

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 21ST JANUARY 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, Peter Foster, Mary Ann Canning, Matthew Ruddle (from 8.30pm), Véronique McCoy
	District Councillors:	Alaa Al-Yousuf (from 7.30pm – 9.15pm) Merilyn Davies (from 7.30pm – 9.25pm)
	County Councillor:	Liam Walker (from 8.25pm – 9.10pm)
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

- **Garden of Remembrance art/sculpture ideas – Alec & Fiona Peever to present some ideas for sculptures/artwork for the GOR**

Alec and Fiona Peever, two local artists specialising in sculpture and carving attended the meeting to present some ideas of possible sculpture pieces that may be suitable for the Garden of Remembrance.

Various examples of their work were presented, including sculptures at West Mill Memorial Garden in Swindon, the Royal Parks in London, Magdalen College in Oxford, Henry Box School in Witney, Lee Valley Park, Hidcote Manor, Avebury Manor and the Bodleian Library.

They suggested having individual green slate memorial plaques for the GOR due to its durability and that it does not scuff easily, and an example piece of green slate was passed around for examination by the Councillors. Various typefaces and fonts could be used and these could be chosen by the purchasers of the plaques.

For the scattered ashes area, they suggested having a large limestone boulder with “In Memoriam” carved into it, with individual bronze leaves made from anodised aluminium that gave them a silver look, where the name of the person could then be carved. This could be done via a local carving shop in Witney. This would then give families some individual commemoration for their loved one.

A suggestion was also made of having an abstract sculpture made, that would be appropriate for the GOR. This could possibly go at the end of the memorial plaques by the benches, and it was suggested carrying on the line of plaques so they ended up in a spiral, where the sculpture could be placed. It was also suggested having an area with more of a woodland theme that may possibly be appropriate for a child’s ashes.

Alec and Fiona advised that they work on commission and would normally charge £500 to produce a costed proposal, but they would be willing to charge half of this provided the Council were happy to utilise their services.

Councillors liked many of the ideas shown and it was agreed going forward that Alec and Fiona would return in a month’s time and provide an outline of a range of options with a rough costing for the Council to consider, with no initial charge attached.

Alec and Fiona were then thanked for attending and both left the meeting at 7.50pm.

- **New storage shed on field**

Simon Brown, Chairman of the Cricket Club was also in attendance to give a brief update about the Club wishing to apply for a Community Facilities Grant via WODC to fund the building of the new storage shed for the tractor and mower and other sport’s equipment. The Community Facilities Grant provided a larger amount, but only 25% of the total cost, which Simon had worked out to be around £20K, for a fully assembled wooden building. Council advised that they were due to receive some significant S106 funds from the 41-house development on Witney Road, some of which would be

used to pay for a storage shed for the tractor. This was currently work in progress and quotes were required to apply for the grant. It was also suggested that the Cricket Club could apply for the Blenheim bursary, although the deadline for applications was the end of January – Mary Ann would email the link for the application to Simon.

Robert agreed to obtain 3 quotes for the building and Simon would keep in touch with any progress with a grant.

Simon thanked the Council for their assistance and then left the meeting at 8.00pm.

Action: Mary Ann to email link for Blenheim bursary to Simon Brown, Robert to obtain 3 quotes for shed asap.

- **Retrospective Planning application at 9 Church View, Freeland**

Mr Kenneth Jeddere-Fisher, resident at the above address, was also in attendance to give a bit of background information regarding the retrospective planning application for a garage/workshop that was due to be considered under item 7 – Planning. He explained that he had no intention to flaunt the planning rules, he initially believed it to be allowable under the Permitted Development regulations. However, there were 2 issues with the current garage. One was the definition of the Principle Elevation. The owners believed that as the garage was behind the foremost elevation, then it would be classed as permitted development. However, it transpired that as one corner of the garage was 1.3m in front of the nearest part of the principle elevation of the house, it would in fact require planning permission.

The second issue was that of 2 separate curtilages of the property. Remnants of a Leylandii hedge on the north boundary and at the front of the property were removed about a year ago and replaced with native species. The resident stated that the property deeds and associated covenants make no mention of more than one curtilage or different land uses within the property, so this was something that was currently in dispute with the WODC Planning Department who felt that there was more than one curtilage. The resident had carried out various planting and landscaping (including planting a laurel hedge at the boundary edge by the pavement) to soften the impact of the garage, which was built to house 3 vintage vehicles. If planning permission was refused, then the fall-back option would be to move the existing garage back and change the pitched roof to a flat roof. If this was done it would be classed as permitted development and there would be no requirement for any additional landscaping to soften the impact. The resident was therefore asking for the Parish Council not to object to the current plans.

