

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 15TH JULY 2019, IN THE NEWELL ROOM, FREELAND, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 7.30PM.

PRESENT:	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Robert Crocker
	Councillors:	Tim Webster, Bill Phillips, Peter Foster
	District Councillors:	Alaa Al-Yousuf (from 7.30pm – 9.15pm) Merilyn Davies (from 7.30pm – 8.40pm)
	County Councillor:	Not present
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

4 residents were present for this session – Susan Fairchild and Oliver Rosenwasser from 18 Hurst Lane and Stewart and Wendy Rose, from 19 Hurst Lane. All four residents wished to raise concerns about some building work being carried out at number 11 Nash Lane under Permitted Development Regulations. The four residents live directly behind 11 Nash Lane and would be significantly affected by the building work being carried out.

In 2017, the owners of 11 Nash Lane applied for planning permission (17/01373/FUL) to build a two-storey house in the garden of 11 Nash Lane. It was withdrawn after objections from neighbours and concerns from the Parish Council.

Residents were very concerned that the owners were now taking advantage of "Permitted Development Rights" without considering the detrimental effects – particularly on privacy – that it would have on the adjoining neighbours.

They were particularly concerned about the large dormer windows that were planned which would completely overlook their gardens and also the apparent height of the construction and whether this was permitted in law under Permitted Development. They were also concerned that the plans being used by the WODC Planning Department were not up to date and did not show the current extensions of the existing properties.

The residents had spoken to the builder to express their concerns but had not had a very satisfactory response with an apparent lack of empathy to the concerns raised.

They had also written to Phil Shaw at WODC who advised them that no action could be taken unless a breach of Permitted Development Regulations took place, which as yet had not occurred.

However, the residents had recently tried to measure the height of the extension and felt that once the roof was on, the building would exceed the limits of what was allowed under Permitted Development. They asked if there was anything the Parish Council could do to assist with the current situation.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Mary Ann Canning – away, Véro McCoy – family commitments, Matthew Ruddle – on a course.

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

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 17th June 2019

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 17th June 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. Peter Foster had received an update from Waldon which advised that they had carried out a re-survey of Freeland village and had identified 4 possible sites for a mobile mast. These were:

- i) Land behind the village hall, presumed to be on the playing field;
- ii) Farmland off Cuckoo Lane, behind Freeland Nurseries;
- iii) Highway verge on west side of Wroslyn Road, adjacent to farmed field 150m north of Oakland Close;
- iv) Land at Cooks Corner Farm.

None of the landowners had yet been approached, and so the next step was for Waldon to carry out some additional checks and put the sites to the radio planners. It was not yet known which of the four sites were workable solutions. Peter would continue to report back any updates.

6.2 Freeland Methodist Church: To receive an update on future of Methodist Church

There was nothing further to report.

6.3 Little Free Library – to update on progress and to finalise location for new larger Library

As Matthew was not present there was nothing further to report.

6.4 CLP Working Group - to update on setting up a group to discuss progress subsequent to the Community Led Plan of 2014

As Véro was not present there was nothing further to report.

6.5 Welcome pack for new residents – to update on progress in creating a new pack

As Véro was not present there was nothing further to report.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:

7.1 Applications Received:

19/01859/HHD

181 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Erection of single storey front extension and two storey rear extension for Ms Nicola Clargo.

Councillors had no objections to the proposed changes to the above property, providing that it did not take away too much light from the neighbouring properties.

19/01669/ADV

LAND BETWEEN WYCHWOOD HOUSE AND MALVERN VILLAS,

Erection of various signs (retrospective) for Mr Dean Roberts.

This application related to the 8 advertising flags that had been erected by Mears Homes when they were only permitted to have 2. In view of the concerns that had been raised by some residents regarding the noise from the flags, it was agreed to advise WODC that the Parish Council would prefer there to only be 2 flags, not 8.

Action: Clerk to submit comments to WODC Planners as above.

19/00021/APPEAL

LAND WEST OF FRUITLANDS, EYNHAM (NEIGHBOURING PARISH)

Erection of five dwellings with associated works **(Appeal lodged)**.

(Original Application Number: 16/03873/FUL, Appellant's name: Mr Ashley Maltman, Appeal Reference: APP/D3125/W/19/3229814).

The appeal was duly noted, with no action being required.

7.2 Applications Approved:

19/01161/HHD

WRESTLERS MEAD, 35 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Conversion and extension to garage to create annex and utility room for Mr & Mrs J Bartrip.

