

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 20TH JANUARY 2020, IN THE NEWELL ROOM, FREELAND, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 7.30PM.

PRESENT:	Chairman:	Peter Newell
	Vice-Chairman:	Robert Crocker
	Councillors:	Vero McCoy, Bill Phillips, Mary Ann Canning, Tim Webster, Peter Foster
	District Councillors:	Alaa Al-Yousuf (till 8.45pm) Marilyn Davies (till 8.30pm)
	County Councillor:	Not present
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No-one was present for this session.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –Matthew Ruddle – ill, Liam Walker – stuck in traffic due to road accident.

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 having a local business.

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

Tim Webster (personal) 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 16th December 2019

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 16th December 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

Peter F gave a brief report. The lady he had been dealing with was now on maternity leave and details of a new site in Freeland that was currently being explored had been emailed around prior to the meeting. Peter would keep the Council updated on any developments.

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

There was nothing further to report on the sale of the church.

6.3 Little Free Library – to update on progress in repairing current library and on transforming phone box into a new library, and to consider quote to purchase signs to decorate the phone box

Matthew had emailed a brief update. Matthew was meeting with someone on Wednesday from a company that can supply new signs/graphics to replace the old BT logos on the phone box. After that meeting, he would have a better idea of the cost and time frame for getting it done - once this was complete the new Little Free Library could be opened for use.

Action: Matthew to obtain quote and examples of vinyl lettering to bring to February meeting.

6.4 Parish Councillor Profiles – to update on progress

There were only 2 Councillors left (Robert & Tim) who were due to appear in the **March and April** editions of the Grapevine. These remaining Councillors were asked to email their profile to Matthew and he would pick one each month to be published. It was also suggested having something in the Grapevine (and on the village website) about how to apply to stand as a parish councillor in the election. The Clerk would see if she could dig out the necessary forms.

Action: Robert & Tim to write their profile and email it to Matthew. Clerk to dig out application forms as above.

6.5 The Big Lunch – to confirm date of event and to organize helpers

The Hall had been booked for Sunday 14th June and helpers would be required to set up the Hall.

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

The Hall had been booked for **Friday 17th April** (note change of date from Friday 3rd April due to Chairman's availability). The meeting would start at 7.30pm, Councillors were asked to be there for 6.45pm to help set up. Councillors were asked to consider topics for discussion, and it was suggested having an environmental theme this year. Ideas put forward were:

- The environment – inviting a speaker to come and talk about climate change, possibly from the Eynsham Green Tea Group who were looking at encouraging people to live a more sustainable lifestyle – Clerk to invite a representative (possible suggested person was Angie Tichen);
- Planting additional trees in Freeland – encouraging residents to plant more trees (the appropriate species and in the appropriate location);
- WODC Plans for Environment – to discuss what the WODC were doing to reduce their carbon footprint and to discuss the District's environment strategy – Marilyn and Alaa agreed to include this in their talks;
- Blenheim – plans for monitoring systems for environment pollution – Clerk to invite Dominic Hare;
- To consider declaring a climate emergency in Freeland following APM;
- Play equipment – to ask for residents' suggestions/idea for new item of play equipment to replace Multiplay with tyres.

Action: Councillors to note change of date, and Clerk to invite attendees as above. Councillors to consider any other topics so this can be finalised next month.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:

7.1 Applications Received:

19/03499/HHD	10 CHURCH VIEW, FREELAND. Single storey rear, side, & front extensions for Mr P Panting.
19/03528/HHD	69 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND. Raise wall height and increase roof pitch (including insertion of front and rear dormer windows) to provide first floor habitable space and replace existing pitched roof over single storey rear extension with a new flat roof and roof lantern, formation of verandah and installation of stove flue. Construction of single storey front extension for Mr Simon Horner.
19/03419/HHD	176 WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND. Erection of single storey side extension for Mr James Eaton.
19/03370/FUL	FREELAND HOUSE, WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND. Construction of three timber cabins for use as staff accommodation for Mr Mahesh Patel.
19/03491/S73	LAND ADJOINING 1 PARKLANDS, FREELAND. Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 18/03385/FUL to allow the construction of external chimney stack to both properties for Mr Paul Cox.

After viewing all of the above 5 planning applications, Council agreed that they had no comments or objections that they wished to make about any of the proposed changes to the properties.

7.2 Applications Approved: None.

7.3 Applications Refused: None.

7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.

