

## **FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, FREELAND ON THE 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 7.30PM.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Chairman:	Roger Faulkner
	Vice-Chairman:	Mary Ann Canning
	Councillors:	Bill Phillips, Peter Foster, Andrew Bird
	District Councillors:	Merilyn Davies (till 8.40pm)
	County Councillor:	Not present
	Clerk:	Lisa Smith

**At the time of this meeting taking place, the UK and rest of the world were still experiencing a Coronavirus (Covid -19) pandemic, and legislation and rules around this were constantly being updated. The current Government advice was for Council meetings to be held face to face, so the meeting was held in the Village Hall to allow for social distancing and better ventilation.**

#### **1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

No one was initially present for this session. However, Perrin Hatwell, joined the meeting from around 8.00pm until 8.45pm to listen to the discussions and introduce himself to the Councillors.

**2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Andy Bain - no reason given, Amy Jackson – Covid related reasons, Alaa Al-Yousuf, Liam Walker.

#### **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.

Roger Faulkner (personal) as Vice Chair of Freeland Community Benefit Society and Speedwatch Co-ordinator.

#### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

##### **4.1 To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman 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 report was provided. The planning drawings should be produced by early January which would then allow the planning application to be submitted by the end of January. Peter would continue to keep the Council updated on progress.

##### **6.2 Parish Councillor vacancy – to update on progress in filling the vacancy and to approve co-option of prospective candidate**

No election had been requested so the Council could fill the vacancy by co-option. One person had expressed an interest in the position, Perrin Hatwell. The Chairman and Vice Chair had been to meet with him and considered him suitable for the role. After a brief discussion, Councillors voted unanimously in favour to co-opt Perrin Hatwell to the Parish Council with immediate effect. The Clerk would advise the District Council and arrange the signing of the necessary documentation.

**Action:** Clerk to advise WODC of the co-option and arrange for forms to be sent to Perrin.

### **6.3 Yellow Rattle trial sites – to receive an update on progress**

The site at Parklands had been planted up, and following the recent electrical works by the nursing home, it was suggested also including this verge to be planted with wildflower seeds as it was currently a muddy mess from where it had been dug. This was agreed and it was suggested asking Highways to re-seed it with some wildflower mix (including Yellow Rattle) or see if they could provide a financial contribution to the cost of the seeds.

**Action:** Clerk to contact Highways as above.

### **6.4 Platinum Jubilee Celebrations & Hedgerow Grant – to receive an update on application for tree saplings from Woodland Trust and Hedgerow Grant from Wild Oxfordshire (via Eynsham Nature Recovery Network)**

Andy had provided an email update as he was unable to attend the meeting.

The Parish Council had been successful in their application to the Woodland Trust for the Urban Pack of 15 saplings, and these would be delivered in March 2022.

Russell Fisher would be providing details to Wild Oxfordshire regarding how much hedgerow would be required from the maps he had drawn up with a priority list, which had been circulated to the Councillors. After reviewing the list, Councillors agreed to the following areas for the hedgerow: Freeland Churchyard, Broadmarsh Lane amenity area, Bridleway on left by Vincent's Wood. Councillors preferred to have the verge by the nursing home that had recently been dug up planted with wildflowers rather than hedgerow plants.

The playing field verge was again preferred to be left as wildflowers not hedgerow, and the two suggested areas in Walkers Close needed to be checked for ownership status. The Wroslyn Road area by 149a/149b was fine, but again needed to check ownership status and inform Highways of the intentions to plant in this location. The Clerk would feed this back to Russell.

**Action:** Clerk to provide feedback to Russell Fisher re the above.

### **6.5 WASP (Windrush Against Sewage Pollution) – to note response received from Thames Water following letter of concern & note additional letter from Robert Courts MP re storm overflows**

A rather unhelpful response from Thames Water had been received which basically advised that they would continue discharging into local rivers when needed from their approved sites and locations and whilst they were looking into this matter, they could not provide a timeframe as to when this would be reduced. Councillors felt this was a pretty unsatisfactory response and agreed to keep sending complaints in every few months in the hope this would illicit some kind of better response and ultimately some remedial action. The Clerk would place this item on the agenda for the January meeting, and in the meantime Councillors were encouraged to feedback their concerns in the Evenlode Catchment survey that had been emailed around for their completion.

