

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT: Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council held remotely at 7pm on Monday 10 August 2020

Parish Councillors Present: John Adler (Chairman), Jean Hawker (Vice Chairman), Julian Carpenter, Tom Maddicott, Nick Stevens, Martin Walker

Apologies: Annabel Batchelor-Wylam

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk), Cllr Neil Butters (from 8.15pm)

Members of the Public: One

60. **Declarations of Interests and Requests for Dispensations**

Cllrs Stevens and Walker declared that they were Trustees of the Memorial Hall.

61. **Minutes of Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2020 were signed as a true record.

62. **Review of Actions**

Cllr Carpenter reported on a recent Valley Parish Alliance (VPA) meeting, noting that:

- The VPA would coordinate a response to the Highways England Severance Scheme and would be holding a meeting on 12 August 2020, which would be attended by BANES councillors, to agree the schemes to put forward.
- Issues to do with increased use of the river and associated problems had been raised. It was difficult, given the number of stakeholders and possible costs involved, to identify solutions. It was suggested that River Wardens had been used in the past to offer advice and warnings.
- A member of the VPA had reported that Network Rail were tendering for a project to reduce the impact of lighting at Freshford Station, including replacement or re-alignment of some lights and putting an anti-reflective coating on the concrete platform extensions.

63. **Open Forum**

A resident spoke to raise a number of matters:

- That lighting at Freshford station needed to meet a minimal level to keep the station open at night.
- To highlight the discussion at the Western Area Planning Meeting at which planning application 19/10471/FUL 3A Church Lane had been approved. A central objection to the application had been the building of two properties in a gap which had previously been infilled with two properties. Both Limpley Stoke and Freshford Parish Councils had insisted that the application contravened the intended definition of infilling as set out in their joint Neighbourhood Plan. Wiltshire Council had consulted solicitors for advice when reaching a decision. In light of this decision the resident questioned whether the wording of the Neighbourhood Plan needed to be considered to prevent ambiguity in any future similar cases.
- Problems with lorries using Church Hall and Dark Lane to access the A36, with some lorries getting stuck because of the nature of the lane. The issue had been raised some time ago but no action had been taken. The resident asked if the Parish Council would raise this matter again with BANES.

It was reported that a meeting had been organised with BANES Highways some time ago for BANES to present some identified options but BANES cancelled the meeting due

to the elections and it had not yet been rearranged. It was agreed that Cllr Stevens would contact BANES Highways to raise this matter again.

Cllr
Stevens

64. **Resignation of a Councillor**

64.1 Jonelle Daniels had resigned as a councillor. A Notice of Vacancy had been displayed and an election had not been requested. The two vacant councillor posts would now be advertised for co-option via the website, a community email and through notices.

64.2 Councillors considered a process for co-opting two new councillors. The Clerk would confirm the method of voting if, as was likely, the meeting was held remotely.

Clerk

Councillors approved the process for co-opting two new councillors, with the method of voting during a remote meeting to be confirmed.

65. **Planning Applications**

20/20/02469/LBA & 20/02468/FUL 1 The Old House, The Hill, BA2 7WG: Repairs to a section of the Grade 2 listed stone boundary wall which is currently showing evidence of distortion, bulging and vertical settlement. Remove existing hedgerow and replant.

Councillors noted that these were essential repairs to a boundary wall to ensure continued safety to the public highway. Making the whole hedgerow to consist solely of Yew would provide a hedgerow better suited to the conservation area and would be more in keeping with a Grade 2 listed rural aesthetic. As the wall was situated on The Hill, a key route through Freshford, it was felt that consideration needed to be given to the timing of this work and to potential traffic control measures that might be needed.

The Parish Council supported this application, requesting that potential traffic issues are considered when approving the application as there is no alternative workable route through the village.

66. **Tree Applications**

20/02565/TCA Middle House, Sharpstone Lane, BA2 7UA: Lawson Cypress and Cherry – remove.

The Parish Council supported this application on condition that a further two trees are planted to replace those which are to be felled.

67. **Decision Notifications**

19/10471/FUL 3 A Church Lane, Limpley Stoke, BA2 7GH: Erection of 2 No. dwellings and associated landscaping and access works (amended design). Approved with conditions.

Councillors were disappointed that this planning application had been approved, despite representations from both Limpley Stoke and Freshford Parish Councils that that the application contravened the description of infill housing as set out in the joint Neighbourhood Plan. A review of the Neighbourhood Plan was due to take place this year and the issues that had arisen in this case would be looked at.

