one door in the middle and no doors either side, with Freeland Parish Council lettering across the top.

Action: The Clerk would contact the carpenter to agree the quotation.

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

Council **resolved** to approve installing an additional dog waste bin at the end of Parklands by the entrance to the woods. The Clerk would arrange this.

Action: Clerk to arrange dog waste bin as above.

#### **6.3.5 New VAS Sign – concern raised from resident that the VAS obscures the bus stop sign**

A resident had raised concern that the new VAS sign was obscuring the bus stop sign. Council agreed to write to Stagecoach to see if the bus stop sign could be moved.

Action: Clerk to write to Stagecoach as above.

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

The footpath rota was now complete for this year and needed to be returned to the Clerk.

Action: Councillor with footpath book to return book to Clerk.

### **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**

An amended plan for the Garden of Remembrance was circulated at the meeting for Councillors to give their feedback. The amended plan was an alternative to the meadow style plan, with a more formal layout to it. It was agreed that both plans would be presented to the village so that residents could give their feedback on their preferred option. However, it was agreed that the December meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> December was too close to Christmas so Council agreed to present the plans at the January meeting instead. The Clerk would cancel the Hall booking for 21<sup>st</sup> December and book the Hall for the 18<sup>th</sup> January. Some memorial garden rules would also be circulated for comment from a small village in Buckinghamshire called Stoke Poges.

Action: Clerk to change Hall booking and memorial rules to be circulated by Mary Ann. Plans for Garden of Remembrance also to be ready for presenting at January meeting (Mary Ann).

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

No reports had been received.

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

A brief report was given. Cycle racks were currently being researched and consideration was being given to having one installed by the CRF boot scraper and one out the front of the Hall. Bookings were still good, and the new gates and railings between the Hall and the CRF had now been installed. These now required painting which would be done when the weather improved. The taps in the gent's toilets had been changed and it was queried if some additional lighting in the car park could be

installed. Robert agreed to look into this with perhaps having some lighting near the front of the Hall on a sensor.

**Action:** Robert to investigate additional car park lighting as above.

## 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:**

#### **15/03521/HHD 50 BROADMARSH LANE, FREELAND.**

Single storey front extension and garage conversion for Mrs C Smith.

#### **15/03580/HHD 5 HURST LANE, FREELAND.**

Convert part of garage to enlarge utility for Mr & Mrs Tom & Vero McCoy.

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

#### **15/03786/FUL 6 WROSLYN ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, FREELAND.**

Change of use from B1 to B2 (microbrewery) for Mr Ian Hemingway.

The Chairman had declared an interest in this item (as a near neighbour) so Mary Ann took the chair and talked through the application with the other Councillors. After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to raise a couple of points to WODC Planners: that the Parish Council had no objections as long as the unit remained as a B1 usage and that the closed method of brewing for copper boiling was to be used (to limit the odours being produced). The Chairman then resumed the chair.

**Action:** Clerk to contact WODC Planners as above.

Two further applications had been received since the meeting papers were emailed out and these were also discussed:

#### **15/04032/HHD 144 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.**

Construction of replacement double garage with study over for Mr Stephen Hall.

Council **resolved** to raise no objections to the proposed changes to the above property.

#### **15/04033/HHD 63 BROADMARSH LANE, FREELAND.**

Erection of single storey rear extension, conversion of existing garage to create utility room and store. Erection of front entrance porch and replace existing rear roof light with new dormer window for Mr Lee Harris.

After a brief discussion, a few concerns were raised about the possibility of overlooking with the dormer window at the rear of this property. This would be reported back to WODC for them to make the final decision.

**Action:** Clerk to contact WODC Planners with comments.

7.2 **Applications Approved:** None.

7.3 **Applications Refused:** None.

7.4 **Applications Withdrawn:** None.

## 8. **CONSIDERATION OF BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUIREMENT FOR 2016/17 - TO INCLUDE: CONSIDERATION OF PRECEPTING COSTS FOR ADDITIONAL VAS SIGN NEAR FREELAND SCHOOL AND CONSIDERATION OF TRANSFERRING OUTSTANDING ALLOTMENT FUNDS TO THE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION**

Details of expenditure in 2012/13 and 2013/14 and to date for 2015/16, together with precept figures for 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting, and were available to councillors at the meeting. Figures for the budget for 2016/17 were provisionally agreed,

totalling £59,980 a very slight decrease from last year (£61,060). Particular reference was made to the following items:

#### ADMINISTRATION ITEMS:

Clerk's Salary – No national pay award had been agreed so the Clerk did not leave the room for this item. Council **resolved** to increase the budget figure to £7,500 to allow for a potential increase of up to 2%, although it was recognised this may not be the actual salary figure. This would be agreed once the outcome of the national pay negotiations was known.

