

# FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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

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

**Apologies:** None

**In attendance:** Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk), Cllr Neil Butters

**Members of the Public:** Four

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

None.

174. **Minutes of Meeting**

**Resolved:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021 as a true record.

175. **Review of Actions**

An update on actions arising from previous meetings was reviewed. It was noted that Rosemary Lane would be closed to traffic from 15 February for up to 5 days to allow BANES engineers to investigate the problem of running water at the end of the lane.

176. **Open Forum**

A resident spoke about the Dark Lane / Church Hill traffic agenda item. He commended the paper that had been put to the Parish Council outlining issues and evaluating possible responses. He reported that issues here impacted a number of residents and had resulted in damage to walls. He identified four issues, set out in the paper, three relating to poor road signage and layout. The fourth issue related to Sat Nav systems inappropriately directing traffic down the narrow lanes. He reported that this issue had been raised with BANES several years ago, but it wasn't clear that any action had been taken. He stated that other local authorities had successfully requested the removal of roads inappropriate for through traffic from Sat Nav systems.

177. **Planning Applications**

None.

178. **Tree Applications**

- 21/00275/TCA Land between access track and boundary in parcel 9517, Church Hill: Three Willow trees – pollard down to base. Supported.
- 21/00165/TCA Home Farm House, Church Hill, BA2 7TX: Portuguese Laurel – reduce by 800mm; Lawson Cypress – reduce by 3m. Supported.

179. **Decision Notifications**

- 20/03390/FUL Under Galleries, Freshford Lane BA2 7TY: Two storey extension, to follow demolition of existing garage, store and conservatory. *Permitted*

180. **Chairman's Report**

- An update on discussions with Bath and West Community Energy about the possibility of undertaking a scoping report for renewable energy options in the village was noted

- It was proposed that the exact location of a water pipe running underneath The Tynning should be confirmed ahead of any potential tree planting. The Parish Council was responsible for ensuring the water pipe was not damaged by any such planting. It was suggested that a pipe locator tool was hired to enable investigation of its exact location. The reliability of this approach was questioned. It was suggested that the Parish Council should consider hiring a professional company to undertake this work. It was agreed that this option and costs would be looked into.
- An update on the redevelopment of the website was noted. Updating of the content would take place once the new site had been constructed.

Cllr  
Walker

## 181. **Finance and Personnel**

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

- £703.41 Selina Jobson for administration
- £275 Alan Duck for grass cutting
- £129.98 Jean Hawker for a wheelbarrow for Parish Council use
- £17.22 Jean Hawker for a padlock and bolt for the Parish Council shed

181.2 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation & note the following payments and receipts:

- £450 Alan Duck for grass cutting (from May 2020) (payment)
- £300 Ian Croker for street cleaning (SO)
- £169.52 SSE street lighting electricity supply (DD)
- £3930.82 HMRC VAT reclaim Dec 18 – Dec 20 (receipt)

181.3 A renewal quote had been received from the current contractor for mowing The Tynning and cemetery grass and maintaining the area around the War Memorial. The Clerk had attempted to obtain other quotes but had not identified anyone willing to quote on this contract. Councillors were happy with the work of the current contractor, James Lock, and there was no increase in the costs of his annual contract. If proposed changes to The Tynning were approved, these might result in changes to the grass maintenance contract.

**Resolved:** to approve the renewal of the annual grass maintenance contract with James Lock for a period of two years.

181.4 A quote had been received from Alan Duck for a hand cut of The Tynning hedge. Proposed changes to The Tynning included potential changes to the cutting of the hedge in future.

**Resolved:** to approve the quote from Alan Duck for the cutting of the Tynning Hedge.

## 182. **Partial Update of the BANES Local Plan**

Councillors received a proposed draft response to the BANES consultation on the partial update of the Local Plan. Councillors were asked to submit any further comments as soon as possible.

It was suggested that trees outside of Conservation Areas required greater protection.

**Resolved:** That Cllr Walters finalise and submit the response to the BANES consultation ahead of the deadline of 18 February 2021.

Cllr  
Walters

## 183. **Natural Environment: Friends of Freshford Tynning Project**

Councillors gave initial consideration to proposals from the Friends of Freshford to enhance biodiversity on The Tynning. In discussion it was noted that:

- Consideration would need to be given to the location of an underground water pipe before any tree planting could take place along the road to the south of The Tynning;
- The Parish Council should contact the three contractors who maintained The Tynning to get their views on possible works and cost implications of the proposals;
- Consideration should be given to longer term maintenance costs of the proposals which would require funding by the Parish Council;
- The safety aspects of creating a pond on The Tynning would need careful consideration, although it was noted that further work was to be undertaken on this aspect of the proposals before it was ready for consideration for approval;
- The possible impact of the proposals on the area identified for Freshford School's educational purposes was questioned. It was reported that when the Parish Council bought the land, B&NES had indicated that they would not retain the Educational Reserve land because the School would have access to all of The Tynning. Despite this statement from B&NES the land continues to be shown as Educational Reserve in the Placemaking Plans.

The process for considering and approving the proposals was discussed and it was noted that:

- A community survey was available for residents to complete online and a paper notice was being delivered to every property in Freshford providing the option of a paper survey to complete;
- An online community forum would be held by the Parish Council in conjunction with the Friends of Freshford on Thursday 18 February 2021. Residents would be able to hear more details about the proposals and ask questions;
- The survey would close on Friday 26 February to give residents enough time to complete the survey and to allow the results to be ready for circulation to councillors on 1 March.

