

FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN MEETING OF FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL, HELD IN THE NEWELL ROOM, WROSLYN ROAD, FREELAND ON THE 18th OF JULY 2022, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORDSHIRE AT 7.30PM.

PRESENT:

Chairman:	Roger Faulkner
Vice-Chairman:	Mary Ann Canning
Councillors:	Peter Foster, Andrew Bird, Amy Jackson, Bill Phillips
District Councillors:	Lidia Arciszewska departed 9:15
County Councillor:	Liam Walker arrived 8:30 departed 9:00
Clerk:	Fay Friend

Members of the public: Kenny Wylie, Christian Silk, Andrew Sharp, Ian Paxton.

1. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION** (see note below)

Four residents were present for this session, Kenny Wylie (re Grapevine), Christian Silk, Andrew Sharp, Ian Paxton (re Freeland Farmers Market).

Ian spoke about how the Market originally started back in 2019 with the money raised from the stall holders going to charity. The Market began in the Village Hall car park but ceased operating during Covid. Once restrictions were lifted it restarted at the school because the car park could not be guaranteed to be available every month. When it restarted it really brought the community back together and Freeland could do with a lot more social events to get the community to mix with each other. The problem with the school is that they have no access to mains electricity or toilet facilities in school holidays. The market therefore wanted to return to the Village Hall and has now secured the Newell room on an 18-month contract starting in September, including the top end of the carpark for stall holders, thereby leaving the hall to be hired for others. This is thought to be a much better arrangement for all. The Village Hall Management Committee is happy, and the market can expand onto the field if required for some more space. Many thanks to Kenny for promoting through the Grapevine. The Parish Council are in support of the new location and wished the Farmers' Market well for the future. Ian departed the room 19:40.

2. **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Alaa Al-Yousuf and Perrin Hatwell.

3. **CODE OF CONDUCT: To receive any Amendments to Register of Members' Interests and Declarations of Interest from Councillors for matters to be considered at the meeting**

There were no amendments to the register of Members' Interests.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** **To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 20th June 2022.**

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on Monday 20th June 2022 were approved and signed by the chairman as a true record of those proceedings. This was proposed by Peter, seconded by Mary-Ann and voted unanimously.

5. **URGENT BUSINESS - To receive any reports and discuss and agree any action as necessary**

Risk Assessment Annual Review – to review the Risk Assessment document

The Risk Assessment Statement had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Council **resolved** not to make any changes to the document and approved the statement, which was then signed by the Chairman at the meeting.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

(a) Mobile coverage in Freeland – to receive an update on progress to improve mobile signal.

Peter gave a brief update as there were no changes to report from previous meeting. The contractors are still waiting on CTIL, and planning application hasn't yet been submitted. Peter has been informed that there is a planned monthly meeting with them the next day. He will send around the plans once they have been submitted and will keep the Council informed with any updates.

A resident on Nash Lane has objected to 5G being anywhere near Freeland. The Parish Council cannot stop the installation if it is being carried out on non-Parish Council land. Nor can the planning authority as such Health and Safety matters are not a planning consideration. The drawings still haven't been seen for the proposed new site so cannot confirm whether it will have 5G or not, but we can assume that it will at some point even if not to begin with. Ofcom believe about 50% of the population currently have 5G coverage and the rate is growing quite quickly. Vast majority of users use 4G. Amy had investigated this, and the government have concluded that there is a slight increase in the exposure to waves, but that the frequency level was lower risk, and that overall, risk was still below any levels of concern. It was reiterated that this is not a Parish Council matter and that the Council would follow the Government guidelines are laying out. On a separate note, the same resident raised issues about the Ukrainian flag having been displayed outside the village hall. The Council agreed that the flag was not a political statement but purely to make all the Ukrainian arrivals feel welcome to our village. As a point of note, in a completely separate decision, the flag had already been taken down as it was judged it had been flown for sufficiently long.

Action: Clerk to respond the concerned resident.

(b) Oxfordshire Treescapes Project – to receive an update on project

Recent OALC minutes include information about a nature recovery plan. For the Parish Council this would be the next stage in the current village project. Long term this could link into the village plan under one of the potential 'action' groups (see item 9). Access to the meeting reports is free of charge. Additionally, OALC have land ownership maps which will be very useful.

Action: Peter to circulate the web address for access to the reports

(c) EV charging points- to receive update

At the OALC meeting, EV charging points were also raised, with Suffolk Plugin Project a useful case study. The average point costs around £300, with the Parish Council looking to potentially add two sockets into the village hall car park. Lidia to check if the Parish Council can receive any money from the District Council but is doubtful. Oxfordshire County Council have advised that they will help any Parish with their own projects for the installation of the sockets.

Action: Clerk to get in contact with OCC regarding a possible project in Freeland

(d) Communications: including social media, noticeboards, website and Grapevine- to discuss any updates.

