

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT: Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council held remotely at 7pm on Monday 9 November 2020

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), Ward Cllr Neil Butters

Members of the Public: Three

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

None.

114. **Minutes of Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2020 were signed as a true record.

115. **Review of Actions**

An update on actions arising from previous meetings were reviewed. It was noted that:

- Cllrs Adler and Walters had completed and submitted a response to the Government's consultation on the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper.
- A URL had been provided for reporting 'near miss' accidents.
- Whilst a meeting with BANES Highways about Dark Lane was still being pursued, additional workload caused by Covid-19 was impacting the availability of staff from BANES Highways department. Cllr Stevens

116. **Open Forum**

A resident spoke to raise a number of matters:

- He highlighted ongoing traffic issues in Dark Lane and asked if there had been any further developments with meeting the Highways Engineer from BANES.
- That the Freshford Mill planning application (20/02020/VAR) was still pending an outcome. If the application was not approved, then the proposed condition that the developers contribute costs towards a traffic survey would not be imposed. The resident supported the Parish Council's paper about traffic counts in Rosemary Lane.
- He felt there had been an increase in the number of vehicles being driven at speed through Freshford and asked for an update on the work of the Community Speedwatch volunteers.
- That the Freshford community website was displaying an out-of-date train timetable and that a current timetable had been supplied.

117. **Planning Applications**

20/03499/LBA The Old Manor House, The Hill, BA2 7WG: Installation of roof access hatch (regularisation).

Councillors agreed to submit the following comments: 'The roof hatch is visually unobtrusive, and the works are beneficial for the whole building as they were carried out to allow access to the roof for maintenance. We are content to defer to the Listed Building Officer's judgement.'

118. **Tree Applications**

None.

119. **Decision Notifications**

None.

120. **Planning Working Group Terms Reference**

Councillors considered proposed revisions to the Planning Working Group Terms of Reference. Most of the proposed revisions were intended to clarify the Terms of Reference document; only a small number of changes to the operation of the Group were proposed.

Councillors approved the revisions to the Planning Working Group's Terms of Reference.

Councillors considered whether to change the name of the Group to the Planning Advisory Group. It was suggested that 'Advisory' was more reflective of the Group's role and more readily understandable.

Councillors agreed by majority vote to change the name of the Group to the Planning Advisory Group.

121. **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman reported that:

- There had been an interesting discussion on 'health in the community' at the most recent Cam Valley Forum. A statement had been made that plans were being considered for the provision of Village Agents to the rural villages to the immediate south of Bath, which included Freshford.
- The listing of The Inn at Freshford as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) would expire in February 2021. To continue to be an ACV, a nomination form would need to be submitted by the Parish Council approximately 8 weeks ahead of the expiry date. Councillors supported the renewal of The Inn as an ACV. Cllr Stevens agreed to complete the form and to consider what evidence would be necessary to support the renewal application.

122. **Correspondence Received**

The following correspondence had been received:

- There had been several separate enquiries regarding planning applications or potential applications. Whilst the Parish Council were happy to liaise with those submitting applications where appropriate, councillors were not experts on planning matters and applicants seeking advice on planning issues were advised to contact BANES Planning Officers.
- The work of the Community Speedwatch volunteers during the past year had resulted in 49 drivers being reported for exceeding the speed limit and subsequently contacted by police. These details would be circulated via email to residents.
- A request for the removal of the defunct BT phone box had been received. The Clerk reported that BT had added this to their list of boxes to be removed, but work was significantly impacted by Covid-19 restrictions.
- Two enquiries had been received regarding cemetery matters.

Cllr Adler

123. **Finance and Personnel**

123.1 The following payments were approved:

- £300 James Lock for grass cutting (part of The Tynning and cemetery)
- £480.87 Selina Jobson for administration
- £199.73 SSE for street light repairs
- £19.19 Domain name renewal
- £490 Alan Duck grass cutting (July-Sept)

123.2 The bank reconciliation was approved & the following payments & receipts were noted:

- £300 Ian Croker for street cleaning (SO)
- £994.39 Public Works Loan for The Tynning (DD)
- £255 Councillors Empowerment Fund (traffic funds) (receipt)
- £10,847.85 CIL Money (Freshford Mill, part 3 of 3) (receipt)
- £255 Mannings (interment of ashes & memorial tablet) (receipt)

124. **Access to Freshford Church School**

Following discussion at the October Parish Council meeting about the paths on the Tynning, currently being used by Freshford Church School for social distancing measures, becoming muddy and potentially unsafe during winter weather conditions, more detailed proposals of a possible solution were considered. The proposals had been put together by the School in conjunction with Cllrs Adler and Batchelor-Wylam. It was proposed that temporary matting was installed on two parallel paths heading towards the School gate, with a third section of matting running alongside the School's hedge to join these two main paths. Matting would be removed as soon as it was no longer required, hopefully by Spring 2021. Parents had raised over £900 towards the matting and a number of parents had agreed to help install the matting, removing installation costs. It was proposed that the Parish Council fund the remaining costs (£673.20) and agree a contingency fund (£300) to cover any unexpected costs.

Councillors agreed that temporary protective matting be installed on three paths currently used by the School for social distancing arrangements.

Councillors agreed by majority vote to fund the remaining costs of the matting and to a contingency fund of up to £300 to cover any unexpected costs.