7.3 Applications Refused: None.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.

7.5 Applications Awaiting Decision:

19/00954/FUL

FREELAND HOUSE, WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Construction of three timber cabins for use as staff accommodation for Mr Patel.

19/01149/S73

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

Removal of condition 9 of planning permission 16/01353/OUT (No requirement for fire hydrants).

Condition Number(s): Condition 9- Fire hydrants shall be installed in accordance with details, including the phasing of installation, which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Conditions(s) Removal: We are informed the local fire authority have confirmed there is no requirement for an on-site main when there is an adequate local main already at the site. This was raised originally with LPA WODC around January 2018.

As the residents were present it was agreed to take item 7.10 next regarding the building work at 11 Nash Lane.

7.10 11 Nash Lane, Freeland – to discuss residents' concerns regarding the construction work being carried out at this property that is allowed under "Permitted Development" regulations.

After listening to the residents' concerns about the building work being carried out at 11 Nash Lane, Councillors felt it highlighted the way that the new rules of "Permitted Development" took away the opportunity for discussion of planning proposals at local level. The Parish Council had objected to a previous full application for development of the site two years ago and this application had subsequently been withdrawn. The current development of 11 Nash Lane was for extensive development of the property within the "Permitted Development" rules in a way that the neighbours clearly found overbearing, leading to considerable loss of privacy. Under the new rules, the Parish Council (nor the immediate neighbours) were consulted. Councillors felt that this gives developers too much leeway to overdevelop sites by "Permitted Development" in an uncontrolled way that, had a normal planning application been made, would have led to strong and very valid objections. It was agreed to write a strong letter to Robert Courts (and to cc in Phil Shaw at WODC Planning Department) to raise concerns about how the Permitted Development Regulations need to be reviewed due to the issues detailed above. It was also agreed to mention in the letter the large transformer on the Mears Site (see item 7.6) that had also caused concerns to residents in Wroslyn Road but that was also allowed under Permitted Development Regulations. The Hurst Lane residents were also advised to perhaps speak to a local Planning Consultant who may be able to offer some advice, plus to speak to the Press as this often had a bigger impact in getting some action taken.

Action: Clerk to write letter to Robert Courts as above.

The residents then thanked the Council for their time and for listening to their concerns and all 4 left the meeting at 8.15pm. The rest of the agenda was then taken in order.

7.6 To discuss concerns raised re large transformer placed by Mears near garden of 2A Wroslyn Road

There was nothing further to report or that could be done as this fell under the Permitted Development Regulations.

7.7 To discuss concerns raised regarding large Leylandii trees by 30 Wroslyn Road that require reducing in height but are located on Mears site

The Clerk had written to Koopmans, managing agents for the Industrial Estate who had responded to advise that they had secured a quotation which they were considering. The Clerk would chase this up if no action taken.

Action: Clerk to chase up if necessary.

7.8 To update on S106 funds associated with the Mears development

£52,236, the S106 contribution for Sport/Recreation purposes had now been paid into the Parish Council bank account. This amount was originally meant to be £44,608 but it had been index linked due to late receipt of the funds.

The Play Facilities contribution (£33,538) and Public Art contribution (£4,410) were still outstanding and will hopefully be received soon. It was presumed these would also be index linked although this had not been formally confirmed.

7.9 Land to the rear of Woodlands – to update on a meeting held with Graham Flint, MD of Pye Homes regarding future of this land

The Chairman and Vice Chairman reported on a recent meeting held with Graham Flint of Pye Homes regarding the wooded area at the back of Woodlands and The Blowings. This land was the subject of a controversial planning application a few years ago when Pye's wished to build on land adjacent to the woodland and build an access road through the woods. At the time the Parish Council opposed the scheme and this application was withdrawn.

Pye Homes had now received two separate reports from residents that some of the trees in this wood were "overgrown" and in a potentially dangerous condition. They noted that as landowners they are legally responsible for the safety of any persons on their land. They have conducted initial investigations and as a result have decided to temporarily close off the land and withdraw access agreements on the grounds of safety until such time as a satisfactory standard has been met. However, they were aware that this could cause some suspicion amongst residents who may think this land will be built on. Pye Homes had reassured the Council that they have no plans to build on this woodland or the adjacent land at the back of Wroslyn Road at the present time, although at some point in the future this may change. This was duly noted by the Council.

