

# **FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

## **DRAFT: Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council**

held remotely at 7pm on Monday 14 December 2020

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

**Apologies:** Annabel Batchelor-Wylam

**In attendance:** Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk)

**Members of the Public:** One

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

Cllr Hawker declared an interest in planning application 20/04416/TCA and would not vote on this item.

134. **Minutes of Meeting**

**Resolved:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2020 as a true record.

135. **Review of Actions**

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

- Avon and Somerset Police had confirmed that whilst they captured data on 'near miss' accidents and those accidents where no physical injuries were sustained, there was no requirement to report it. Therefore, data from Highways England would not include near misses or collisions where no injury was sustained. It would be possible to request this data from Avon and Somerset Police. Councillors agreed to send a community email with details of how to report near miss accidents or those where no physical injury was sustained, to build up the data held by Avon and Somerset Police.
- BANES Senior Traffic Management Engineer had confirmed it would not be possible at the current time to meet to review concerns about traffic on Dark Lane due to the impact of Covid-19 on their workload. He suggested that the Parish Council put together a paper identifying the traffic problems and possible solutions. The need to ensure the views of the whole community were captured when identifying problems and solutions was noted, given that a solution for one issue might create other problems. Consideration would be given on how to progress this.

Cllr  
Stevens

136. **Open Forum**

A resident spoke to raise the following matters:

- He felt that there was an increasing amount of dog mess on the pavements and asked if the Council could email residents about this issue or consider installing additional dog waste bins.
- Another lorry had become stuck in Dark Lane. The driver said he had followed his Sat-Nav and had not seen any signs about the narrow road. The resident acknowledged that residents held different opinions as to the solutions for problems on Dark Lane. Noting that problems had been ongoing for some time he asked the Parish Council to take a lead in resolving these issues.

- The resident thanked councillors for their work during a difficult year, commending the work of LiFERAFT and the community spirit that had been seen in the village during Covid-19 restrictions.

### 137. **Planning Applications**

20/04080/LBA & 20/04079/FUL Vine Cottage, High Street, BA2 7WF: Demolition of existing stone wall. New stone wall to improve vehicular access and parking provision and change of garage door material from softwood to steel.

It was noted that the Freshford and Sharpstone Conservation Area Character Appraisal highlighted boundary rubble walls within the village as a feature of special interest and stated that 'The removal of boundary walls to provide access or parking should be resisted.'

Whilst this application was similar to a previous one relating to the property next door (16/03713/FUL), there were felt to be two key differences. Firstly, Vine Cottage already had parking spaces, whereas the property next door did not. Secondly, this application sought permission to demolish 5 meters of wall whereas application 16/03713/FUL was for 2.5 meters.

The proposed replacement of the wooden garage doors with a single metal roll over door was not considered a suitable or acceptable alternative.

It was felt that the application failed to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area & that any degree of public benefit did not outweigh the visual harm to the Conservation Area.

**Resolved:** to Object for the reasons outlined above.

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

Councillors considered that the current building had some conservation value and, in line with the Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan, would like to see the building preserved and repaired where possible rather than demolished and replaced.

**Resolved:** to submit Comments only.

20/03390/FUL Under Galleries, Freshford Lane, BA2 7TY: Erection of two storey extension, to follow demolition of existing garage, store and conservatory (*revised plans*).

According to the correspondence from the applicant's architect, an original volume had now been agreed, although the details of the calculation were still unclear to councillors. Revisions were considered to be relatively modest although a reduction in glazing on the West Elevation was seen to be an improvement.

The accuracy of the bat survey was questioned, since there was known to be a protected bat roost within a kilometre (as the crow flies) of the property. The use of Magic Maps only to provide accurate, local information for the bat survey was questioned.

**Resolved:** to submit Comments only.

### 138. **Tree Applications**

20/04416/TCA Freshford Manor, Church Hill, BA2 7WF: Lime trees (T1-T5) – pollard down to 20ft. Lime trees (T6-T7) – fell.

The two trees to be felled were close to the listed wall to the Church and the roots were lifting the surface of the drive and beginning to undermine the wall. Councillors noted the need for a balance between conserving walls and conserving the natural environment. A local example was given, where parts of the bottom of a stone wall

affected by tree roots had been removed and replaced with wood boards to allow the continued growth of the trees. This approach was commended.

