

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT: Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council held remotely at 7pm on Monday 8 March 2021

Parish Councillors Present: John Adler (Chairman), Jean Hawker (Vice Chairman), Annabel Batchelor-Wylam, Tom Maddicott, Tania Pascoe, Nick Stevens, Martin Walker, Ben Walters

Apologies: Julian Carpenter

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: Ten

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

Under item 199.3, Cllrs Walker and Stevens declared that they were Trustees of Freshford Village Memorial Hall.

192. **Minutes of Meeting**

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2021 as a true record.

193. **Review of Actions**

An update on actions arising from previous meetings was noted.

194. **Open Forum**

A resident spoke about the Friends of Freshford Tynning proposal. He asked if The Tynning's location within the Conservation Area had been considered in the proposed plans. He also asked to what extent were the initial and ongoing costs of The Tynning proposal being considered by the Parish Council.

A resident spoke on a number of matters:

- He reported two recent incidents where lorry drivers had followed Sat Nav systems into Dark Lane, encountering problems because the road is unsuitable for large vehicles;
- That the delivery of building materials to a property in the centre of Freshford had resulted in traffic being stopped between 8.45am and 9.30am and the road being blocked to larger vehicles and buses. Previously, when responding to planning applications the Parish Council had stipulated that deliveries of materials should not be made at key times and he suggested that this should be done for future applications where relevant.
- That B&NES had still not reached a decision on the most recent Freshford Mill planning application, despite the January date for determination. Four new companies had recently been created with 'Freshford Mill' in the title and the resident asked if the Parish Council knew what was happening here.
- That he supported the proposal that the Parish Council join the Community Rail Network to enable access to funds to support volunteers at Freshford Station.

The Chair of the Friends of Freshford spoke about their Tynning proposal. He thanked the Chair of the Parish Council for his support in considering the project and obtaining residents' feedback. More work would be undertaken on proposals for a pond, culvert, the cemetery and War Memorial before these were ready to be considered.

Each project would have a leader to oversee the details of costs, funding sources, maintenance and volunteer recruitment. Costs for each project would vary but he was confident that all initial and ongoing costs could be covered by the Friends of

Freshford. It was likely that efforts would focus initially on the project to create humps and access points along the top of The Tynning, and that other projects were likely to follow in the summer and autumn. Friends of Freshford had a history of providing volunteers to take on these types of projects.

The Chair of Friends of Freshford reported that all comments from the questionnaire would be taken on board with the aim of satisfying as many residents as possible.

195. **Planning Applications**

- a) 20/04079/FUL Vine Cottage High Street, BA2 7WF: Demolition of existing stone wall. Replacement with new stone wall to improve vehicular access and parking provision and change of garage door material from softwood to steel.

The Parish Council received the revised plans, noting that it objected to the previous planning application. The significant reduction in the length of wall proposed for removal was considered more acceptable. The revised garage door design was viewed as a marked improvement, addressing the Parish Council's previous concerns.

Resolved: To comment only. That the Parish Council no longer objected to the application and left the matter for the determination of the Planning Officer.

- b) 21/00431/FUL The Cottage Pipehouse Lane, BA2 7UH: Erection of garage (Resubmission).

Cllr Walker declared that he would not take part in discussion or voting on this item due to a connection with the applicants.

The original building appeared to have been extended beyond the one third of the original building that the Green Belt SPD provided as guidance for what is 'more likely to be acceptable' and therefore the proposed extension was considered to represent further disproportionate development in the Green Belt. The proposed extension was felt to lack sufficient design merit to justify another addition to this property. When combined with previous additions, there was a danger that the original building would become entirely subservient to its extensions. It was considered that the proposal did not improve the physical qualities of the built environment as required by the Villages Design Rationale in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Resolved: To object.

196. **Tree Applications**

None.

