

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council

held remotely at 7pm on Monday 11 May 2020

Parish Councillors Present: John Adler (Chairman), Jean Hawker (Vice Chairman), Annabel Batchelor-Wylam, Julian Carpenter, Jonelle Daniels, Tom Maddicott, Nick Stevens, Martin Walker

Apologies: Jacob Heatley-Adams

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk), Ward Councillor Neil Butters (from 8.55pm)

Members of the Public: One

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

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

2. **Minutes of Meetings**

The minutes of the meetings held on 10 February 2020 and 9 March 2020 were approved as true records.

The record of decisions made on urgent items of business on 14 April 2020 was approved as a true record.

The minutes and the record of decisions made would be signed by the Chairman when possible.

3. **Review of Actions**

It was noted that progress with a number of Parish Council actions had been impacted by the ongoing Coronavirus situation.

- Concerns raised by a resident regarding train services through Freshford had not been progressed as further information from the resident had not yet been received.
- Cllr Carpenter to check on whether a request to reinstate the Saturday bus service as part of a tender process had been made to Wiltshire Council and BANES. This was felt to be particularly important in light of the possible discontinuation of the No.94 bus service. Cllr Carpenter
- The previous bank reconciliation had been circulated by Cllr Adler.
- Cllr Walker had arranged to meet with Tim Jarrett from Curo regarding the cemetery wall. Cllr Walker
- Cllr Daniels to contact Curo regarding the maintenance of the land they own between the cemetery and the Glebe. Cllr Daniels
- It was not an appropriate time to monitor traffic on Rosemary Lane and this would be reconsidered in the autumn.
- It had not been possible to progress ideas relating to traffic and parking issues at Freshford Church School, discussions with the School would start again once possible. Cllr Daniels
- It had not been possible to go ahead with the planned Climate Emergency Meeting, which would be rescheduled when possible.

4. **Open Forum**

No items were raised in the open forum.

5. **Planning Applications**

20/01154/FUL Hillbreeze, Sharpstone Lane, Freshford, BA2 7UA: Alterations to fire damage property to include erection of an extension with bathroom and kitchen and installation of new roof. Erection of a storage building.

Councillors considered a draft proposed response to this application. In discussion it was noted that the application was considered to be defective in form and content in the following ways:

- There was no Design and Access statement lodged with the application.
- There was no indication of how the application conformed to the Village Design Statement.
- There was no clear indication of how the historic fabric of the building would be preserved where this was possible.
- There were insufficient details of craftsmanship and materials. The proposed build looks out of character in the landscape and insensitive to the physical and environmental context of the site.
- The build appears to effectively double the existing footprint of the residence and as such represents a significant and unacceptable increase in volume. No comprehensive figures were given to show the total volume increase as compared to what now exists.
- There was no explanation as to why a storage shed should be built. It appears to be disproportionate in size with a height of over 5 metres and its proposed aluminium shell is not sensitive to its physical and environmental location.

The Parish Council considered that assertions in the application, that there were no trees or hedges on the proposed development site or on land adjacent to the site that might be important as part of the local landscape character, were inaccurate.

The Parish Council shared concerns expressed by those who had already responded to the consultation and requested that due weight be given to the matters raised.

Taking these factors into account councillors resolved to object to the application in the form submitted for the following reasons:

- The application was considered defective in its present form.
- The build as proposed was 'inappropriate development', was not a positive addition to the landscape and was out of character in the Conservation Area.
- The application was not in compliance with the Village Design Statement.
- Environmental concerns had not been acknowledged or addressed.
- The build exceeds significantly the 'One Third Guideline' of volume increase.

Councillors agreed that the full comments, reflecting the points made above, be submitted to the Planning Officer.