7.11 A40 Planning application re park and ride and associated works – to discuss whether the PC wishes to submit a response to the proposed development work

An objection response paper had been written by Mary Ann and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Council were generally happy with the response but felt a positive statement at the beginning of the paper was required to state that there was a great deal of merit in the A40 park and ride scheme but that there were some important aspects that the Council were unhappy about. It was agreed the Clerk and Chairman would amend the response paper and then get it submitted.

Action: Clerk and Chairman to amend response paper and Clerk to then submit it.

7.12 Freeland War Memorial – to discuss whether the war memorial has special architectural or historic interest – see Historic England consultation emailed around

A letter had been received from Historic England regarding whether the Freeland War Memorial in the churchyard had any special architectural or historic interest. After a brief discussion, Council agreed to pass this query onto the Parochial Church Council who would be better placed to respond.

Action: Clerk to pass query onto Freeland PCC.

8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

The District Council update from Alaa included information about the community transport Good Neighbour Scheme, the details of which had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting and would be appearing in the next Grapevine.

A village meeting was being held on 20th September at 5pm in the Village Hall with a representative from the Good Neighbour Scheme to inform residents and to encourage them to sign up as volunteer drivers.

He was also investigating having a scheduled Comet bus service that perhaps serviced the local villages. The Comet bus was available on Mondays and Fridays between 10am and 2pm. There was a possibility of obtaining some funds from OCC for this, but it was not yet clear how much would be available. The Thursday Scout bus was nearly full most weeks, with around 14 people being taken to and from Witney each week.

A climate emergency had been declared in West Oxfordshire and a working party had been formed to create and adopt an action plan to reduce carbon emissions etc. It was hoped to have the action plan adopted by the end of the year, and the idea was also to involve local schools.

Alaa was then thanked for attending and left the meeting at 9.15pm.

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 29th June 2019 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.

9.2 To approve annual subscription renewal for Community First Oxfordshire

After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to approve the renewal of the annual subscription to Community First Oxfordshire. The Clerk would prepare a cheque for signing.

9.3 To approve annual motor insurance renewal quotation for tractor

Came & Company have confirmed the insurance renewal premium for the motor insurance policy for the tractor to be **£191.51** (£201.60 last year) that is payable on 1st August 2019.

This policy is aimed at the agricultural community providing cover to comply with the laws relating the compulsory motor insurance legislation within the EU.

The policy includes comprehensive cover for personal accident up to £10,000 and £1,250 cover for loss of keys/replacement locks.

After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to approve the insurance renewal premium of £191.51.

9.4 Review of Financial Regulations and Standing Orders

The Parish Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders required reviewing. It was agreed that the Chairman, together with either Mary Ann or the Clerk would carry out the review.

Action: Chairman and Mary Ann/Clerk to review documents.

9.5 Annual audit - to receive an update on progress

The Clerk gave a brief update on the audit which was progressing well. All information had been submitted to the external audit provider and the outcome was awaited.

9.6 Oxfordshire Association for Blind – to consider request for donation

A request for a donation had been received from the Oxfordshire Association for the Blind. After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** not to offer a donation.

9.7 Approval of invoices for payment

The Council approved invoices for payment as listed on the invoices for payment sheet distributed with the meeting papers. Council therefore **resolved** to approve all of the following invoices for payment:

Cheque Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
102561	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 15.07.19	£12.50
102562	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary July 2019	£902.57
102563	Bill Phillips	Litter picking January - June 2019	£400.00
102564	WODC	Field cut 28/03, 13/04, 03/05, 25/05/19	£362.60
102565	JF Gardening & Maintenance	Mowing March - June 2019	£480.00
102566	Nigel Green	Mowing March - June 2019	£880.00
102567	Josh Purple	Removal of elm tree saplings by play park	£495.00
102568	Stackhouse Poland	Motor insurance policy renewal - tractor	£191.51
102569	Community First Oxfordshire	Annual subscription	£70.00
102570	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary August 2019	£902.57
102571	Matthew Ruddle	Refund of expenses for Big Lunch	£9.33
		Total:	£4,706.08
Plus:	NEST pension payment of £67.64 (employee & employer contributions). £38.95 has been deducted from Clerk's salary for July and August salary payments.		

9.8 Approval of invoices during August - to discuss the approval of invoices that need to be paid during August and decisions on any planning applications received.