197. **Decision Notifications**

- 20/04186/FUL, 6-7 Upper Mount Pleasant Freshford BA2 7UG: Erection of single storey outbuilding following removal of existing. *Permitted*

198. **Chairman's Report**

198.1 Land behind The Glebe

The Chair had contacted B&NES about whether a previous offer to the Parish Council to take over ownership and maintenance of land behind the Glebe was still open. B&NES confirmed the land was surplus but would require the Parish Council to cover the costs of a valuation, usually £1500+VAT. It was agreed that the Parish Council was only interested in this land if B&NES would consider gifting it to the Parish Council. Cllr Pascoe proposed putting together a proposal to create a nature reserve on this area and then asking B&NES to consider gifting the land for this environmental initiative. It was agreed that this idea should be pursued.

Cllrs
Pascoe &
Adler

A plan of the exact boundary of the land would be circulated to all councillors.

198.2 Redevelopment of the website

The Chair and Clerk had received training on using the redeveloped website and been given access to the site. Another meeting with Zonkey was being arranged. The draft website would be circulated to councillors shortly for review and help with updating information.

198.3 Village agents

Progress had been slowed due to Covid-19 but the Chair had spoken with those involved and it was hoped that progress would be made with the aim of getting preventative medical care services in the community.

199. Finance and Personnel

199.1 **Resolved:** to approve the following payments:

- £416.93 Selina Jobson for administration
- £15 contribution to Accessible Documents training
- £128.74 ALCA subscription
- £38.80 HMRC tax contribution

199.2 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation & note the following payments and receipt:

- £300 Ian Croker for street cleaning (SO)
- £140.90 SSE street lighting electricity supply (DD)
- £36 CPRE annual subscription (DD)
- £360 CPJ Field interment (receipt)

199.3 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies held.

Councillors noted an update on CIL monies received, spent, and currently held.

Resolved: that, in line with the previous resolution of the Parish Council, the third and final CIL payment of £10,081.96 be paid to Freshford Village Memorial Hall.

It was proposed that £1856 of CIL money be used to part fund a scoping study to be undertaken by Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE) to identify possible sites for renewable energy schemes in Freshford. It was proposed that a grant application be submitted to FLiSCA for the remaining £1500 required. In discussion it was noted that:

- Discussion at the Climate and Nature Emergency Community Forum and the results of the associated questionnaire had indicated community support for investigation of a larger scale renewable energy project.
- The long-term intention was to provide a community owned energy facility that would provide enough renewable energy to cover the needs of the village. There was potential for additional environmental learning to be included in the scheme and for profits from energy generation to go towards local climate change projects.
- There was mention of two potential sites as part of the scoping study and it was questioned how these would work as community energy sites, given that both were in private ownership. It was noted that one site was in Hinton Charterhouse.
- It was suggested that Limpley Stoke Parish Council might be interested in the scheme. The project had been mentioned informally to some Limpley Stoke councillors but had not been raised for formal consideration.
- It was clarified that the scoping study would identify any potential sites in Freshford, not just the two that had been identified.
- It was suggested that more information was needed on this potential project to fully understand what was involved. This potential project was of a significant scale

and it was felt important that all councillors were informed and clear on the project.

- The potential for producing renewable energy from the mine shafts in Freshford was raised; it was reported that BWCE did not possess the expertise in this type of renewable energy at this time.

Resolved: that £1856 of CIL monies be put towards a scoping study by BWCE on potential renewable energy sites in Freshford.

Councillors were asked to identify any other potential projects that might be suitable for funding from CIL monies.

200. **Natural Environment: Friends of Freshford Tynning Project**

Councillors received a summary of the results of the survey of local residents about the Friends of Freshford Tynning proposal and a list of all comments. 109 completed surveys had been received, covering the views of 225 people. The results summary and comments were available to residents on the Freshford web site. All projects had been supported by a clear majority (82% or above) of respondents.

It was agreed that the proposals would be forwarded to the B&NES Conservation Officer for comment. The B&NES Principal Rights of Way Officer had commented positively on the proposals. It was reported that Friends of Freshford had considered The Tynning's location within the Conservation Area when developing all projects.