**Action:** Clerk to place item on January agenda, and Councillors to complete Evenlode survey if possible.

### **6.6 Annual Parish Meeting – to update on date of meeting and topics for discussion, including climate crisis and how to make the village more sustainable**

It was suggested holding the Annual Parish Meeting on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April which was in the Easter School holidays. The Clerk would book the Hall if it was available. It was also noted that as the third Monday in the month fell on Easter Monday (18<sup>th</sup> April), it was agreed to move the April PC meeting to Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April instead. The Clerk would check room bookings for this date.

Councillors were asked to consider the topics for discussion and to email their suggestions to the Clerk and Chairman by 10<sup>th</sup> January.

**Action:** Clerk to book village hall as above, Councillors to email topic suggestions to Clerk and Chairman by 10<sup>th</sup> Jan.

## **7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:**

### **7.1 Applications Received:**

**21/03953/HHD**

**5 WALKERS CLOSE, FREELAND.**

Erection of a single storey extension to front and side for Mr Oliver Puddle.

After reviewing the above application, Council agreed there were no objections they wished to make regarding the proposed changes to the property.

### **7.2 Applications Approved: None.**

**7.3 Applications Refused: None.**

**7.4 Applications Withdrawn: None.**

**7.5 Applications Awaiting Decision:**

**21/03258/FUL 3 CUCKOO WOOD CARAVAN PARK, EYNHAM ROAD, FREELAND.**  
Erection of detached building for the garaging of heavy goods vehicles for Mr Perry Hatwell.

**21/03680/HHD ROWAN, WITNEY ROAD, FREELAND.**  
Erection of a single storey side and rear extensions for Mrs Penny Young

**20/01734/OUT LAND NORTH OF A40, A40 SECTION FROM BARNARD GATE TO EYNHAM ROUNDABOUT, EYNHAM (NEIGHBOURING PARISH)**  
Outline application with means of access for a mixed-use Garden Village, comprising residential, retail, food and drink, health and community facilities, hotel, class B1, B2 and B8 employment uses, education provision, burial ground, public open space with sports pitches together with ancillary facilities, landscaping and associated infrastructure and works for Grosvenor Developments Ltd.

**21/00961/FUL LAND SOUTH OF SHASTON, THE GREEN, FREELAND.**  
New Build Chalet Bungalow with detached double Garage for Mr & Mrs Neil and Catherine Tregear.

**21/02627/OUT LAND OFF THE WEST SIDE OF WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND.**  
Outline planning application for the erection of a retirement community of up to 160 extra care units (C2 use class) with associated communal facilities and open space, with access from Wrosllyn Road, (all matters reserved except access) and retention of veterinary practice in the coach house for Inspired Villages.

**7.6 Neighbourhood Plan – to receive an update on progress with next steps to kick starting the process for a Neighbourhood Plan and discuss ways of encouraging involvement from residents**

Amy had sent in an update via email as she was unable to attend the meeting. A really good meeting had been held with Astrid Harvey, Community Planning Officer from WODC on 4<sup>th</sup> December about understanding Neighbourhood Planning and whether it's for Freeland or not. Key points from the discussion were as follows:

- Neighbourhood Plans can be very helpful in setting a planning, development or even green space framework for the community.
- However Neighbourhood Plans are a lot of work – usually 2 years plus in development and might have to keep changing as the wider planning frameworks change – not just the WODC Local Plan but the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan as well.
- Bringing forward land for development under a Neighbourhood Plan is cumbersome – the Parish Council would have to put out a call for land and treat applicants fairly and impartially.
- The PC could achieve objectives without a Neighbourhood Plan (depending on objectives) – and indeed it might in some instances be beneficial in terms of flexibility and time.
- A follow-up meeting is planned for 20<sup>th</sup> January (at the moment in the village hall but might go online) where the following would be discussed:
  - Agree (if possible) a proposal within the group about what it thinks is desirable/appropriate/needed for Freeland in terms of development;
  - Agree whether a Neighbourhood Plan is the right mechanism to achieve this goal, and if not, what is the right strategy (re-engaging with Astrid for guidance on this);
  - Agree next steps in terms of engaging the community to determine support for the agreed goal and strategy.