After a brief discussion, it was agreed that any urgent cheques up to a maximum value of £2,000 that needed paying before the September meeting could be signed off by the Chairman and Vice Chairman (or another cheque signatory in their absence). The Clerk would confirm with the Chairman or Vice Chairman the urgency of the payment to be made.

It was also agreed that the Planning Team would review any applications that were received over the summer and would try and delay any large schemes that could be controversial by asking WODC for an extension to the time limit. Where this was not possible then an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting may have to be called.

9.9 Any other financial business – none.

10. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS

10.1 Play areas/Playing Field – to receive any reports: Peter Foster had the pink book and there were no problems to report. A problem with a wobbly handrail on the wobbly bridge equipment had been reported this month and had now been fixed, so this was recorded in the book. The elm tree saplings in the hedge by the zip wire had also now been removed and an invoice for the work had been received. The book would be passed to Matthew.

10.1.1 Play area reports – to update on trampoline tile gluing, to note play area safety matting needs attention

Mary Ann had the trampoline tile glue and would get this done shortly.

Action: Mary Ann to glue tile,

10.1.2 Storage building on field – to update on progress in obtaining quotes

Quotes would now be obtained as the S106 funds had now been received. It was agreed Robert, Tim and the Chairman would meet on site to agree the dimensions of building required before quotes were obtained.

Action: Robert/Tim to obtain quotes for the storage building.

10.1.3 Weed Spraying of field – to consider whether weed spraying work is required this year

Council agreed the field didn't need spraying at the current time. The decision was to be held over until the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to add to next month's agenda.

10.1.4 Broken drain cover on field at back of Newell Room – to discuss and agree any action necessary

A report had been received that the drain cover at the back of the Newell Room on the field was broken. Robert had a quick look and advised a new metal mounting was required which he could fix.

Action: Robert to repair drain cover as above.

10.2 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports

10.2.1 To update on getting overhanging trees and shrubs cut back on Eynsham Road

This work had still not been done so the Clerk would chase this up yet again.

Action: Clerk to chase up Savills to get trees and shrubs cut back.

10.2.2 Playing field signs – to update on progress on ordering 2 new signs to attach to Blenheim Lane nameplate

The new sign had now been installed onto the post. Councillors passed on their thanks to Peter Foster for carrying out this work.

10.2.3 White line painting by Primary School and across residents' driveways on Wroslyn Road – to receive an update

The Clerk had received notification that the lines were due to be painted within the next 1-2 months. However, it had been noted that some white markings had appeared along Wroslyn Road that showed the white lines would not go far enough around the corner of Parklands as was originally requested. The Clerk had been in touch with Highways to advise of this and a response was awaited.

Action: Clerk to continue to pursue if necessary.

10.2.4 Parking near the Church – to discuss any response from Witney Town Charity re suggestion of leasing their field as a temporary car park

No further response had been received from Savills. It was agreed not to chase this up for the time being.

10.2.5 Road priority on Cuckoo Lane and Wroslyn Road – to discuss any response from Highways to a resident's suggestion of trying to change the road priorities by Cuckoo Lane/Barnard Gate/Wroslyn Road junction

The Clerk had written to Paul Wilson in Highways last month who advised that they would investigate the concerns raised and suggestions offered. Clerk to chase up a response as necessary.

Action: Clerk to chase up response if required.

10.2.6 Mowing of grass verge in Broadmarsh Lane – to consider asking local contractor to mow grass verge in Broadmarsh Lane following resident's concerns.

A resident who lives at 56 Broadmarsh Lane had written to the Clerk to complain about the length of the grass on the verge by their house that is normally mowed by Highways. They were asking if there was anything the Parish Council could do to get it cut as it was now nearly waist height and looked really untidy. The resident did try to mow the verge last year but ended up breaking their mower on the roots present in the verge, so they were unwilling to try again.

The Clerk in the meantime had written to Highways to find out when they are planning to cut this verge (if at all), and had received a response to advise this verge was not the responsibility of Highways and they had passed the query to the District Council. It was agreed in the meantime that if WODC did not cut it, to ask a local contractor who lived in the road if they would mind cutting it.

Action: Clerk to ask local contractor if they would cut verge.

10.3 Footpath & Bridleway matters/Footpath Book – to receive any reports plus:

It was thought Véro had the book – the Clerk would check. No recent reports had been received. Last month it was reported that the stile at Cuckoo Lane exit was wobbly and needed the planks replacing/tightening. The gate into the cow field by Little Blenheim had come off the hinges. Robert agreed to repair both the gate and the stile. The book would be passed to the Chairman.

