

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

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

PRESENT:	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Not present
	Councillors:	Mary Ann Canning, Tim Webster, Jane Linnell, Bill Phillips, Janet Dalton
	District Councillors:	Colin Dingwall
	County Councillor:	Not present
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public were present for this session.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Robert Crocker and Toby Morris - both 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

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

Tim Webster (personal) as having a local business.

Peter Newell (personal) for item 5.7 – Parish Councillor Vacancy.

All of them signed the book accordingly.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 19TH JANUARY 2015

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 19th January 2015 were approved and signed as a true record of those proceedings.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

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

A quote had been received from Andrew Booth for £186.30 to fit the defibrillator. This was approved and the equipment was due to be installed on Thursday 19th February.

5.2 Memorial trees – update on progress and to discuss quote and wording for metal plaques

All 15 trees had been planted and Councillors were very pleased with the results. Councillors wished to pass on their thanks once again to Robert Crocker for planting the trees. Some costings had been obtained for the brass plaques. Two sizes were available, a 5"x2" plaque would cost £25, or a 6"x4" plaque would cost £41.20. Council **resolved** to have the larger plaque costing £41.20 each and the name of each resident commemorated would be included on each plaque. The exact wording would need to be finalised. It was agreed to place a note in the Grapevine to see if any residents wished to sponsor a plaque in memory of the persons commemorated, and to see if they had a preference for a location, although the exact tree could not be guaranteed. Janet and Bill agreed to find out in which war the residents on the war memorial died.

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

The Clerk had not yet written the letter but would do so this month.

Action: Clerk to write letter as above.

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

The fence was beyond repair and the broken piece needed removing. Tim agreed to speak to the nuns again about getting it removed.

Action: Tim to speak to nuns re fence as above.

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

Tim and Mary Ann had met with the Methodists on 6th February and a report had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Falling numbers of worshippers was a major problem and if numbers didn't increase then it was likely the Chapel would close. A suggestion had been made of publicising the Chapel to encourage more members to join the congregation, plus promoting it as a possible venue for community events, and linking it with the Village Hall complex. Bill agreed to take this idea to the next Village Hall Management Committee meeting. Another suggestion was that the local food bank was in need of a permanent base and this option could be explored. It was also reported that Julie Hirst was happy to give a talk about the Chapel at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Action: Bill to take suggestions above to next VHMC meeting.

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

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

- The Future of the Methodist Chapel
- Defibrillator training
- Outcome of the CLP
- Memorial trees

The defibrillator training would normally take approx. 1.5 hours, but the Clerk would ask the organiser if a shorter session could be arranged for the APM and then the full training would be arranged at a later date. If this couldn't be done, it was suggested contacting David Tee a Community responder in Hanborough to see if he could come along and do some defibrillator training.

5.7 Parish Councillor Vacancy – to update on progress in filling the vacancy

Two residents had expressed an interest in the vacancy. The Chairman declared an interest in this item as one of the applicants was his brother in law so (in the absence of the Vice-Chairman) the Chairmanship was passed to Tim and the Chairman left the room. The two applicants were Matthew Ruddle and Andy Murray, both of whom lived in the village. Details of each applicant had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and each one was discussed in detail. After careful consideration, Council voted unanimously to co-opt Matthew Ruddle to the Council with immediate effect. The Clerk would contact each applicant to advise of the outcome and the Chairman then returned and resumed Chairmanship of the meeting.

Action: Clerk to advise both applicants of the outcome of the decision.

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

The Chairman had the book and there were no problems to report apart from the seats on the junior swings were starting to perish in places but they were fine for the time being and would be monitored. The book was passed to Jane as she had agreed to cover for Mary Ann whilst she was away.

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

Mary Ann confirmed she had emailed the school to try and arrange a visit to show the plans again to the children. It was also suggested placing a note on the Freeland Mums and Dads Facebook page to get letters of support from parents for the new equipment that could be submitted to WREN as part of the grant application. The Clerk would arrange this.

Action: Clerk to place note on social media page as above.

6.2.3 Shed on the field – to update on progress in making the shed safe and any action taken following receipt of the Health & Safety Officer's report

The Chairman had written to members of the Football Club regarding the health and safety officer's report and action that needed to be taken. A positive response had been received and the potentially hazardous chemicals had now been removed and disposed of in the appropriate way. The Council wished to pass on their thanks to Ben Symonds and Simon Hole for their support with this. The Club

now needed to identify which equipment they wished to retain. A temporary storage location would be required and then the shed could be dismantled. The Clerk also reported that Sally Hole had confirmed she had no objections to the area being improved and if that meant dismantling the shed then that was fine.

Action: Robert and Tim to remove shed once equipment has been removed.