Comments had been received from the contractors currently maintaining The Tynning about the possible impact of proposals on maintenance schedules and costs.

Each project within the proposal was considered in turn and the following comments made.

Project 1: Humps to be enhanced with wildflowers with pedestrian access gaps.

- Access points were included to allow people to stand back from passing cars and to ensure that The Tynning remained easily accessible to those with pushchairs, wheelchairs etc.

Project 2: Bollard trees with felled tree trunks as barriers.

- Strimming around felled trees would cost an additional £15/cut. It was suggested that the grass should be allowed to grow around the felled trunks and would not require additional strimming.
- Current wooden bollards would be kept in place at least until trees were established.
- The gap between bollard trees was queried, as it was felt important that a continuous barrier was not created, which might require planning permission.
- It was queried whether the trees and bollards could be viewed as the creation of a continuous line of planting and, if so, if this would this need planning permission.

Project 3: Create a NW corner coppice – no comment.

Project 4: Plant an Oak tree above the 5-bar gate – no comment.

Project 5: Plant a Walnut tree in the NW coppice corner – no comment.

Project 6: Plant a Small Leaf Lime in the SW corner – no comment.

Project 7: Create a community orchard.

- It was suggested that planting the orchard in the top NE corner of The Tynning might be preferable as this area was flatter, easier to maintain and less exposed. Friends of Freshford had considered this, but felt that planting in the NE corner would take away this accessible piece of land, that the natural drainage of water to the lower

area would mean less manual watering was required and that the proposed trees were hardy enough to thrive are the bottom of The Tynning.

- Trees would need to be planted in a way that allowed for large cutting machines to mow between them.

Project 9: Plant wetland tolerant trees – no comment.

Project 13: Plant a hedge along the border with the High Street.

- It was suggested that planning approval for the proposed hedge might be needed and confirmation should be sought on this matter.
- Maintenance on the side of the hedge above the high wall was queried. Planting the hedge far enough away from the edge to allow level access would make maintenance easier. However, this would mean that this edge of The Tynning was unprotected, with the potential for people, especially children, to fall down a significant drop. Maintenance with long-handled pole cutters was suggested. The current fence would remain in place until a hedge was established.

Resolved: that, in light of evidence of support from residents, the above projects included in the Friends of Freshford Tynning proposal were approved and could proceed.

Consideration of proposed changes to grass maintenance, and projects at the Cemetery and War Memorial would be considered at a future meeting.

201. **Climate Emergency**

201.1 Climate Change Action Plan

A draft action plan arising from the Climate and Nature Emergency Community Forum and responses to the associated questionnaire was received. Work was continuing on developing the plan.

Cllrs Adler
/ Pascoe

201.2 Bath and West Community Energy Scoping Project

Discussed under the agenda item on CIL monies, see minute 199.3.

202. **Highways and Transport**

202.1 Meeting with Severnside Rail Partnership

Notes from a meeting with Severnside Rail Partnership about Freshford Station were received. New processes were in place for receiving funding for station maintenance by volunteers.

Resolved: that Freshford Parish Council becomes a member of the Community Rail Network to access funds to support the upkeep of Freshford Station by volunteers.

202.2 VPA Request to Support Response to the B&NES Transport Delivery Action Plan

The Parish Council had received a late request from the Valley Parish Alliance to support a proposed response to the B&NES Transport Delivery Action Plan consultation in relation to the A36/46 link. The VPA response was in line with the Parish Council's established position on this matter.

203. **Parish Council Assets**

An update on repairs to Parish Council assets and on works to street lights was received.

204. **External Meetings**

None.

205. **Correspondence Received**

The Clerk reported on correspondence received.

206. **Exchange of Information**

No matters were raised.

207. **Date of next meeting**
Monday 12 April 2021, 7.00pm.

Meeting ended 9.25pm