The results of the survey would be considered by the Parish Council at its meeting on 8 March 2021 when councillors would consider the approval of each project within the proposals.

#### 184. **Climate Emergency**

Cllr Pascoe reported on the well-attended Climate and Nature Emergency Community Forum, held online on 28 January 2021. 96 households had completed the questionnaire and 80 people signed up to attend the Forum. Cllr Pascoe was putting together a presentation about the evening, including recordings of the external speaker presentations, for sharing with residents via the website.

Many ideas had been put forward in the break out groups and these, combined with any additional ideas from the questionnaire, would be drawn up into an Action Plan for consideration by the Parish Council.

Cllrs Adler  
/ Pascoe

#### 185. **Highways and Transport**

##### 185.1 Dark Lane / Church Hill Traffic Issues

Councillors considered a paper setting out possible ways of resolving issues with HGVs and other unsuitable vehicles using Church Hill and Dark Lane as a route through the village. Both roads were narrow and unsuitable as a route through the village. Residents reported vehicles getting stuck, having to undertake difficult manoeuvres and, on occasion, damaging private property.

It was proposed that the Parish Council ask BANES Highways Department to:

- Review current road signage and signage locations;

- Consider if road markings at the top of Church Hill can be improved to make it clearer that this is not the route through the village;
- List these roads as unsuitable for through traffic on Sat Nav systems.

Changes to the road junction at Church Hill could be considered, but this would require planning and greater cost and it was recognised that there might be limitations on taking actions forward here.

There had been some support at the Climate and Nature Emergency Community Forum for a central delivery point as a way of reducing the number of delivery vehicles driving through the village and this idea could be explored further.

#### 185.2 Village Hub Bus Stop

Noting that the Parish Council had already approved the moving of the bus stop to outside the Galleries/Village Hall, councillors considered a proposal to replace some of the current grassed area here with a hard-standing durable waiting area with a dropped kerb for wheelchair and pram access. Bollards were proposed to prevent vehicles being driven onto and damaging the grass. A replacement bench was also proposed. A revised diagram of the scheme had been circulated to councillors on the day of the meeting, with a reduction in the amount of hardstanding and more of the grass retained. It was noted that:

- Assurance had been received from the Wiltshire Bus Manager that the 94 route would continue to serve Freshford village;
- Funding could be sought from FLiSCA and Friends of Freshford, but it was unlikely that funding could be found to cover all costs. A potential GWR funding scheme had been suspended indefinitely in light of the impact of Covid-19. It was proposed that the Parish Council consider using Community Infrastructure Levy money to cover any remaining costs;
- Confirmation was needed as to whether residents who had previously said they were willing to donate a new bench were still willing to do so. Consideration should also be given to whether the current bench could be repaired;
- It was confirmed that changes to Freshford Village Memorial Hall would not impact this area;
- The land was owned by BANES and their approval of the scheme would be needed. Given BANES ownership of this land a question was raised as to whether the Parish Council should spend money on an asset that it did not own.

It was clarified that the aims of the scheme were to: move the bus stop to a better location by the Village Hub; protect the grass by preventing cars from driving on to this area; and improve the aesthetic amenity of this area.

It was suggested that these aims could be achieved by a less expensive solution such as installing bollards to protect the grass, or by using stones to the same effect.

**Vote:** Councillors voted on whether to replace the grass area by the entrance to the Galleries/Village Hall with a hard-standing durable waiting area, with disabled and pushchair access. The proposal was not supported.

Councillors agreed that there should be investigation of the installation of bollards or stones along the edge of this area to prevent cars being driven on to the grass and to improve the aesthetic amenity of this area.

Cllrs  
Walker /  
Carpenter

186. **Parish Council Assets**

Cllr Walker provided a summary of the state of the Parish Council's assets, including proposals to repair a grit bin, two benches and renovations to all noticeboards. Costs for repairs to the grit bin and a bench had been included in the 2020/21 budget. Councillors discussed the use, purpose and location of the four noticeboards.

**Resolved:**

- The wooden grit bin should ideally be repaired and that the Clerk should seek clarification from B&NES as to whether B&NES or the Parish Council has responsibility for this bin. If necessary, a new plastic grit bin should be purchased.
- Repairs to the bench at the south of The Tynning should be undertaken.
- GWR should be contacted to see if they would undertake the redecoration of the bench at Freshford Station.
- That all four noticeboards should be renovated. Following this work spare keys to all noticeboards should be held by the Parish Council and arrangements put in place for maintaining up-to-date notices.

Clerk

Clerk

Cllr Walker to obtain quotes for these works.

Cllr Walker

187. **External Meetings**

None.

188. **Correspondence Received**

The Clerk reported on correspondence received, reporting that:

- BANES were holding a consultation on their Transport Delivery Action Plan until 1 March 2021. Cllr Carpenter had attended an online event about this. Members of the public were encouraged to participate in the consultation. The Action Plan was due to be finalised by early Autumn 2021.
- Problems with the culvert had been reported to the Parish Council and it was felt that blockages in the main drains were adding to issues here. These issues had been reported to the BANES Highway Maintenance and Drainage Manager.
- Severnside Community Rail Partnership were setting up a meeting with Friends of Freshford Station and a representative of the Parish Council to consider support required at the station.

189. **Exchange of Information**

No matters were raised.

190. **Date of next meeting**

Monday 8 March 2021, 7.00pm.

Meeting ended 9.25pm