Amy had compiled a brief for a new PC website for which 2 quotes were received, both of which started at £1500 plus hosting costs. However, it was since found that the existing host site – Hugo Fox – had far more flexibility to adapt content and look/feel of the PC web pages than previously understood, including having a news page and social media feeds. It could also adopt the domain name of choice so the PC would appear to have its own separate website and would be more easily searchable. This was a far preferable option in terms of cost and time. A twitter account (@Freeland_PC) had been created and was now linked into the website along with a news page, both of which were on a side panel for easy viewing. While the Hugo Fox pages were easy to edit and every intuitive, there were still some things Amy and Fay were not able to edit, and therefore it was recommended that the PC subscribe to the Hugo Fox 'silver support' package for £19.99 a month. Hugo Fox could also provide training and other support. Amy proposed to change the domain and had found www.freelandpc.org.uk was available at £12+ VAT (first two years, renewable annually thereafter). This was proposed by Amy, seconded by Peter, and agreed unanimously. Andrew has compiled a protocol for posting content online. The Councillors **resolved** to adopt as written.

The noticeboard up by the primary school needs replacing. The cost of a replacement (including a section for use by the Parish Council) would be in the region of £1500. The Council voted in principle to approve up to £2000, which Amy proposed Peter seconded and voted unanimously.

Action: Clerk to get quote for new noticeboard.

(e) Towser fraud- to be discussed

After a brief discussion the councillors were in agreement that our internal audit group provide numerous checks to ensure this doesn't happen within our Parish Council.

7. PLANNING - Applications received & WODC Decisions plus:

Applications Received:

22/01590/HHD

8 Wroslyn Road, Freeland.

Erection of replacement single storey rear extension for MR and MRS K Brasey

After a brief discussion it was decided not to make any comments or objections on the planning application.

19/01725/CC3REG & 19/01095/ADJ (R3.0057/19)

(Revised P&R Site Layout Plan) of planning permission at Land West of Cuckoo Lane and Adjacent to the A40, Eynsham, OX29 4PU

Mary-Ann circulated an email with the Parish Council's concerns to OCC. The cutting of the hedgerows has been approved by the Oxfordshire County Council. The reason for two applications was land ownership issues which have now been rectified in the recent submission. The Council's biggest concern is the reprioritisation of Cuckoo Lane and the increased traffic - both general and construction - that will come through Freeland. The footpath at the Green is already struggling where vehicles with long wheelbases are causing damage, making it more unsafe for the public. The Council still has major concerns, and we want the reprioritisation in the plan either for the Park and Ride or Salt Cross. Liam added that the works are due to start February 2023 but might be extended due to delays.

Action: Mary-Ann to email our concerns.

22/01680/HHD

3 Wroslyn Road, Freeland.

Whole house renovation to raise roof, front and rear extensions

After a brief discussion it was decided not to make any comments or objections on the planning application.

22/01713/HHD

23 OAKLANDS CLOSE, FREELAND.

Proposed single storey rear extension for Mr and Mrs Clark amended version of **22/00848/HHD**

Oaklands Close application had been refused by WODC planning committee on previous application due to the front changes which has now been removed from the application. After a brief discussion it was decided not to make any comments or objections on the planning application.

Applications Approved: None.

Applications Withdrawn: None.

Applications Refused:

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 Wroslyn Road, (all matters reserved except access) and retention of veterinary practice in the coach house for Inspired Villages. (Awaiting potential appeal)

Applications Awaiting Decision:

20/01734/OUT

Land North Of A40, A40 Section From Barnard Gate To Eynsham Roundabout, Eynsham (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.

Freeland Parish Council sent in a letter of objection even though this is a different Parish, in order to support Hanborough Parish and due to the proximity and how the new building site will affect Freeland. Roger dropped leaflets that were left over by Hanborough Parish down Wroslyn Road to try and gain some more comments from Freeland Residents. The consultation period is still open until the Uplands Committee hears the case at a date yet to be decided. Lidia will keep us informed when the application is due to be heard by the committee.

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.

The previous confusion with the notice being served has been rectified with the details on the portal now being marked as incorrect and having been superseded. Additional comments were added that Freeland Parish Council does not own the access road; this is also now stated on the portal.

22/01047/FUL 34 FREELAND GATE, FREELAND.

Change of use of land to extend private garden of both Plot 34 and Plot 35 for Mears New Homes with Sovereign Housing Associates

22/01459/FUL ELM Farm, The Green Freeland.

Conversion of existing field shelter to create home office for domestic use for Mr and Mrs H Whitbread

- Inspired Villages planning application – to receive an update

There is no update that has been received about this application.