This is where the idea of a survey comes to the fore. Suggest that the group comes back to the Parish Council with a proposal after that and this feeds into a survey for running late February/early March. Could be run in hard copy and online – using a leaflet with a QR code.

Councillors were asked if the Parish Council was to do this, to consider what other things would they wish to find out in the survey and what possible questions they would like to be asked. It was also noted that views could be sought at the Annual Parish Meeting next year. Amy would update the Council following the next meeting.

#### **7.7 Salt Cross Garden Village WODC Letter to Inspector – details emailed around**

The Parish Council had been advised that WODC had sent a letter to the Planning Inspector regarding the additional phasing of essential infrastructure work that was requested by the Inspector. At the time WODC provided an indicative timetable for the work which envisaged completion by early October, subject to a number of factors.

WODC had since advised that unfortunately it had not been possible to achieve their original estimate but the work was progressing well including ongoing engagement with key stakeholders such as OCC and the main garden village site promoter Grosvenor Developments Ltd.

In terms of revised timings, WODC hoped to be in a position to engage with other stakeholders in early December with a view to submission of the final documentation prior to the Christmas break. This was duly noted.

#### **7.8 WODC Land Management Plans – details emailed around**

The Parish Council had been invited to respond to newly developed Land Management Plans for key WODC owned and managed sites.

WODC owns and is responsible for the management of a wide range of public open green spaces across the district. They had recently reviewed the management of the different habitat and natural features across 12 key sites across the district, to identify opportunities where improvements could be made through changing the way things are maintained by their grounds maintenance team Ubico. Many of these areas had the potential to be enhanced for both wildlife and people, and new Land Management Plans had been created to maximise that wide range of natural benefits these sites bring. Out of the 12 key sites, the nearest one to Freeland was North Leigh Common.

The WODC Land Management Plans could be viewed and commented on using the link below, which was open until **Friday 31st December**. Councils were encouraged to respond, as the plans would shape what happens in the local area:

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/enhancing-our-natural-capital/>

After a brief discussion Council agreed not to submit any comments as they were happy with the proposals for the North Leigh Common site.

#### **7.9 Evenlode Catchment Partnership survey – details emailed around**

All members of Freeland Parish Council were invited to participate in some research being conducted by the Evenlode Catchment Partnership (ECP), the purpose of which was to capture opinions on topics relating to the Evenlode River and the local water environment. Opinions provided would help them to steer the direction of their projects going forward and ensure they are in line with local concerns.

The ECP was established to help local people and organisations to work together to improve river water quality, enhance wildlife, improve flood management, and build greater community engagement with the river and its tributaries. The survey would take 5-10 minutes to complete and Councillors were encouraged to complete the survey, ideally before Christmas.

All details would be kept anonymous, but the results would be available on their website when they had analysed the data.

### **8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS**

No reports had been received from Alaa or Liam.

Merilyn provided some information on a planning application very similar to the Inspired Villages (IV) application which was discussed at an Uplands Planning Committee and where the feedback from the local GP practice /NHS service provider became one of the key elements in the decision making for

the Planning Officers, as well as a lack of affordable housing and “ghettoization” of the village, all three of which had been included in the feedback for the Freeland IV application. The Inspired Villages planning application was due to be presented at the February Uplands Planning Committee where a decision would hopefully be made.

Merilyn was also asked if there was anything she could do to help with the A4095 Freeland white gates that needed replacing ideally with PVC ones rather than wood. Merilyn agreed to speak with Pye’s to see if they would be willing to replace them.

**Action:** Merilyn to speak with Pye’s re white gates.

Merilyn was thanked for her update and she left the meeting at 8.20pm.

## 9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

### 9.1 Presentation of the monthly financial report

The monthly financial report for December was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 30th November 2021 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 Review of Budget and Precept Requirement for 2022/23

Council agreed not to make any changes to the proposed Precept Requirement for 2022/23 so the Clerk would now submit the figures to WODC.