Action: Robert to repair gate and stile as above.

10.3.1 To discuss any response from Highways re improving the footpaths for wheelchair users up towards A4095 end of village

The Clerk had reported concerns to Highways about the uneven pavements causing difficulties for wheelchair users from the school to the A4095 end of the village. No response had been received from Highways and it was agreed not to chase this up as it was felt it was likely it was not bad enough for Highways to take any action.

10.4 Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports

No reports had been received.

10.4.1 To receive an update on the progress for the Garden of Remembrance to include update on order and installation of archway

As Mary Ann was not present there was nothing to report.

10.5 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

A very brief update was given. The boiler was going to be replaced imminently as there were ongoing issues with the current one. A complaint had been received about a very noisy wedding but apart from that everything was going well.

10.5.1 To update on quotes for tarmacking the gravelled area of the village hall car park

Robert had received one quote so far. A soakaway was also likely to be required to assist with the drainage. Robert was considering asking Mary Ann to produce a proper specification for the work required, and it was agreed to check the Financial Regulations/Standing Orders in case the work needed to be put out to tender.

Action: Robert to obtain two further quotes for the tarmacking work, and to ask Mary Ann to produce specification, Clerk to check Financial Regulations/Standing Orders re whether the work had to be put out to tender.

10.5.2 To update on whether bike racks in Blenheim Lane are moveable to the Village Hall

This had not been done yet but would be done shortly.

Action: Robert to move bike racks to the Village Hall.

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

- (a) OALC – June update – details had been emailed around.
- (b) OCC – Community Transport Newsletter – details had been emailed around.
- (c) Thank you notes – received from Parochial Church Council, Grapevine and Hanborough Day Centre for donations given last month – details had been emailed around.
- (d) OALC – draft AGM minutes – details had been emailed around.
- (e) Parish Councillor profiles – to discuss each Councillor producing a profile to be placed in the Grapevine each month to raise awareness in the lead up to elections next year - details had been emailed around. Councillors agreed to all producing an individual profile and placing it in the Grapevine.

Plus additional items received since agenda sent out:

- (f) Cycle routes/Freeland roads – to discuss letter of concern from resident re state of Freeland roads and perceived unsafe cycle routes – details had been emailed around. After some discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would get a quote for some “20’s Plenty” signs, and to write a positive letter stating that it was unlikely to be feasible (because of cost and in places narrow verges) to get a cycle route on the Eynsham Road but it was more likely to get one via Hanborough. It was also agreed to include a statement requesting the provision of a cycle route in the A40 park and ride consultation response.

Action: Clerk to respond to resident as above and to get quote for signs.

12. RISK ASSESSMENT STATEMENT – ANNUAL REVIEW

The Risk Assessment Statement had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Council **resolved** to make one change to the document which was to remove the sentence:

“Proper arrangements will be made when the Garden of Remembrance comes into use that”
so that it read: *“Preparation of plots will only be permitted by approved undertakers.”*

Council then approved the statement, and the Clerk would get an amended copy printed off to be signed by the Chairman.

Action: Clerk to print off amended Risk Assessment statement for signing by the Chairman.

13. CIRCULATION

July circulation – out at meeting.

No June circulation.

May circulation – returned.

No Feb, March or April circulation.

January circulation – returned.

14. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Clerk gave a brief update. With only 22 days of rehearsals, a very successful performance of Joseph & his Technicolour Dreamcoat had been held during the week of 1st July by the Year 4/5/6 children, and a very well attended Freefest had taken place on 13th July. The Year 3's went on trip to Christchurch Cathedral and the Natural History Museum. SAT's results had been given out, and great results had been achieved this year. Y4/5 went on trip to visit Sikh Gurdwara temple in Oxford. 150 years of the school and church had been celebrated last week. Upcoming events were a Joseph theatre trip, Year 2 sleepover, enrichment morning, and the leavers church service and assembly.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

Conifers on field – there were some very large conifers at the top of the playing field near the village hall that were getting out of hand. It was not clear if they were situated in a resident's garden or on the field. If they were on the field, it was agreed that the Clerk would obtain a quote for their removal.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

There was no meeting in August, so the next ordinary meeting would be Monday 16th September 2019, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.15pm.