Mr Jeddere-Fisher was then thanked for attending the meeting and left at 8.20pm.

Whilst the Planning Application above had been viewed, it was agreed to take item 7 – Planning, before the rest of the agenda.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:

7.1 Applications Received:

19/00066/PN42

115 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Erection of single storey rear extension (measuring 5.5m in length x 3.65m in height and 2.35m to eaves height) for Mr Damian Smith.

After reviewing the above new application for the 115 Wroslyn Road, Council agreed not to make any objections to the proposed changes to the property.

18/03598/HHD

9 CHURCH VIEW, FREELAND.

Retrospective application for a garage/workshop for Mr Kenneth Jeddere-Fisher.

After taking into account all of the information provided by Mr Jeddere-Fisher and reviewing the plans for the garage, the Council felt that it would be better to have the laurel hedging planted up against the garage to provide screening, rather than at the front of the property. This would then open up the boundary to where it was before. It was suggested moving the current small shed to behind the garage to its previous position, all of which would help to soften and improve the street scene.

The Clerk would make these suggestions to the Planning Department.

Action: Clerk to submit planning responses as above.

7.2 Applications Approved:

18/03053/HHD 117 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Erection of single storey front and rear extensions and conversion of loft for Mr Max Everson.

7.3 Applications Refused:

18/03056/HHD 115 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.

Erection of single and two storey extensions and conversion of loft for Mr Damian Smith.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.

The rest of the agenda was then taken in order.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Bill Phillips - unwell.

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.

Matthew Ruddle (personal) as a member of the Freeland Scout's Committee.

Mary Ann Canning (personal) as a member of Freeland Charitable Foundation (FCF).

All of them signed the book accordingly.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 17th December 2018

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 17th December 2018 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

There was nothing further to report. The preferred site for a mast at Whitehouse Farm was still being explored but no formal agreement had been made as yet.

Action: Peter to update Council with any progress as above.

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

There was nothing further to report. The Parish Council had submitted their response to the planning application submitted last month for change of use to a domestic dwelling, and the outcome of this was awaited.

However, it was noted that WODC were also currently dealing with another similar application submitted at the same time for a change of use of the former Methodist Church at North Leigh. As a starting point and in the interest of consistency, the District Council would be required to apply the same principle policy assessment to both applications. Only once an assessment against local plan policies had been undertaken as a starting point, would the District Council then consider other material considerations that exist in favour or against the proposal. This would include any extant permissions as fall-back, and the established likelihood and degree of weight they can be given in the overall planning balance. Both applications had initially been extended to February 11th to allow a Committee determination if required. This would be confirmed once a recommendation had been arrived at. However, the Planning Officer had advised that no decision was imminent.

6.3 GDPR – to update on progress

The Clerk would review any outstanding items in January.

Action: Clerk to continue working on GDPR items.

6.4 Little Free Library – to receive an update on the design proposals and associated costs for a new larger Library

It was reported that Graham Lay had been instructed to make the new library, following last month's agreement on the design. A concrete base would be required to attach the library to, and Tod Fairfield had stated he may be able to help. However, the new library would require planning permission to be sited where it is currently, so alternative options were being considered. Matthew would email Liam with regards to whether it would need Highways permission for where it would be located.

Action: Matthew to email Liam re Highways permission.

6.5 Big Lunch – to confirm date of event and to organise helpers

The Hall had been booked for Sunday 9th June from 11.00 am onwards. All Councillors who were available were asked to help with setting up and clearing away, and of course being in attendance!

6.6 Annual Parish Meeting – to confirm date and to discuss topics for meeting

The APM had been booked for Friday 26th April. Possible topics for discussion were suggested as:

- Village Hub update – (to include update on Freeland Methodist Church) – it was suggested asking members of the Village Hub Group to give an update
- A40 Park and Ride Scheme – agreed to invite someone from OCC to come along and talk about it
- West Oxfordshire Garden Village – to ask someone at WODC to come along and give an update
- Garden of Remembrance – sculpture ideas – to ask residents about their preferred options of sculptures once report received
- Wildlife corridors – Robert to give a brief presentation about wildlife corridors
- Christmas lunch update – Julie Stuart-Thompson to give an update on the Christmas lunch event held in the Village Hall on Christmas Day 2018

Council to make a final decision next month.