7.5 Applications Awaiting Decision:

19/02563/HHD 2 HURST LANE, FREELAND.

Erection of garden room (Retrospective) for Mr & Mrs Rogers.

19/03094/HHD GLEBE FARM, THE GREEN, FREELAND.

First floor extension for Mr R Crocker.

7.6 Receipt of S106 Funds - To update on S106 funds associated with the Mears development

There was nothing further to report. Receipt of the Play Facilities and Public Art Contributions were still awaited. The Clerk had chased this up again and was awaiting a response.

Action: Clerk to chase up S106 Funds as above.

7.7 Review of Permitted Development Regulations – to note any update from Robert Courts MP regarding request for review of Regulations

The Clerk had chased up a response with Robert Courts MP last month to request an update on the review of the Permitted Development Regulations. His office had confirmed that they had chased up the Minister and were awaiting a response.

7.8 Oxfordshire Garden Village Masterplan Framework response – to consider request for meeting

Following submission of the Parish Council's response to the Garden Village Masterplan Framework, a request for discussions with members of the Parish Council had been received from the Garden Village Team to try and address the concerns raised. From the available dates given, it was agreed to meet with the Team on 13th February at 8.00pm at Mary Ann's house. The Clerk would contact the Garden Village Team to arrange.

Action: Clerk to contact Garden Village Team to arrange meeting as above.

8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

Merilyn had nothing further to update since the last meeting. She had been invited to attend the A40 briefing on 24th January by Liam and was working on lots of planning issues in Hanborough at present.

Alaa had nothing further to update since the last meeting.

Merilyn and Alaa were thanked for attending and Merilyn left the meeting at 8.30pm and Alaa left the meeting at 8.45pm.

Liam emailed an update through after the meeting as he had been unable to attend due to being held up in traffic. The update included details about OCC setting their budget for 2020/21 which was very much an invest to save budget with no cuts being made. Investments were being made in adult & children's social care which were both OCC's main demand services. More funding was also being put into highways which meant adding teams back onto the roads to concentrate on roadside vegetation, sign cleaning and sign maintenance. Council tax was due to increase by 2% specifically for adult social care and then 1.99% for other council services. The Councillor Priority Fund was also due to continue. The proposed budget was due to be voted on at their full council budget meeting on the 11th February.

He noted that Oxfordshire had been rated the best authority in England for recycling for the 6th year running. The use of the Ardley incinerator was also very positive which was burning waste to power over 50,000 homes in Oxfordshire. OCC were also working closely with the District Councils to increase their recycling rate.

Liam had also been asked to join the OCC Cabinet and so from February he would be taking on the role of Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery and Operations. He would still try and attend PC meetings but if he was unable to do so he would send in a written report.

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 31st December 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 was signed by Bill.

9.2 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 (£)
102597	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 20.01.20	12.50
102598	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary Jan 2020	902.57
102599	Bill Phillips	Litter picking Oct/Nov/Dec 2019	250.00
102600	JF Gardening & Maintenance	School verge shrub and hedge removal	110.00
102601	Information Commissioner	Data Protection Registration fee	40.00
102602	HMRC	NI contributions	161.46
102603	Lisa Smith	Microsoft Office subscription renewal	59.99
		Total:	1,536.52
Plus:	NEST pension payment of £67.64 (employee & employer contributions). £38.65 has been deducted from Clerk's salary for January salary payment.		

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

Peter F and Vero carried out the review on 14th January and a report of their findings had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The report found the system of control of the Parish Council finances to be appropriate and being carried out in a proper, transparent and thorough manner. It was recommended that the role of the Independent Internal Controller be reviewed to ensure that there was no duplication of work from that which Bill was carrying out. It was also recommended that the use of BACS be reviewed to confirm whether or not it could be used more widely. Both of these recommendations were accepted by the Council and would be investigated by the Clerk.

Action: Clerk to investigate use of BACS and role of Independent Internal Controller as above.

9.5 To approve quote for additional bench work around village

The revised quote for the additional bench work for 5 benches around the village had been emailed around to Councillors prior to the meeting. Since the previous quote, some of the benches now required power washing and soaking in preservative for 24 hours. After a brief discussion, Council **resolved** to approve the revised quote and the Clerk would arrange for the work to be carried out.

Action: Clerk to arrange bench work as above.

9.6 Any other financial business – None.

10. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS

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

Vero 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

With the ongoing wet weather, the trampoline tile had still not been glued. Mary Ann had the trampoline tile glue and would get this done shortly.