- Salt Cross Garden Village AAP – to receive update

A meeting is being held next week between representatives from Freeland and Eynsham Parish Council to share the knowledge and any updates with the planning for Salt Cross. Lidia is helping in organising a date in October for a public meeting to update all residents of Freeland with all things Salt Cross as it was found to be a major concern within the survey. It was agreed that this public meeting should also include a presentation on the proposed introduction of a 20MPH speed limit.

- Local plan – to receive update

There is no update on the Local Plan

It was agreed that the Planning Team would review any applications that were received over the summer and would make recommendations to the full Council, and anything considered controversial would be circulated to the full Council with Councillors giving feedback via email.

The Planning Team could also try and delay any large schemes that could be controversial by asking WODC for an extension to the time limit.

8. REPORT OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

Liam gave a brief report about an individual seen around primary schools and reiterated that Thames Valley Police are well aware, and that the individual has been spoken to. Additionally, Freeland Primary school have been informed. Liam had nothing else to report and departed the meeting.

9. FREELAND VILLAGE SURVEY

Amy prepared a report on the survey results for the Grapevine and the website. She also liaised with the village group interested in community development; no offers to analyse the data further were received, but there was a discussion around taking forward the results. In light of this, Amy prepared a proposal paper with recommendations based on the outcomes for discussion at the PC meeting. The outcomes were:

1. **Goals and strategy.** Proposal that the Parish Council develop some goals as part of the findings of this survey, which it then uses to focus activities and energy, measure progress and achieve tangible benefits throughout its term. **Response: the PC agreed this broad approach provided the survey**

results are seen as indicators of areas for further exploration rather than the definitive ‘views of village residents’; it would therefore be useful to see whether they could stimulate grassroots action and community-led plans being developed, with goals and strategies.

2. **Mobilisation.** Next steps would be inviting the 33 people from the survey who were interested in being part of a follow-up, plus anyone else interested, to a meeting to discuss setting up groups to look at the key themes. It is suggested the (interlinking) themes for exploration are:

- Strong community – through volunteering, tackling isolation and loneliness, establishing social events
- Amenities/facilities – support on identifying opportunities to develop new amenities for the village or provide easier access to those outside the village (working with the Freeland Community Benefit Society)
- Traffic – incorporating issues around traffic calming, speeding and parking
- Sustainability/green issues – which are relevant to and cut across the other groups

Response: This would be a good first step. Councillors should link into these groups, not necessarily leading them; it should be a community-led effort. It would be useful to bring together similar activities within the village under common banners so there could be better co-ordination, for example traffic calming and Speedwatch sitting under ‘Traffic’; the village hall sustainability efforts sitting within wider Sustainability.

Action: AJ/clerk to set up a village meeting in Sep or Oct (after Salt Cross/Traffic calming meeting)

3. **Salt Cross.** Concerns about Salt Cross run high, mainly due to lack of information and therefore fear of the unknown and assumptions – some of which may be true, and some not. A meeting should be convened to update residents and let them know of likely timescale and impacts and allow a chance for ongoing dialogue/updates. As part of this, there needs to be a clear set of objectives agreed for this, and also for what is needed from engagement with Eynsham PC and WODC.

Response: this has already been picked up under another agenda item. Agreement that the PC needs to be more proactive and ‘on top of’ the Salt Cross issue moving forwards, and more actively involved in developments in Eynsham, for example, the work being done on the Energy Systems Catapult for the local electricity primary substation area. Regular contact/routes of communication e.g., updates from WODC on Salt Cross and Eynsham should be set up to support this.

Action: RF, MAC and clerk to discuss this at their administrative meeting over the summer.

4. **Other developments.** It is clear within the survey responses that there is concern around overdevelopment, inappropriate development and the potential merging of the villages. However, appropriate develop is also a way to deliver benefits to the village – although it is for developers to come forward with opportunities. Should the PC acknowledge this and reiterate its policy on development, that it remains: “It is the policy of Freeland Parish Council to oppose multi-dwelling developments on green field sites unless an overwhelming benefit to the whole village can be demonstrated.”

Action: It was agreed that this position should be reiterated as part of a general review by the RF, MAC and clerk over the summer break.

10. **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

(a) Presentation of the monthly financial report

The monthly financial report for May was presented to the Council showing details of the bank balance at 30th June 2022 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.