6.3 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports

It was reported that the pavements in the second cul de sac in Parklands were very damaged and in need of repair. It was agreed to report this to Highways. The Clerk would arrange this.

Action: Clerk to report broken pavement to Highways as above.

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

The new shelter had been ordered via OCC. A quote for the base had been obtained from a local builder and this was for £1,148 + VAT which Council felt too expensive. Robert had previously advised that if the quote was too high, his company would be able to provide a much cheaper quote for the work. Council **resolved** to accept the quote from Robert up to a maximum of £400.

Action: Robert to provide quote for bus shelter base as above.

6.3.2 Pothole repairs - to update on response from Cllr Hudspeth re a proposal that the Parish Council takes charge of its own minor road repairs (just potholes) using an approved contractor

A cheque for £1,500 had been received from OCC Highways towards minor pothole repairs. The Parish Council were only permitted to do minor cosmetic repairs, any larger potholes still had to be reported to Highways in the usual way. It was agreed to ask a local contractor what work could be carried out for £1,500. The Clerk would contact him.

Action: Clerk to contact local contractor as above.

6.3.3 Intermittent sewage smell on Wroslyn Road – to update on contact with Thames Water following resident's complaint

No further communication had been received from Thames Water so it was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

6.3.4 Cars parking on pavements – following complaint from resident, update on response from WODC re flyers

The Clerk had contacted WODC who had confirmed that they did not have any flyers but that the Parish Council could design their own if they wished. Council were not comfortable with placing flyers on cars so it was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

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

Highways had responded to advise there was no obvious site for the VAS sign to be situated. However the Area Steward would investigate if the current school sign post could be extended or if the Parish Council were able to install their own post. No further response had been received so the Clerk would chase this up.

Action: Clerk to chase Highways as above.

6.3.6 Double yellow lines by school – update on progress in application for traffic order change

The Clerk had spoken to the Area Steward who had advised her that the likely cost of just the legal fees for a traffic order change would be in the region of £5,000, plus there would be line painting costs of approx. £1,200. It was suggested having this on the agenda for the November budget meeting where it could be discussed putting funds in the budget to cover these costs. It was also suggested contacting the school to advise them of the costs involved and to see if the school or parents were willing to make a contribution towards the cost of the lines.

Action: Clerk to contact the school and to diarise to place on the November meeting agenda.

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

No reports were received. The Footpath rota had been updated and the book was passed to the Chairman in readiness for the rota to recommence from the beginning of March.

6.4.1 Hazel tree overhanging footpath and garden at no 48 Broadmarsh Lane – to consider quote to have the tree lopped and pruned (but not removed)

A quote had been obtained from Elliot Hall for the hazel tree to be lopped and pruned, and this would cost £110. Council approved this quote and the Clerk would arrange for the work to be carried out.

Action: Clerk to arrange tree work as above.

6.5 Cemetery – to receive any reports

No reports were received.

6.5.1 To update on investigations regarding raised tombs plus to consider a costing for a burial mound at the new cemetery site

An approximate costing had been calculated for the burial mound. It would need a volume of about 5,600 cubic metres, with approx. 10,000 tonnes of soil being required. Working on the basis of an approximate cost of £10 per ton of soil delivered, the likely cost would be in the region of £100,000, which was deemed way too expensive to consider doing.

The Chairman was still investigating raised tombs and had received some responses to his enquiries to date. From the advice received so far it appeared that there were special conditions attached to having a raised tomb with regards to sealing the unit and ventilation systems. The Chairman would report back at the next meeting with any further findings.

Action: Chairman to continue with raised tomb investigations.

6.6 Allotments – to receive any reports

No reports were received.

6.7 Community Led Plan – update on progress

As there was nothing further to report on this currently it was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

6.8 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

A very brief report was given. The hall accounts had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Although the holding account showed a balance of £11K, some of this had been spent on redecorating the hall. New members had also been recruited, a new cleaner had been appointed and three new helpers had been recruited.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions

No planning applications had been received this month.

7.1 Applications Received – None.

7.2 Applications Approved:

14/01948/HHD ALVERE, WITNEY ROAD, FREELAND.
Single storey extensions, alterations and new garage for Mr John Major.

14/02068/FUL OVERSTONE, THE GREEN, FREELAND.
Extension and conversion of outbuilding to provide a dwelling for Ms Janine Charles.

14/01447/FUL OAKFIELD HOUSE, WITNEY ROAD, FREELAND.
Erection of two semi-detached dwellings (Re-submission of Approval 14/0656/P/FP) for Mr & Mrs S Ainsley.

14/01566/HHD 62 BROADMARSH LANE, FREELAND.
Erection of single storey side extension for Mr Michael Gilbert.