**Action:** Clerk to submit precept figures to WODC.

### 9.3 Approval of invoices for payment

The Council approved invoices for payment as listed on the invoices for payment sheet distributed with the meeting. These invoices would all be paid by BACS online. Council therefore **resolved** to approve all of the following invoices for payment:

BACS Ref Number	To whom paid	Details	Amount (£)
BACS 100	Freeland Village Hall Bookings	Hall hire 20.12.21	25.00
BACS 101	Lisa Smith	Clerk's salary - December*	950.42
BACS 102	RA Crocker Ltd	Materials to connect water pipe on field	1,214.82
BACS 103	Peter Newell	Website expenses	76.75
BACS 104	Summit Trees	Laurel hedge cutting at BML + willow at pond	1,080.00
BACS 105	Elite Turf Solutions Ltd	Verti-draining of playing field	1,320.00
BACS 106	JF Gardening & Maintenance	Mowing July - Nov	275.00
BACS 107	Sawscapes Play Ltd	Balance for new toddler play equipment	29,746.32
BACS 108	Barlow & Sons (Hermitage) Ltd	Gate latch for PHL gate	28.44
BACS 109	The Play Inspection Company Ltd	Post installation inspection	360.00
BACS 110	Nigel Green	Mowing Sept - Nov	1,060.00
BACS 111	Volunteer Link-Up	Donation	100.00
BACS 112	Oxfordshire County Council	Traffic surveys x 4	588.00
BACS 113	Summit Trees	Hedge cutting by village hall car park	600.00
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>37,424.75</b>
<b>Plus:</b>	NEST pension payment of £33.09 (employee & employer contributions). The amount of £18.91 has been deducted from Clerk's salary for December salary payment.		
	*Pay award pending for Clerk's salary - negotiations still taking place so previous salary continued.		
	NI rate has slightly decreased so £23.50 has been deducted this month (rather than £24.10).		

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

The Chairman and Peter Foster would carry out the review this year, which needed to be done by the end of January 2022. They would arrange a date to meet with the Clerk in January.

**Action:** Chairman and Peter F to arrange to meet Clerk to carry out review.

### 9.5 Any other financial business – to receive an update on change of bank signatories

The forms had been completed to remove Tony from the bank account.

## 10. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS

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

#### **10.1.1 Play area reports: Play area reports – none.**

Pink book– Andrew had the pink book and would pass it on to Amy. There were no problems to report.

#### **10.1.2 Water for cricket square – to update on progress with adding a water supply to the new storage shed.**

There was nothing further to report. Notification has been received from Oxfordshire County Council to advise that a road closure licence had been applied for to close Pigeon House Lane from 16-18 March 2022 for Thames Water to provide a new water mains connection.

Robert Crocker would advise the Clerk when the connection had been completed.

#### **10.1.3 Play equipment replacement for wooden climber and toddler area development – to receive an update on installation of new equipment and to note damage to lime tree roots and consider any action deemed necessary**

The new play equipment had been installed and looked great, together with new safety surfacing underneath the junior slide (that was identified in the recent inspection). Unfortunately, considerable damage was caused to the roots of the lime tree when the area was dug for the installation of the trampoline and surrounding safety surfacing, and this was not highlighted by the contractors to Mary Ann or the Clerk at the time. Some quotes and advice had since been sought from some local tree surgeons to try and protect the lime tree and aid its recovery.

One company suggested the tree was not imminently dangerous but suggested pollarding the crown of the tree to reduce by 50% over the next 12 months and then monitoring over the next 24 months – quote for this work was **£800 + VAT**.

Another company quoted **£615.10 + VAT** to reduce the height by 1.5m. Or they could carry out a tree survey with written report and recommendations for up to 10 trees for **£260 + VAT** then £7.50 per tree thereafter.

Another suggested that lime trees are quite tolerant of damage to their roots and suggested reducing the overall symmetry of the crown by up to 2m of branch length to reduce the load and size of the tree, then monitor on an annual basis, quote for this work was **£500 +VAT**.

After further discussion, it was agreed to monitor the lime tree over the winter and see how it was doing, and then should any remedial work be required then the expectation would be that Sawscapes would cover the costs. The Clerk would write to Sawscapes to advise them of this.