20/01574/FUL Freshford Mill, Rosemary Lane, BA2 7PL: Erection on a ground mounted array of No6 solar panels. Permitted.

68. **Chairman's Report**

Cllr Neil Butters had asked for notification of any projects where Freshford Parish Council might look for funding from BANES. The monitoring of traffic on Rosemary Hill, the review of the Neighbourhood Plan and a referendum on the Community Right to Build Order had been identified as such projects. The Parish Council had until September to confirm all potential projects.

Councillors reported positively on the resurfacing of part of Freshford Lane.

69. **Correspondence Received**

A resident had provided an update on concerns they had raised with BANES about a piece of agricultural land that they considered was now being used as a garden without planning

consent for change of use having been obtained. The Planning Enforcement Office would take no action at the moment but had suggested that the resident continue to monitor the situation and bring forward any further evidence of change of use.

70. **Finance and Personnel**

70.1 The following payments were approved:

- £300 James Lock for grass cutting (part of The Tynning and cemetery)
- £406.04 Selina Jobson for administration
- £410 Alan Duck for grass cutting and removal of a tree limb

70.2 The bank reconciliation was approved and the following payment was noted:

- £300 Ian Croker for street cleaning (SO)

70.3 It was noted that a Direct Debit had been set up for payment to SSE of the electricity supply.

71. **PC Assets**

Following approval at the last meeting, a contract with SSE for the electricity supply for the street lighting was now in place from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021.

72. **Communications**

Councillors considered the award of a contract for the redevelopment of the PC website to one of two companies – Aubergine (based in Leighton Buzzard) or Zonkey (based in Bath). Councillors Adler, Maddicott and the Clerk reported back on discussions they had had with the two companies. It was noted that:

- Both companies could provide a suitable solution at a cost within the Parish Council's budget and the difference between the offerings of the two companies was small.
- Both companies offered a clear design framework that would ensure adherence to WCAG 2.1 standards within the design.
- Both companies had demonstrated their products to be straightforward to administer.
- Aubergine had a history of working with a significant number of parish and town councils and were recommended by the Society of Local Council Clerks.
- Aubergine offered a well-structured web design package that was designed to meet the requirements of town and parish councils.
- Zonkey is a Bath-based company working with a small number of South West based town and parish councils and has a record of working with local businesses.
- Zonkey had developed a specific web design for town councils and was working on a parish council specific design.
- Both Aubergine and Zonkey were small companies but were felt to be secure enough to offer ongoing support in the longer term.
- Details of ongoing support costs had been confirmed by Aubergine. Zonkey's estimate of support costs was higher than Aubergine's but Zonkey had indicated that these were negotiable.

In summary:

- Aubergine had a framework solution in place that was already used by other parish councils, and Zonkey were developing a similar offering that was less mature in the marketplace.
- Aubergine offered a slightly cheaper solution.
- Zonkey are a local company.

Councillors agreed by majority vote to award the contract to Zonkey largely on the basis that it was felt important to support local business which also better enables a closer working relationship.

73. **Local Government Association (LGA) Consultation on a Model Code of Conduct**

The Local Government Association was running a consultation on a proposed new model of a Code of Conduct, with a closing date of 17 August 2020. Cllr Stevens had considered the proposed model and would submit comments to the consultation.

Cllr
Stevens

74. **Built Environment**

Residents who had offered to fund a new bench in Freshford had provided details of the proposed bench. Councillors noted it would be an iron bench, around the Boer Oak on the Tynning. The bench was being made by a local company specialising in iron work. It would be a sturdy structure and would be bolted to the ground.

Councillors approved the proposed bench and thanked the residents for their generous gesture in funding such a bench for the community.

It was agreed that Cllr Walker and the Clerk would consider updating the Parish Council's policy on memorial benches.

Cllr
Walker

75. **Upcoming External Meetings**

The VPA would meet on 12 August 2020 to consider a coordinated response to Highways England Severance Scheme and issues concerning increased use of the river.

76. **Exchange of Information**

Cllr Carpenter reported positively on online councillor training he had undertaken with the Avon Local Council Association. The Clerk would circulate details of other councillor training sessions being run by ALCA.

Clerk

77. **Date of next meeting**

Monday 14 September 2020, 7pm.

Meeting ended 8.40pm.