7.3 Applications Refused – None.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn – None.

7.5 To note any update regarding resident's complaint re noise and smell from extractor fan at unit 2 on Wroslyn Road Industrial Estate

The resident who raised concerns regarding the extractor fan at Unit 2 had emailed the Clerk to give an update on the current situation. They advised that the extractor is being removed and re-sited on the south wall. The installation will then include noise reducing measures and an application will be made for retrospective planning permission. They also advised that Mr Ward will then be making further investigations from an environmental perspective.

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

Following the Clerk's letter to Andrew Tucker regarding unit 17, a response had been received to advise that Giles Hughes, Head of Planning will be investigating our concerns and will respond directly. No further response had yet been received.

7.7 To note and discuss any potential impact of the amendments made to Pye Homes planning application for 169 homes on land South of Witney Road, Long Hanborough

The Clerk had been made aware of some changes that had been made to the Pye Homes planning application and a letter from the architects acting on behalf of Pyes that had been sent to WODC Planners had been emailed round to Councillors for information. Colin confirmed that Hanborough Parish Council had written to WODC Planners with further concerns regarding traffic flow, and the capacity of the primary school and doctor's surgery. The details of their concerns were discussed and forwarded onto the Clerk. After much discussion, Council **resolved** to write a letter to Andrew Tucker, Head of Planning at WODC to raise similar concerns to Hanborough PC to include the fact that WODC do not take into account the collective impact of any planning development proposals within an area with regard to the 5% increase allowance limit on traffic flow. The Clerk would write to Mr Tucker with these concerns.

It was also reported that Witney Oxford Transport (WOT) group were proposing to have a new railway station at Yarnton which would have to be accessed via the A40 or Cassington and concerns were raised about the impact this would have on the traffic flow in an already congested area.

8. FINANCIAL MATTERS

8.1 Presentation of the monthly financial report

The monthly financial report was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 30th January 2015 and the receipts and payments received or paid out in the last month. The bank statement was checked as agreeing with the figures on the finance sheet and signed by Bill.

8.2 Approval of invoices for payment

The Council approved invoices for payment as listed on the invoices sheet distributed with the meeting papers.

Council **resolved** to approve the following invoices for payment:

Cheque Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
102172	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary February 2015*	£600.42
102173	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 16.02.15	£12.50
102174	Scribe 2000 Ltd	Accounts software annual licence 2015/16	£294.00
102175	Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association	Membership renewal	£40.00
		Total:	£946.92
* salary includes nationally agreed pay increase of 2.2% (approved last month)			

8.3 To discuss any actions arising from the report on the review of the effectiveness of internal audit process (to include review of financial system)

The Chairman and Janet had met with the Clerk on Friday 23rd January to carry out this review. A report of their findings had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Council noted and accepted the report and agreed that no actions were required at the current time.

8.4 Any other financial business – None.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The following were received, noted and/or considered:

(a) Daffodils in grass verges – concerns raised from Gardening Club re daffodils being trampled in the grass verges. It was agreed that the Clerk would place a note in the Grapevine asking residents to avoid walking on the grass verges whilst the bulbs were coming through.

Action: Clerk to place note in Grapevine as above.

(b) OALC – members update January – details had been emailed round for information.

(c) ORCC Policy Bulletin – details had been emailed round for information.

Plus additional items received since agenda papers circulated:

(d) OPFA – membership renewal request – Council approved the OPFA membership renewal at a cost of £40.00.

(e) OCC – Local Transport Plan 4 consultation – details had been emailed round for information.

(f) Age UK Oxfordshire – invite to Community Information Network Partnership meeting – West Oxon meeting is being held on Weds 18th March, 10am – 12noon at Eynsham Village Hall, Back Lane, Eynsham – no-one wished to attend.

10. CIRCULATION

February circulation – none.

January circulation – still out.

11. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

Colin gave a brief report of District Council business. The Cabinet were due to meet shortly to recommend approval to the Draft Local Plan with lower housing figures incorporated within it. Nothing was contained within the Plan for Hanborough or Freeland, so only speculative enquiries could be considered. The annual budget was due to be approved shortly, and it was likely there would be a small surplus due to costs savings made with ongoing shared services.

12. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

There was nothing to report.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

Notice boards – it was reported that the cork tiles on both notice boards were starting to become detached from the board and required re-stapling. Tim agreed to do this.

Action: Tim to restaple the cork tiles on to the notice boards.

Meeting times – a suggestion was made of starting the meetings at 7.30pm rather than 8.00pm so that the meeting didn't finish quite so late in the evening. It was agreed to place this item on the next agenda for discussion.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 16th March 2015, 8.00pm in the Newell Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.30pm.