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

#### **10.1.4 Playground Inspection Training - to receive an update on progress on updating the weekly play area checklist following Playground Inspection Training**

Andrew advised this would be done by Christmas.

#### **10.1.5 Play Area Annual Inspection & Post Installation Inspection – to note items identified in both inspections and to discuss any action necessary**

The annual inspection identified only 2 moderate risk items, one was the Multiplay with tyres equipment that had since been removed and replaced with the new wooden tractor. The other was the junior slide that had some corrosion that needed attention, as well as some shingle stones that needed to be removed and the safety surfacing underneath the slide was identified as potentially inadequate for the fall height. New safety surfacing had now been installed whilst the contractors were on site and arrangements were being made to have the corrosion on the slide repaired and the shingle stones removed. The bracket on the junior swings had also been identified as possibly needing attention so Andrew agreed to take a look.

All other items identified in the report were low risk or very low risk, but these need reviewing carefully and identifying if any other remedial work was required. Surfacing underneath the basket swing and zip wire may also need attention going forward.

The post installation inspection report also highlighted that the internal tunnel dimensions of the new wooden tractor did not meet with requirements of BS EN 1176 Part 1 (current length of tunnel is 2070mm, diameter of tunnel is 550mm / measurement required is 750mm). This was mainly due to the tyres at each end protruding making the overall tunnel length slightly too long. There was also a

toggle entrapment present in contravention of the requirements of BS EN 1176 Part 3. These had been highlighted to the manufacturer and a solution had been identified to set the tyres into the tunnel at each end so that they were not protruding out, which would mean the tunnel would be a satisfactory length, and the toggle entrapment had already been identified on installation and the fixings had been changed. Sawscapes would be carrying out the tunnel repair on the 5<sup>th</sup> January.

**Action:** Andrew to check brackets/fixings on top of junior swings and report back.

## **10.2 Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports: None.**

### **10.2.1 Traffic calming measures – to receive an update from Traffic Calming Working Group**

There was nothing further to update at the current time. Mary Ann was going to contact the architect Colin Davies to see if he was willing to work with Freeland regarding traffic calming measures and then arrange a meeting of the group with a Highways rep present.

**Action:** Mary Ann to contact Colin Davies and arrange meeting of group.

### **10.2.2 Speedwatch– to receive an update from Speedwatch group**

The Chairman provided a brief update on the Speedwatch activity. The team now had 8 volunteers with one member having unfortunately resigned. The two new Speedwatch signs had been installed at each end of the village.

A new online system had been introduced which was a requirement of carrying out Speedwatch activities, with each Speedwatch site needing to be registered via Google Maps. It had been a challenging time getting everyone trained on the new system so that the data could be recorded and some assistance from Thames Valley Police had been requested.

### **10.2.3 First and Last Mile – to update on progress in transferring S106 funds to FLM to purchase buses for community bus service**

The letter of understanding had been signed by both parties and the S106 funds from Oxfordshire County Council (total of £79,177) were finally received into the Parish Council bank account on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021. The first tranche of £55,424 was transferred out the same day to First and Last Mile to enable them to purchase the buses. This was duly noted and at some point the second tranche of funds would need to be transferred to FLM, although this would be some time next year. It was noted that a bank charge of £28 had been incurred for the transfer of such a large sum of money that had to be done via a CHAPs payment, this was duly noted and accepted and would be deducted from the final tranche of funds.

### **10.2.4 Memorial trees – to update on progress in getting broken/rotten posts replaced**

Graham Lay had provided a quote for the work and this was agreed. The posts would be replaced shortly.

### **10.2.5 Bus shelter on A4095 – to update on progress in getting a new shelter installed on A4095**

A query was raised as to when the new bus shelter was going to be installed on the A4095, which was part of the S106 conditions on the Mears Homes development. The Clerk had chased this up and had been advised that the S106 funds had been received from the developer to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and that a representative wished to meet with a Parish Council representative to discuss our requirements. No meeting had yet taken place so the Clerk would chase this up again.

**Action:** Clerk to chase up OCC to arrange meeting.

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

The footpath rota had been completed for the year and would restart again in the Spring. The signage on BR1 still needed attention – this had already been logged with Oxfordshire County Council.