(b) Approval of invoices for payment

The Council approved invoices for payment as listed on the invoices for payment sheet distributed with the meeting. Proposer was Peter seconded by Mary-Ann and vote was unanimous. 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 178	Fay Friend	Clerk's salary - july	.
BACS 179	Roger Faulkner	Refund expences- Stationary	117.66
BACS 180	Fay Friend	Refund expences- Stationary	8.84
BACS 181	OALC	Books	9.20
BACS 182	rendell garden services	mowing	125.00
BACS 183	Village hall hire	18th july	12.50
BACS 184	MS Amlin	tractor insurance	194.89
BACS 185	W. Phillips	litter collection april, may, june	250.00
BACS 186	J F Gardening and Maintenance	mowing	180.00
BACS 187	rendell garden services	tractor repairs	105.71
BACS 188	Amy Jackson	web expenses	14.39
BACS 189	Fay Friend	Clerk's salary - August	.
		Total:	1,018.19

(c) Any other financial business

Approval of invoices during August - to discuss the approval of invoices that need to be paid during August and decisions on any planning applications received. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that any urgent payments up to a maximum value of £1,500 that needed paying before the September meeting (or any expenditure that had previously been agreed) could be signed off by the Chairman and Vice Chairman (or another signatory in their absence). The Clerk would confirm with the Chairman or Vice Chairman the urgency of the payment to be made. Proposed Bill, which was seconded by Peter and voted unanimous.

On the net positions report there needs to be a change of cost code name from Dog bins to Dog and litter bins due to the change to due usage into a joint bin.

Action: clerk to change cost code name to Dog and litter bins

11. PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ITEMS:

(a) Play Areas/Playing Field/Play Equipment Book – to receive any updates

There is currently sand in the sandpit but not sure how much is left in the shed. Mary-Ann is working with Sawscapes at the options to make it better. Sawscapes should be able to do something with the chute to reduce the amount of sand missing and being lost. It was a bespoke design. For insurance reasons we, the Parish Council, cannot change the design. Andrew has offered to look at sandbox to see if a draw system underneath can be incorporated into the design without tampering with it. Mary-Ann is looking into getting a quote for replacing the soft matting under the basket swing.

Andrew reported that a girl has broken her arm on the monkey bars. As no complaint had been received and it appears to have been an accident for which the Council was not responsible no further action was deemed necessary. There are still ongoing issues regarding locking the taps on the playing field and who is requiring access to them. Clerk to look into a system. Additionally, clarification as to who pays for the water on the field needs to be sought. Also 1 out of the 3 taps are insulated and this needs to be addressed with our local contractor.

Actions: Clerk to look at tap lock, speak to Robert for water payment and local contractor about the tap insulation boxes.

(b) Village Highway Matters – to receive any reports:

- **Traffic calming measures** – to receive any update

The Parish Council have now submitted our bid for the 20MPH which will be under consideration. The council will update the villagers in October at the open meeting.

- **Speedwatch**– to receive any update

There has been no update received from the group.

(b) Footpath & Bridleway matters/Footpath Book – to receive any reports: Footpath signage on BR1 needs attention – this has been logged with OCC.

There has been no change or update on this item

(d) Garden of Remembrance – to receive any reports plus:

- **S106 Public Art funds** – to receive update on sculpture cost

There has been nothing to report from the Garden of Remembrance. Mary-Ann is still looking for a new local artist to design the sculpture.

(e) Freeland Hall Management Committee – to receive any reports

We have now connected to the Wi-Fi with the assistance of Kenny, but the wrong WIFI Code and box information is located in the cupboard in the Newell Room which needs to be rectified. The disabled signs in the car park are now clear and the clock has been quoted to be fixed.

(f) Village Hall sustainability- to receive updates

Peter is in the process of trying to arrange the next meeting. Andy Bain has contacted low carbon hub which will provide a free energy audit. Additionally, Peter has been in touch with Community First Oxfordshire who deal with village halls. Dot from the VHMC works closely with the contact where they use them to support the running of Village Hall. The VHMC provide Community First Oxfordshire with an annual donation for their help and support. Andrew has kindly agreed to join the group.

(g) Village Pond – to receive any updates

There is no update received. Robert is still looking at sorting this in the Autumn.

(h) Amenity area – to receive any updates

There have been no updates provided.

(i) Village trees – to receive any updates

The two dead trees are: an elm on the main road approaching the Green from the A40. The other is an ash which is almost dead, opposite the entrance to Freeland House. Many of the tree whips are in a poor state. New signs have been placed on the two silver birch trees in the Broadmarsh Lane amenity area to notify the members of the public that we are aware that they are dead, and we are looking to replace them in the autumn. A new watering rota needs to be sorted out along with buying the materials for staking the whips. Mary-Ann has offered to arrange this with Tim at the garden centre. Before Andy departed the council, he agreed to stake the trees. Clerk needs to get this confirmed.

Action: Mary-Ann to arrange materials for tree staking. Clerk to speak to Andy about Tree staking.

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

(a) OALC June update – details emailed around

Merilyn has been appointed community officer for Blenheim estate. Of which she wants the Parish Councils surrounded Blenheim to be more involved and has asked for a discussion with the Chairman, Vice-Chairmans and Clerks of which we have all said we would like to be involved in.

13. CIRCULATION

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS - for preliminary discussion only

Peter wants to mention about GOR reserving plots.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 12th September 2022, 7.30pm, in the NEWELL ROOM. There being no other business the meeting closed at 21:57pm.