It was suggested that as this project would benefit the local community, local groups (FLISCA and Friends of Freshford) should be approached to see if they would be willing and able to contribute to this project.

Councillors agreed by majority vote to approach FLISCA and Friends of Freshford to see if they were able to contribute to this project.

125. **Natural Environment: Declaration of an Ecological Emergency**

Councillors considered a proposal to declare an Ecological Emergency. This was seen as complementing the Parish Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency, since the two issues were interlinked. It was stated that by declaring an Ecological Emergency the Parish Council would consider ways of repairing, protecting and enhancing the nature and wildlife of the Parish. The declaration would support and guide planning and wider decision making by the Parish Council.

Councillors agreed to declare an Ecological Emergency.

It was noted that this declaration needed to be communicated to residents. Ongoing communication about these issues to the community was viewed as equally as important as making this declaration.

126. **Natural Environment: Update on the Friends of Freshford Tynning Project**

Following discussion at the October meeting, some councillors had met with members of the Friends of Freshford to discuss their proposals for the Tynning. The proposal document had been updated in light of this meeting and circulated to councillors. Friends of Freshford and councillors would continue working together to finalise proposals and bring them to a future meeting of the Parish Council. There would be consultation with the residents about the final proposals. This communication would be considered alongside communications about the ecological emergency as the two projects were seen to be interlinked. It was suggested that the outcomes of a residents survey about the Tynning, undertaken in 2016, should be considered when drawing up current proposals.

A successful day of bulb planting on the Tynning had been organised by the Friends of Freshford.

127. **Climate Emergency**

Councillors considered a proposal to hold an online Climate Emergency community meeting for, as the planned Climate Emergency meeting in March had been postponed because of Covid-19 restrictions. The meeting would seek community input into the Council's Climate Emergency Plan, enabling the creation of a set of agreed initiatives that the Parish Council could proceed with at a community level.

BANES had agreed to help facilitate the online meeting. Cllrs Adler and Pascoe had drafted some initial ideas for the meeting and councillors were asked to forward on any other ideas. A date for the meeting was still to be finalised. Ways of including residents who were not able to participate in an online meeting would be considered.

It was noted that communication to the community about this meeting should be considered alongside communication of information about the declaration of an Ecological Emergency.

128. **PC Assets**

128.1 Possible installation of more LED lamps in Freshford street lights

Cllr Walker had met with SSE to discuss the possible installation of more LED lights in street lamps in Freshford. There were a number of variables to consider when installing LED lights (brightness, warmth of light, times of activation of lights) and different locations might require different levels of light. SSE would provide quotes to fit two different sample light fittings. It was proposed that once councillors had had the opportunity to see these different lights in operation, councillors could then consider replacing the majority of lights in Freshford with LEDs. It was estimated that this could reduce energy used by street lights by about 60%. Although cost savings would be made it was acknowledged that the costs of undertaking the change to LEDs was likely to be significant.

On a separate issue, Curo had been asked to repair lights along the path by the Glebe and to consider extending lights along an unlit section.

128.2 Update on maintenance contract for Freshford street lights

A group of parishes across BANES were continuing to liaise with Volker about costs for the maintenance and repair of street lights. Volker had stated that they would provide a service on a time and materials basis, rather than through a contract. Freshford Parish Council were being updated with any developments.

SSE had recently repaired a broken light on a time and materials basis.

129. **Communications**

Zonkey were continuing to work on redeveloping the Freshford website. Whilst progress had been slower than hoped, Zonkey had stated that they should have a basic site, focussing on Parish Council content, with the first draft completed within the next two weeks.

130. **Highways and Transport**

130. 1 Traffic counts in Rosemary Lane

Cllr Carpenter had met with the BANES Senior Traffic Management Engineer who had suggested four sites for traffic monitoring on Rosemary Lane, at a total cost of £500. With levels of traffic reduced by current Covid-19 restrictions, it was proposed that the counts were postponed, probably until early 2021. Cllr Carpenter would liaise with the Senior Traffic Management Engineer in December.

Councillors agreed that:

- traffic counts would be undertaken at four locations on Rosemary Lane;
- the undertaking of these traffic counts would be postponed to a point when traffic levels were felt to be no longer significantly impacted by Covid-19 restrictions.

It was noted that BANES Highways were seeking a condition on the current variation to the Freshford Mill planning application, that the developers pay £5000 towards traffic surveys. If approved, this condition was likely to negate the need for the Parish Council to pay for the Rosemary Lane traffic counts. The Parish Council had received £255 towards the costs of these counts from the Ward Councillors Empowerment Fund; if this funding was not needed for these traffic counts then the BANES Community Engagement Team had advised that it might be possible to propose using these funds for a different traffic project. Further advice would be sought from BANES Community Engagement Team in the future if required.

130.2 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points

Following requests from two residents, the possibility of installing EV charging points in the village was being considered by councillors. Potential sites were being investigated for their practical and logistical suitability.

Cllr Maddicott agreed to take on this project, with support from Cllr Pascoe. Councillors were asked to forward on any other ideas for possible locations for EV charging points.

Cllr
Maddicott

131. Exchange of Information

It was noted that revised plans had been submitted for planning application 20/03390/FUL Under Galleries, Freshford Lane.

It was noted that the new bench had been installed around the Boer War oak tree.

132. Date of next meeting

Monday 14 December 2020, 7.00pm.

Meeting ended 9.05pm