## **10.4 Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports plus:**

No reports were received. It was suggested using some of the S106 Public Art money to fund a new sculpture or statue or mosaic inscription in the Garden of Remembrance, so this would be placed on the next agenda for discussion.

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

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

Bill gave a brief update. A very short Committee meeting had been held, a number of event cancellations had been received due to Covid , and the rules and regulations were currently being revised.

#### **10.6 Village Pond – to receive any reports**

There was nothing further to report.

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

(a) OALC November update – details had been emailed around.

(b) OALC – return of some Covid restrictions – details had been emailed around, and Council were asked to consider any actions arising from the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, in light of new Government restrictions. OALC's current advice was to continue as normal except to wear face masks in indoor settings (at council meetings), return to social distancing, good ventilation and all the other sensible mitigation measures.

OALC also advised in the last to consider delegating power to the Clerk, in discussion with the Chair, to make decisions as necessary. They advised to consider approving it in anticipation as it was difficult to know what January might bring.

Therefore after careful consideration, Council approved the following resolution:

In response to the continuing Covid-19 outbreak and in the event that it is not possible to convene a meeting of the council in a reasonable time, the Clerk shall have delegated authority after discussion with the Chair, to make decisions on behalf of the council where such decision cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline. The delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the Council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations. This delegated authority ceases upon the first meeting of the council after the council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.

(c) OCC Community Emergency Planning – to discuss whether the PC wishes to create a community emergency plan – details had been emailed around.

With Winter approaching and colder weather beginning to appear more frequently, Parish Councils were asked to consider updating or creating a community emergency plan. Community emergency plans allow communities to identify local resources which may be used to prepare for and reduce the impact of emergencies. After a brief discussion, Council agreed not to take this forward at the current time.

(d) Oxfordshire Treescapes Project - to discuss whether the PC wishes to take part in the Treescapes Project.

The Oxfordshire Treescapes Project was a new initiative that had just launched, offering services to farmers, landowners, community groups and policy makers. The Treescapes Project was run by GrowGreenCarbon, in partnership with Oxford University's Environmental Change Institute.

They were mapping the right places for trees to be planted, and had created the Oxfordshire Treescapes Opportunity Map, a tool that showed the right places to establish treescapes for the right reasons.

They were able to offer a comprehensive range of services to parish councils, farmers, community groups and landowners to help them decide where and why to introduce treescapes. The maps could be viewed online or a request for a detailed report on land or a parish could be made.

Mary Ann confirmed that she had produced a report for the whole parish that she would bring along to the next meeting for discussion.

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

Plus additional items received since the meeting papers sent out:

(e) OALC December update – details had been emailed around. A model letter to send to our local MP to apply pressure to allow virtual meetings for Parish Councils was included in the update, and Councillors agreed to send the letter to try and persuade the Government to reintroduce rules to allow virtual meetings.

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

(f) OCC – Fraud & Scam awareness – confirmation had been received that Trading Standards would try and accommodate a weekend (although not ideal) to come along and talk at a meeting about Fraud and Scam awareness, or they could have a stand at a coffee morning. The Clerk would arrange a date with them, and try and coordinate some defibrillator training at the same time, this



would probably be in the Spring in the lighter evenings when residents may feel safer coming out at night and therefore a higher attendance could hopefully be achieved.

**Action:** Clerk to arrange date for training as above.

(g) OCC Highways – Notice of temporary road closure of Witney Road, Finstock – details had been emailed around and were duly noted.

## **12. CIRCULATION**

No December circulation.

## **13. TO RECEIVE A MONTHLY UPDATE REGARDING FREELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

There was very little to report. Unfortunately various events like the Christmas Fayre and School Discos had had to be cancelled due to the rise in Covid cases around the country. It was hoped these would be rescheduled in the New Year once cases calmed down.

## **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ONLY**

None.

## **15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Councillors agreed, that in light of the current situation with increases in infection rates, to book the Village Hall for all Parish Council meetings for the first 6 months of 2022 to take us up to the July meeting, after which it was hoped to move back to the Newell Room from September. The Clerk would arrange this.

**Action:** Clerk to book Village Hall as above.

The next meeting of the Council would be held on **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**. There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.26pm.