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

Councillors considered a draft proposed response to this application. There were felt to be a number of issues with the application, particularly that it did not comply with either the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Policy or the Villages Design Statement. The interpretation of 'infill' housing used in the application was questioned. 'Infill' housing was set out in the Neighbourhood Plan as *'the filling of a gap normally capable of taking no more than two houses. Infill development must be consistent with the policies set out in the plan and preserve the openness of the Green Belt.'* In this case it was noted that houses had already

been built on this plot and it was felt that additional buildings would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

It was suggested that the previous application to build 3A Church Lane had included a commitment to create a wild flower meadow and that this application would contravene this condition. It was agreed that Cllr Batchelor-Wylam would look into this and, if there was a such a commitment in the original application, then concerns regarding this issue would be included in the Parish Council's response.

Cllr
Batchelor-
Wylam

Freshford Parish Council supported objections already lodged by Limpley Stoke Parish Council and by local residents.

Taking these factors into account councillors resolved to object to the application on the basis that:

- The construction of these two new homes is inappropriate development which by its nature is harmful to the Green Belt. That the definition of infill is not met in this instance and is neither in compliance with the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Policy nor the Villages Design Statement. It does not clearly outweigh the fundamental need to preserve the openness of the Green Belt.
- The application is in part in direct contravention of the Conditions attaching to the planning permission granted for No.3A Church Lane.

Councillors agreed that the full comments, reflecting the points made above, be submitted to the Planning Officer.

6. **Planning Consultation**

A BANES consultation on the 'Local Plan Partial Update and Statement of Community Involvement' was underway with a deadline for responses of 1 June 2020. It was reported that the consultation sought feedback on the scope and process of the consultation, rather than on the Local Plan itself. It was noted that the five-year review of Freshford Neighbourhood Plan was due this year and the relationship between this Plan and the Local Plan was highlighted.

The consultation included a request for the identification of sites considered to be potentially suitable for development for housing, employment use or renewable energy (deadline for this aspect 15 June 2020). In light of the Parish Council's Climate Emergency Resolution it was felt that consideration should be given to identifying sites for renewable energy.

It was agreed that Cllrs Adler, Batchelor-Wylam and Maddicott would consider the consultation and the request for potential sites for renewable energy development and provide a report to the June Parish Council meeting.

Cllrs Adler,
B-Wylam,
Maddicott

7. **Tree Applications**

None.

8. **Decision Notifications**

9 The Glebe, Freshford, BA2 7TZ: First floor extension over existing kitchen/diner/wc, minor internal alterations to form self-contained accommodation on both floors sharing a front door. Permit.

9. **Response to Coronavirus**

Members of Freshford and Limpley Stoke parish councils, along with members of FLiSCA, had worked together on the 'LiFERAFT' project to support residents and provide information during Coronavirus. Appreciation of the work of those involved with the LiFERAFT project was noted.

Councillors expressed thanks to those working in The Galleries, which had performed a vital service to the community, and to Tim Tuckey who had overseen the prescriptions and medication service.

10. **Freshford Surgery**

Following the decision by the Beckington Practice that they would not be involved with setting up a Freshford Surgery facility as part of the Freshford Memorial Hall development, alternative solutions are being investigated by the Hall Trustees. The Memorial Hall Trustees has approached the Coombe Down practice who are interested in further discussions. Changes to local Clinical Commissioning Groups had weakened the county divide and might provide an opportunity for a health facility covering Freshford and the wider community.

A possible referendum to be held by BANES could not now be held until May 2021 as all local elections had been put back to this date due to Coronavirus restrictions. The Parish Council is to approach BANES to see if the Referendum could be undertaken in a more timely manner using alternative methods, such as a Postal Vote approach.

Councillors resolved that the Parish Council would provide full support to all activities required to create a new local surgery in Freshford and to work towards creating a community health facility within the village.

11. **Finance and Personnel**

a) The following payments were approved:

- £300 James Lock for grass cutting (part of The Tynning and cemetery)
- £606.99 Selina Jobson for administration
- £265.40 Parish Magazine for printing of the November Bulletin

b) The bank reconciliation for April was approved and the following payments and receipts were noted:

- £12.09 Water2Business for water supply (DD)
- £270 Ian Croker for street cleaning (SO)
- £994.39 Public Works Loan for The Tynning loan repayment (DD)
- £15,873 BANES installment of precept payment (receipt)

c) The renewal of the insurance through Came and Company was considered. It was reported that councillors had undertaken a significant review of the insurance last year. Confirmation of the location of sheds was required.