6.7 Blenheim Community Grant – to discuss any suggestions to apply for using this grant

As already discussed under item 1, it was agreed that Mary Ann would forward the details of the grant application to Simon Brown so that he could apply for the grant on behalf of the Cricket Club for the new storage shed.

Action: Mary Ann to forward details of grant to Simon Brown.

8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

Merilyn gave a brief update about complaints she had received about excessive mud on the A4095 by the new 41 house development, plus complaints about the increase in speeding vehicles along the A4095 between Wroslyn Road junction and Long Hanborough.

Alaa gave an update on the Area Action Plan in relation to the Garden Village, and also about a plan WODC had to charge a Council Tax premium on long term empty properties.

The County Council update from Liam included information about a new permit scheme that was being considered for utility companies for when they had to dig up roads, plus a brief note about a burglary that happened on Wroslyn Road recently, when many other villages around the District had also been targeted. Liam noted that the Christmas Lunch event held in the Village Hall had been a huge success and thanked Julie Stuart-Thompson for all her effort. Liam also noted the complaints about mud on the road from the 41 house development and confirmed he had spoken with the site manager today who would get the mud cleared. He also advised that they were currently experiencing problems with ground water on this site, which was one of the key objections made at the time by the Parish Council!

Liam was thanked for attending and left the meeting at 9.10pm.

Alaa and Marilyn were also thanked for attending and left at 9.15 and 9.25pm.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

9.1 Final Review of Budget/Precept Requirement for 2019/20

Following the changes made last month, the Budget/Precept Requirement for 2019/20 was reviewed and accepted.

9.2 Presentation of the monthly financial report

The monthly financial report was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 31st December 2018 and the receipts and payments received or paid out in the last month. The changes agreed last month had also been made in Scribe and these were also now reflected in the monthly report. The bank statement was checked as agreeing with the figures on the finance sheet and signed by Mary Ann (in Bill's absence).

9.3 Approval of invoices for payment

The Council approved invoices for payment as listed on the invoices 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 (£)
102517	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 21.01.19	£12.50
102518	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary January 2019	£908.75
102519	Bill Phillips	Litter picking Oct/Nov/Dec 2018	£250.00
102520	Nigel Green	Mowing/Hedge cutting Oct/Nov 2018	£530.00
102521	JF Gardening & Maintenance	Mowing around village Sept - Dec 2018	£250.00
102522	Information Commissioner	ICO Data Controller Fee (GDPR regs)	£40.00
		Total:	£1,991.25

9.4 Pension scheme – to receive an update on setting up pension scheme and to approve date for re-enrolment

Details of what exactly was required in terms of setting up a pension scheme had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The steps that needed to be followed were as follows:

1) Choose a re-enrolment date – for Freeland PC this could be anywhere between 1st December and 31st May 2019. The Clerk suggested this be **1st April 2019** to start off the financial year and to give time to set the scheme up. **Council resolved** to approve 1st April 2019 as the re-enrolment date.

2) Assess staff – staff need to be assessed to see if they now meet the criteria which meant they had to be enrolled into a pension scheme. For Freeland PC there was just the Clerk, and as she was now working 18 hours per week and had previously opted out of the pension scheme, this meant that she would meet the above criteria and had to be put into a pension scheme.

3) Choose a pension scheme

The Clerk did not earn enough to pay income tax, therefore there were a limited number of pension scheme options available. The main options were NEST, Aviva Workplace Pension, The People's Pension, True Potential Investment and Standard Life Workplace Pension, all of which provided a "relief at source" option.

The Council were required to choose a suitable pension scheme, and the Clerk was currently looking at the options in more detail and would provide further details together with a recommendation next month.

4) Put staff into pension scheme and start paying into it

The Council had to put any eligible staff into a pension scheme and this had to be done within six weeks after the re-enrolment date, and payments then had to be made.

5) Write to eligible staff

It was a legal requirement that staff needed to be written to within six weeks of the re-enrolment date to advise them they had been put into a pension scheme.

6) Complete the re-declaration of compliance

This had to be completed and submitted within five months of the third anniversary of the automatic enrolment staging date, otherwise the Council could be subject to fines. There was an online form to complete. For Freeland PC, the re-declaration deadline is **31st July 2019**.

Action: Clerk to give details of pension schemes next month together with a recommendation, so that above steps can then be completed.