Insurance – It was agreed to keep the figure of £1,620, however only £1,200 needed to be precepted as there was £410 of unspent funds in this year's budget.

Audit fee – In light of the current levels of income and expenditure and the likelihood that this would increase next year due to the Play Park Project, it was agreed to increase the audit fee figure to £700 for the coming year. As there was already £500 remaining in the current year's budget, only £200 was included in the precept.

Office Equipment – A new laptop had been purchased this year, but as the projector costs had also come out of this year's budget, a negative balance of £410 was shown. £500 was included in the precept to remove the negative balance.

Training - Clerks and Councillors – As there was an unspent balance of £400 in the current year's budget, it was agreed not to allocate any further funds for training for the coming year.

Hall Hire - £47.50 was remaining in this year's budget to cover the remaining hall hire charges.

Although most of the meetings were being held in the Newell Room, rather than the Village Hall, it was agreed to increase the payment slightly to £185 to cover the anticipated additional Hall usage.

Elections – No election expenses needed to be included for the coming year.

Website/software - £110 was allocated to cover the running costs of the website hosting by EverWeb, and a further £40 was allocated to cover the costs of the mapping software.

Accounts software - £200 was allocated to cover the annual fee for the Scribe accounts software.

Stationery/printer items/postage/notices – all of these budgets showed unspent balances, and whilst the Clerk did have some expenses claims to submit, it was agreed that no further funds would be allocated to these budgets for the coming year.

#### ALLOTMENTS:

Allotments - £671.82 was being held in the allotment funds. As the management of the allotments had now been transferred to the Allotment Association, Council **resolved** to transfer the remaining balance to the Association.

#### CEMETERY ITEMS:

Cemetery Maintenance – £2,170 was currently held in unspent funds in the cemetery maintenance budget so it was agreed not to include any further funds for next year, as this would adequately cover the required grass cutting and hedge trimming.

Cemetery Reserve Allocation – Following the decision to change the cemetery site into a Garden of Remembrance, it was agreed not to budget further funds into the Cemetery Reserve fund for next year. This left the existing £26,047 currently held in reserve funds for the Garden of Remembrance.

#### PLAYING FIELD ITEMS:

Play Park Development/Maintenance – The play park development fund currently had £21,825 being held. In view of this Council resolved not to include any further funds to this budget for next year. The maintenance figure of £1,000 would continue based on the previous year's expenditure – this covered inspections, grass cutting and hedge cutting.

Playing Field Maintenance– Servicing for the gangmower and tractor had not been required as the cutting of the playing field was now being carried out by a contractor. The contractor's costs were likely to be in the region of £1,836 (based on 27 cuts per year at a negotiated cost of £68 per cut), plus there were also plans for a new lean-to shed to be built on the field to replace the old garage. It was therefore agreed to increase the budget figure to £6,800 to cover these costs plus any ground maintenance required. The spraying of the field had also not been deemed necessary this past year so this was not included in the budget.

#### SECTION 137 ITEMS:

Community Responders – As there was £2,100 currently held in reserve, Council resolved not to allocate any further funds for the coming year.

Donations: It was agreed to keep the figure set at £780 based on this year's expenditure of £780, however only £730 needed to be precepted as there was £50 of unspent funds in this year's budget.

Subscriptions: An additional £100 was agreed to be allocated to this budget to allow for any increases in subscription charges next year.

Other S137 - £3,470 was currently being held in reserve funds to cover any items that could not be authorised under any other expenditure powers. It was therefore agreed not to allocate any further funds to this budget for the coming year.

#### VILLAGE HALL/CRF ITEMS:

Servicing CRF Loan – This remained at £5,559 to cover the two fixed payments of £2,779.14 per year made on the loan.

Servicing Village Hall Loan – This remained at £23,656 to cover the two fixed payments of £11,827.81 per year made on the loan.

Village Hall/CRF Maintenance - £500 was allocated to this fund to cover any maintenance required around the Hall and CRF – this included grass cutting and hedge trimming in this area.

#### VILLAGE MAINTENANCE ITEMS:

Grass cutting – £1,500 was allocated to cover the grass cutting around the village that was carried out by a local contractor.

Litter Collection – Bill Phillips advised the Council that he did not wish to have an increase in his payment so did not leave the room for this item. Councillors thanked Bill for this gesture and therefore agreed to keep the payment at £1,000 for the litter collection work done.