Action: Mary Ann to glue tile. Robert to provide temporary fencing around trampoline if needed.

10.1.2 New storage building on field – to update on progress in obtaining quotes

A brief update was given. A constructive meeting had been held with members of the Sports Clubs (football and cricket club representatives were both present) and the general feeling was that they were happy with the suggested size of 8m x 8m for the new storage shed. Pegs had been put out so

that the size could be visualised. A resident who lived by the field was also present who raised concerns regarding the drainage from the field to their property and this would be investigated to see what could be done to alleviate this. No concerns were raised about the size or height of the shed. It was reported that as the new shed would be over 30m², planning permission would be required which would cost in the region of £230. Council **resolved** to allow payment of up to £300 for the planning application fee and Mary Ann agreed to start the application process. The Chairman would dig out some photos of the old shed which could be included with the application to show that 2 sheds were being replaced with one larger storage building.

As previously stated last month, some landscaping and screening around the shed would also be included, and there was a query about the size of the doors required. Three quotes were being obtained and it was hoped to have these ready for discussion next month.

Action: Mary Ann to start application process for planning permission, Tim/Mary Ann to collect quotes, Chairman to email photos of old shed to Mary Ann.

10.1.3 Picnic bench on field – to receive an update from Picnic Bench Working Group re location for installation of a new picnic bench on the playing field and obtaining quotes for additional safety surfacing

Two quotes had been obtained, but a third was required so it was agreed to defer this item until February when hopefully all 3 quotes would be available.

Action: Mary Ann to try and obtain a third quote.

10.1.4 Annual inspection report – to update on progress in checking zip wire bolt

The zip wire bolt had been dismantled, checked and reassembled by a representative from the play equipment supplier and all was found to be in good working order with only minor wear and tear. A recommendation was made to continue with visual inspections with a more in-depth inspection in a year's time.

10.1.5 Tractor – to consider quote to have a winter service carried out

The Clerk had obtained a quote from the tractor supplier for a 50 hour winter service to be carried out on site which would cost between £400 - £450 + VAT. This would cover change of engine oil & filter, transmission oil filter, suction filter (if there is one), plus check and change if necessary of fuel filters & air filters, plus an all over check of things like grease points/torqs etc. As the tractor had only done 35 hours, Robert suggested contacting them to see if the price could be negotiated down – the Clerk would pass on the contact details to Robert. In the meantime, Council **resolved** to agree payment of up to £450 (excluding VAT) for the tractor service to be carried out.

Action: Clerk to pass contact details to Robert to see if price can be reduced.

10.1.6 Replacement of the Fenland Leisure Products Climbing Frame – to receive an update from Picnic Bench Working Group regarding suitable alternatives for this equipment

The Picnic Bench Working Group members had not yet met to discuss this but would arrange to meet shortly. It was agreed to carry this item forward to the Spring.

Action: Picnic Bench Working Group to investigate suggestions for replacing climbing frame equipment.

10.1.7 Pitch Improvement Report (PIP) – to discuss the contents of the PIP and to consider any actions arising from the recommendations and associated costs (in particular verti-draining the field)

A Pitch Improvement Report carried out by the Oxfordshire Football Association had been emailed around to Councillors by the Football Club prior to the meeting. The report recommended verti-draining the field to relieve compaction and improve drainage. The Football Club had obtained a quote from a trusted source which totalled £1,200 + VAT to verti-drain the whole field. The Clerk had also obtained a quote from the previous supplier used by the Council approximately 5 years ago, and this totalled £932 + VAT to verti-drain the whole field. However, concerns were raised about the standard of work previously carried out, and after discussion, Council **resolved** to approve the higher quote of £1,200. It was agreed to ask Simon Hole from the Football Club to liaise with the supplier as to when to carry out the work so that the weather conditions would allow the best results to be achieved.

Action: Clerk to advise re approval of quote and arranging work with Football Club rep as above.

10.1.8 Weed Spraying of field – to consider quote for weed spraying work

A quote of £330 + VAT had been received from a company that had been previously used by the Council for weed spraying the field. After a brief discussion, Council agreed the field didn't need spraying at the current time. It was agreed to review it again in late Spring.

Action: Clerk to add to April's agenda.

10.2 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports

10.2.1 Highways reports – to receive any reports: Overhanging shrubs on Hurst Lane, potholes,

The Clerk had contacted a resident who knew the owners of the house that owned the verge with the overhanging shrubs. A response was awaited.