Councillors agreed that the Parish Council's insurance be renewed with Came and Company at a cost of £825.78.

12. **Correspondence Received**

The Clerk gave a verbal report on enquiries received from residents, including a Freedom of Information Act request that had been submitted by a resident in relation to a previous planning application. The Clerk and Chair would prepare a response to this request.

13. **PC Assets**

a) The street lighting maintenance contract was being reviewed in light of a significant increase in costs in the contract with SSE. Some parish councils in BANES were working together to try to secure a contract with Volker and this possibility would be investigated. It was reported that SSE had provided a good, reliable service and this should be considered alongside cost comparisons.

The Clerk and Chair would pursue further clarification about street lighting contracts and would report back to the June meeting.

ClIr Adler,
Clerk

b) The Tynning was being used for a community art project as a positive response to the current Coronavirus situation. Thanks were expressed to ClIr Batchelor-Wylam for organising this project.

ClIr Walker

c) Bench No.3 by The Tynning was in need of repair or replacement. Cllr Walker would contact a resident who might be interested in funding a new commemorative bench.

Cllr Walker

d) A resident had suggested restoring the old animal pound by The Galleries and including a heritage statement about the building. Cllr Walker to ask the resident to put forward further details.

e) Cllrs Walker, Batchelor-Wylam & Daniels had met with two residents about the possible re-wilding of the cemetery. The residents had been asked to put forward further details.

14. **Communications**

The March edition of the Bulletin had been cancelled due to Coronavirus.

The Parish Communications email list had been moved to MailChimp and this was working well.

15. **Highways and Transport**

Cllr Butters had asked for the views of the Parish Council on the A36 Severance Study. Cllr Stevens stated that he had reported on a previous version in 2018, setting out the priority schemes identified by the Parish Council and the Valley Parish Alliance.

It was agreed that Cllrs Stevens and Carpenter would consider the previous response documents and report back to the June Parish Council meeting.

Cllrs
Stevens &
Carpenter

16. **Built Environment**

Nothing to report.

17. **Natural Environment**

a) Maintenance contractors would continue working during Coronavirus restrictions as long as social distancing could be maintained. The Clerk to ask HL Mills to cut The Tynning as soon as possible, in light of a previous Parish Council agreement to increase to two cuts a year. The Clerk and Cllr Batchelor-Wylam would liaise with HL Mills to make them aware of the stones project on The Tynning.

Clerk / Cllr
Batchelor-
Wylam

b) Councillors approved a quote from Alan Duck for a total of £195 to cut back a damaged tree in the cemetery and to make good remaining branches.

18. **Upcoming External Meetings**

Cllr Adler had been asked by BANES to give a talk about Climate Emergency actions to other parish councils, in light of the success of the Cam Valley Forum meeting about Climate Emergency activity.

The next Valley Parish Alliance meeting was scheduled for the 10 June 2020, subject to confirmation that it would go ahead.

19. **Exchange of Information**

a) A tap had burst in the cemetery. Wessex Water had attended quickly to address the immediate problem and a resident had later repaired the tap at no cost. It was agreed that the Chair would contact the resident to express the thanks of the Parish Council.

Cllr Adler

b) It was reported that although Cllr Heatley-Adams was out of the country at the moment he would undertake his Parish Council planning responsibilities where possible.

c) A councillor suggested that the Terms of Reference of the Planning Working Group should be reviewed.

d) Councillors were asked for their views on the idea that Parish Council meetings could be held during the daytime. Whilst this was possible for some councillors, others would find daytime meetings difficult to attend. It was noted that some members of the community might find attending daytime meetings difficult. Meetings would continue at 7pm for the foreseeable future.

20. **Date of next meeting**

Monday 8 June 2020, 7.00pm, to be held remotely.

Meeting ended 9.15pm.