Tree work – It was likely that some tree work would be required in the next year so it was agreed to allocate £500 to cover these costs, in addition to the £1,520 currently held in reserve.

Pond Maintenance – Money had been saved this year by the Councillors carrying out the bulrush removal. As there was already £1,100 held in reserve funds it was agreed not to allocate any further funds for the coming year.

Amenity Area – Further work on this area would be required to establish ownership status but this was not felt to be urgent. As there was currently £1,900 currently held in reserve it was agreed not to include any further funds for next year.

Seat Repairs – It was felt unlikely that repairs to the benches in the village would be required during the next year so it was agreed to discontinue the budgeted allocation of £200 for 2016/17. There was £344 currently being held in reserve which could be used if required.

Highways/Footpath maintenance – in view of the likely cuts to services from OCC, and more services like pothole repairs, drain clearance and verge work likely to be devolved out to parish councils, it was agreed to increase the budget figure by £3,000 to cover these costs, although the costs were at this stage unknown. Additionally a new VAS (vehicle activated sign) was budgeted for at a cost of £5,700 under the Highways heading.

### **9. ADDITIONAL PEA SHINGLE FOR THE VILLAGE HALL CAR PARK - TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF SEVERAL TONS OF PEA SHINGLE FOR THE HALL CAR PARK AT A COST OF APPROX. £35 PER TON**

The front part of the gravelled area of the car park had gradually become eroded and needed some additional pea shingle. Council **resolved** to approve that up to £250 could be spent on the shingle. Robert would arrange this.

**Action:** Robert to order the pea shingle.

### **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> October 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:

Cheque Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
102238	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary Nov 2015	£600.42
102239	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 16.11.15	£12.50
102240	SP & AS James	New metal fencing between VH & CRF	£240.00
102241	Barlow & Sons (Hermitage) Ltd	Posts & Stakes for memorial trees	£112.68
102242	WODC	Playing field cutting x3 (2 invoices)	£244.91
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>£1,210.51</b>

### 10.3 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.

### 10.4 Any other financial business: None.

## 11. CORRESPONDENCE

The following were received, noted and/or considered:

- (a) OALC – members update October – details emailed round.
- (b) Talking Oxfordshire – OCC consultation event – to receive any feedback from event held on 9<sup>th</sup> November. The Chairman attended this meeting and gave a brief update of the likely further cuts to OCC services and items such as pothole repairs, drain clearance and verge cutting which were likely to be devolved out to parish councils to take ownership and deliver. It was not clear at this stage whether any funding would be made available to parish councils to cover these additional costs.
- (c) OCC – Update to Local List of Information Requirements – consultation emailed round.
- (d) Community First Oxfordshire – to note change of name from ORCC – this was duly noted.
- (e) WODC – Meeting between Town and Parish Councils and WODC – to be held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 7.00pm at Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney – details emailed round – the Chairman would be attending.
- (f) WODC – Waste and recycling collections – consultation emailed round.
- (g) OCC – changes to subsidised bus services – Cabinet Report back, details emailed round.

Plus additional items received since agenda papers circulated:

- (h) Overgrown laurel hedge on Broadmarsh Lane – concern had been raised from a resident that the hedge was overhanging the road and needed cutting back. The Clerk had contacted WODC to request that the hedge be cut back – a response was awaited.
- (i) OCC – Subsidised bus services and Cabinet Decision – details had been emailed round.
- (j) Community First Oxfordshire – annual report – details had been emailed round.
- (k) Parking at Willoughby Fields – a neighbour who lives opposite the development had visited the Clerk to express their annoyance at the parking situation outside of Willoughby Fields. The Clerk had advised them to contact the local PCSO as there was very little the Parish Council could do to ease the situation. This was duly noted and no further action was deemed necessary.

## 12. CIRCULATION

November circulation – out at meeting.

No October circulation.

September circulation – still out.

## 13. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

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

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

A brief update about the school was given by the Clerk including the appointment of a new headteacher called Sarah Nickelson. Sarah was currently Deputy Headteacher at Hanborough Manor School and would be joining Freeland after Easter next year.

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

Potholes – a pothole was reported by the field on Wroslyn Road just past Oaklands Close. This could be reported online or via the Highways contact number 0845 310 1111 – Janet agreed to report this.

Old fence – it was reported that some old fence had been left in the lane by a resident in Church View – the Clerk would write to them to ask them to remove it.

SSE funds for resilience – A request was made to place this item on the next agenda for further discussion.

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2015, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.**  
There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.10pm.