Potholes – there were some rather large potholes along Pigeon House Lane that needed to be reported via Fix my Street. Robert would get these reported. A suggestion was also made of making Pigeon House Lane a one way road to try and stop all the rat running that was currently going on and clogging up the lane. It was agreed to put this on the APM agenda for discussion with residents.

Flooding - The house on Wroslyn Road that was reported last month with a channel dug out with water running out into the road had been looked at but it was unclear where the water was coming from. It was agreed to monitor this area for the time being.

Cherry tree, Broadmarsh Lane – A resident had asked for a cherry tree to be cut back/removed due to the roots possibly affecting their extension (their builder had expressed concerns). However, Highways had confirmed they would not remove the tree. A suggestion was made of putting a root barrier membrane down to divert the roots in another direction.

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

There was nothing further to report. The Clerk was chasing up a response to get an update but was not having much success. A contact telephone number was passed to the Clerk so she would try and phone to obtain an update.

Action: Clerk to chase up a response.

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

Confirmation had been received from Thames Valley Police that they had changed their policy regarding acceptable equipment to be used by Speedwatch teams and that the Bushnell gun was now acceptable. The Speedwatch team had therefore been invited to submit returns of speeding motorists once again.

Roger Faulkner was in the process of resurrecting the original Speedwatch team, and a note was also being placed in the Grapevine this month to encourage any other volunteers. The Parish Council were very supportive of the reformation of the Speedwatch team in Freeland which was felt to be an active deterrent to speeding motorists.

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

The rota was complete for this year – Robert would pass the book to the Clerk to retain until the Spring.

Action: Robert to pass footpath book to the Clerk.

10.3.1 Graffiti on wall by Wroslyn Road/Woodlands footpath – to consider if any action to be taken regarding removing the graffiti

As reported last month, WODC would not remove the graffiti on the wall as it was privately owned, (and the Parish Council also agreed) so it was now down to the resident to remove it.

10.4 Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports

No reports had been received.

10.4.1 To receive an update on the construction of the base for the timber storage cupboard and outstanding archway work

Mary Ann had chased up the sawmill again re the outstanding archway work. She had also contacted the local contractor to arrange the base work for the litter bin and storage cupboard. Tim confirmed that he would be replacing some of the box hedging in the next 10 days.

Action: Mary Ann to continue chasing up sawmill re arch and purchase timber shed and arrange local contractor to install base. Clerk to order dog bin (and litter bin once base is completed).

10.5 Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

There was nothing much to report. The AGM was due to be held in February and currently the Committee members were all volunteers (not elected). An idea had been put to the Committee about having a term of service for committee members, whereby members were elected to serve a term, then had to stand down and be re-elected. This would give an opportunity to advertise to the village for people to become involved if they so wished and could possibly help to lessen the impact if key members suddenly decided they wished to resign from the Committee. However, this idea so far had not been particularly popular with members.

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

The tarmacking work had now been completed and Councillors were very satisfied with the result. The invoice for the work was awaited.

10.5.2 To update on installation bike racks by the Village Hall

This had not been done but would be done now that the tarmacking had been completed.

Action: Robert to install bike racks by the Village Hall.

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

- (a) OALC – December update – details had been emailed around.
- (b) Thank you letter from resident re white lines – details had been emailed around.
- (c) Hanborough Environment Group – invite to meeting on 24th January in Freeland Hall re asking parishes to declare a Climate Emergency. The Chairman and Vero hoped to attend.

Plus, additional items received since agenda sent out:

(d) A40 briefing at County Hall with Liam Walker, Monday 27th January 2-3pm – details had been emailed around. Peter Foster hoped to attend.

(e) Village Halls week photo competition – details had been emailed around. It was agreed that Bill and the Hall Management Committee would look into this.

Action: Bill & FHMC to look into photo competition.

12. CIRCULATION

January circulation – out at meeting.

No December circulation.

November circulation – still out.

No October circulation.

September circulation – still out.

July circulation – still out.

13. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Clerk gave a brief update. The school were investigating plans to set up a school library. The had also been revisiting “the 4R’s” – resilience, resourcefulness, reflection, reciprocity, as key elements to aid learning behaviour. Extra residentials were also being offered this year for Y2, Y3 and Y5&6 children.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY

None.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next ordinary meeting would be held on **Monday 17th February 2020, 7.30pm in the Newell Room.**

Vero offered her apologies for the next meeting as she would be away.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.55pm.