9.5 To receive an update on the review of the effectiveness of internal audit process (to include review of financial system)

Matthew and Mary Ann had met with the Clerk and a report on their findings would be circulated next month.

Action: Matthew and Mary Ann to circulate report.

9.6 Any other financial business – None.

10. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS

10.1 Play areas/Playing Field – to receive any reports:

Robert had the pink book and there were no problems to report. The book would be passed to Bill.

10.1.1 Play area reports – to update on trampoline tile gluing, weeds coming through safety surface under large wooden climber plus rope on multiplay needs monitoring, plus a report of a bright lights on playing field, swing had been completely wrapped over the top rail.

Tim was due to clear the weeds that were coming through the safety surface under the climber shortly, Mary Ann had obtained a quote for the trampoline glue, and Council approved the purchase of one tube costing £8.95. Robert had sorted out the swing. With regards to the bright light, Mary Ann and Robert had both been to visit the resident, and WODC had also visited as they had received a complaint made directly to them. Council agreed to write a tactful letter about respecting and maintaining Freeland's dark skies and to ask them to face the light into their garden.

Action: Tim to clear weeds, Robert to sort swing, Mary Ann to order glue and Clerk to write letter as above.

10.1.2 Playing field mowing: to receive an update on tractor registration

The Clerk was still trying to sort out the tractor registration which was proving incredibly challenging. The DVLA had rejected the application for a second time due to an issue with the Certificate of Conformity. The Clerk was in contact with George Browns to get this sorted and would hopefully be able to submit everything back to DVLA later this month.

Action: Clerk to continue chasing to get tractor registration completed.

10.1.3 New storage building on field – to update on progress from working group

Robert agreed to obtain 3 quotes as soon as possible so these could be used for the grant application.

Action: Robert to arrange quotes as above.

10.1.4 Tree planting by cricket nets – to update on progress

The trees were due to be delivered this week, and Mary Ann and Robert would meet to agree the exact location of where they would be planted. They would also ensure the Gardening Club were involved in the planting.

Action: Robert and Mary Ann to arrange tree planting.

10.1.5 Gate lock – to discuss suggestion of having a lock on gate by Pigeon House Lane entrance as suggested by Sports Club.

The Football Club had contacted the Clerk to suggest having a lock put on the gate at the Pigeon House Lane entrance to the field. There had been a number of anti-social issues experienced at the Hanborough playing field and they were concerned the same could happen in Freeland. The lock would hopefully act as a deterrent, and also help prevent unauthorised travellers potentially accessing

the site. Council agreed to get a padlock and chain put on the gate, Robert agreed to do this and would get 6 or 7 extra keys cut to be held by various Council and Sports Club members.

Action: Robert to arrange padlock and chain for field and key cutting.

10.2 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports plus:

10.2.1 Highways reports – to receive any reports – blocked drains on Wroslyn Road; water on road on hill by Heritage Cottage.

The blocked drains had previously been reported to Highways, but a resident had been in touch to advise they were still blocked. The Clerk had reported this again to Highways. It had also been reported that there was water on the road on the hill by Heritage Cottage, which initially was thought to be water running off the Nursing Home field, but it appeared to be more than this. The Clerk had reported this to Highways as well.

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

The Clerk had made some progress and had spoken to Savills who manage the Estate on behalf of Eynsham Park. The confirmed they would review the area concerned and arrange for any necessary work to be carried out.

10.2.3 VAS Signs - to update on progress in getting two new VAS signs purchased

The power to the two VAS signs had now been connected, so it was hoped the signs would be operational very shortly.

10.2.4 Missing chevron sign on Eynsham Road bend – update on progress

Highways had confirmed that a new sign would be ordered, but to date this had not been installed.

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

Highways had confirmed that they were willing to give their consent for the signs to be attached to the existing nameplates, so the Clerk had now ordered the signs. An invoice for the signs was awaited.

10.2.6 White line painting by Primary School – to receive an update on the repainting of white lines by the school

The repainting had not yet been done and Liam advised that generally line painting was not carried out in the winter. This would probably not now be done until the Spring.

Action: Clerk to chase up as necessary.

10.2.7 To note response from Highways re request for single white lines to be painted across residents' driveways on Wroslyn Road

The Clerk had made a request to Highways and a response was awaited, although it was noted that the same issue applied in item 10.2.6 in that it was not the time of year for line painting to be carried out. This was duly noted and the Clerk would chase up a response as necessary.

Action: Clerk to chase up as necessary.

10.2.8 Telegraph poles in Freeland – to note any response from SSE re state of telegraph poles and electricity supply in village, especially with regards to mobility scooter use in Freeland

The Clerk had contacted SSE and they had responded to state that they do not put poles in the middle of a pathway, plus due to the age of the poles, it was possible that that pathway had been built around the poles. The Clerk would ring them to discuss further.

Action: Clerk to contact SSE to discuss further.

10.2.9 Speedwatch – to receive an update regarding Speedwatch activity in Freeland

A meeting had been arranged with Inspector Hookham and Helen Keen to provide training on the static devices. However, 2 members of the Speedwatch team had unfortunately stepped down from Speedwatch, so more volunteers would be required.

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

A response had been received from Witney Town Charity to advise that it had been passed on to their managing agent (Savills) who would get in touch shortly. A response was awaited.

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

The Clerk was holding onto the book until the rota restarted again in March.

10.3.1 Footpath reports: fallen tree on BR2 has been reported to OCC

It was not clear if this tree had been moved. Councillors to check.

10.3.2 To receive an update on any response received from OCC re footpath signage issues on FP8, FP9, & BR1.

No site visit from the Footpath Officer had taken place to discuss signage problems at FP8, FP9 and BR1. The Clerk had contacted Sarah Aldous at OCC to request a site meeting, but no response had been received. The Clerk would chase this up.

Action: Clerk to contact Footpath Officer as above.

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

The archway was still in the progress of being made and an installation date was yet to be confirmed. Mary Ann had chased this up with the Sawmill. Mary Ann was working on producing a brochure containing useful information about the GOR that could be handed out to people to take away with them after visiting the Registrar. Mary Ann and the Clerk had met with their first client for the GOR and given information about plots etc. Temporary plot markers were required, and vases needed to be ordered, plus a storage area for the vases was needed. Tim agreed to find some wooden stakes for the temporary plot markers. It was also noted that a new chair was required for the GOR Working Group as the Chairman wished to step down, but this would be agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

Action: Mary Ann to work on production of brochure, to chase up archway and to arrange order of vases and storage area. Tim to provide wooden stakes for plot markers.

10.5 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

A brief update was given. There were some intermittent problems with the boiler in the Hall which were currently being investigated. The Newell Room heating was not working, but the changing rooms were very hot. Lots of mud was being left by the sports clubs outside of the changing rooms, the Clerk would mention this when she emailed them about the gate lock. The new Velux blinds had been installed but were not operational as yet.

10.5.1 To update on whether tarmacking the gravelled area of the village hall car park is possible

The Clerk had received information that the tarmacking would be eligible for S106 funding, so Robert would assess the work required.

Action: Robert to assess work required.

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

This had not been looked at yet, Robert would have a look shortly.

Action: Robert to look at bike racks to see if they would be moveable to the village hall.

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

(a) OALC – S137 amount for financial year 2019-20 – details had been emailed around.

(b) BT Payphones – confirmation of reconnection of Parklands kiosk – details had been emailed around. BT had emailed confirmation that the Parklands kiosk had now been reconnected and they had sent out a contract to be signed and returned to them so the electricity company could be made aware that there is a defibrillator inside the phone box. The Clerk was awaiting receipt of the contract.

Plus additional items received since agenda sent out:

(c) Salvation Army – request to site a Salvation Army clothing recycling bank on Parish Council land – details had been emailed around. Unfortunately, Council felt unable to find a suitable location for the recycling bank and felt unable to take up any valuable space in the village hall car park. The Clerk would write to the Salvation Army to decline their request.

Action: Clerk to write to Salvation Army as above.

(d) Grit box by village hall – request from resident re grit box by village hall. A request had been received to have a grit box by the village hall for residents to use and to help with gritting the village hall paths and car park. Robert and Tim agreed to install a box with some grit at a suitable location by the Hall.

Action: Robert and Tim to install grit box by Village Hall.

12. CIRCULATION

January circulation – out at meeting.

No December circulation.

November circulation – still out.

No September or October circulation.

July circulation – still out.

13. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

A brief update was given by the Clerk. A couple of school trips were being planned to the Motor Museum and the Shakespeare Globe and National Gallery. The School now also had 2 new pets, 2 guinea pigs called Caramel and Cookie, plus Year 3 were currently setting up a tropical fish tank.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

None.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Next meeting would be Monday 18th February 2019, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.58pm.