Pollarding was proposed because gas pipes were to be laid underground and might damage the tree roots. The alternative route for the gas pipes would damage a listed stone wall. Reducing the height and weight of the trees was proposed to give them a better chance of recovering if any damage was incurred. Councillors queried whether any new trees would be planted to replace the two proposed for felling.

**Resolved:** to submit Comments only.

139. **Decision Notifications**

None.

140. **Chairman's Report**

Councillors considered a request from the Chairman that the Clerk be paid an additional 3 hours a week in November and December to reflect the unplanned hours being worked on activities including VAT reclaim, website redevelopment and SSE supply billing issues.

**Resolved:** to agree to pay the Clerk for 3 additional hours per week in November & December.

A review of the Clerk's working hours would be undertaken in early 2021.

141. **Correspondence Received**

The Clerk reported on a number of items raised by residents.

142. **Finance and Personnel**

142.1 Councillors noted the external auditor's report on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20.

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

- £300 James Lock for grass cutting (part of The Tynning and cemetery)
- £416.93 Selina Jobson for administration
- £100.68 SSE for street light repairs
- £700 Donation to Freshford Village Memorial Hall
- £60 DM Malley for payroll
- £79.99 BT Batchelor-Wylam for matting pins
- £39.99 A Menheneott for additional matting pins
- £100 Chloe Alexander for internal audit (2019/20)
- £240 PKF Littlejohn for external audit (2019/20)

142.3 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation & note the following payment and receipts:

- £300 Ian Croker for street cleaning (SO)
- £250 FLISCA donation to The Tynning matting
- £60 James Long (Masons) for memorial inscription

142.4 Councillors considered an invoice from SSE for the street lamp electricity supply from June 2019 to November 2020 for £2606.86. A report set out the problems with SSE billing that had resulted in this back-dated invoice. Charges from 2018 up to June 2019 had been withdrawn by SSE and charges from July 2019 to July 2020 had been recalculated on a lower contract rate, because of SSE billing issues.

**Resolved:** to approve payment of the invoice from SSE of £2606.86.

It was agreed that the report detailing issues with the billing would be attached to the minutes as part of the documentation recording this payment.

142.5 Councillors considered the annual Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) report for 2019/20.

**Resolved:** to approve the annual CIL report for 2019/20.

143. **Budget 2021/22**

Councillors received a draft budget for 2021/22 and a list proposing priorities for projects to be undertaken in 2021/22, noting that it would not be possible to fund all projects in one year. The following points were noted:

- If the Parish Council decided to replace all remaining standard street lamps with LED lamps, a company had been identified that provided up-front funding, with costs paid back over time from the savings accrued. Therefore, it might be possible to undertake such a project with no up-front costs to the Council.
- In light of the Parish Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency declarations a budget should be set aside to cover costs of related activities.
- It was agreed that relocation of the bus stop to outside the Memorial Hall / Galleries should be a high priority proposal, given that this project had been considered in September 2019. A previously identified funding source was no longer available, but other sources of funding would be investigated. It was felt that the Parish Council could not cover the entire estimated costs of the scheme and some external funding would be needed. Whilst the initial proposal had looked at relocating the bus stop, it was suggested that there might be low-cost solutions to improving the look of the current bus stop area.
- Tree works were likely to be needed in the cemetery and on The Tynning.

Taking into account the points raised, a revised budget reflecting the priorities agreed, would be presented at the January 2021 Parish Council meeting and would be considered alongside the setting of the precept.

144. **Renewal of Asset of Community Value**

**Resolved:** to approve an application from the Parish Council to be submitted to BANES for the renewal of the listing of The Inn at Freshford as an Asset of Community Value.

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

Cllr Pascoe was working with Friends of Freshford (FoF) to provide additional detail on the responsibilities and costs involved in the FoF proposals for improvements to the ecology of The Tynning. FoF would need to approve the proposals before submitting them to the Parish Council for consideration. Community views on the proposals would be sought.

The hard work of FoF on the proposals was noted and Cllr Pascoe was also thanked for her work with this project.

146. **Climate Emergency**

Councillors considered a questionnaire to be circulated to residents in advance of the Climate & Nature Emergency Community Forum to be held on 28 January 2021. The Forum was intended to identify climate related actions that the community wanted to take forward.

Two points were raised, one suggesting clarification of who was being referred to in the survey and a second highlighting the need for the inclusion of a GDPR statement. Subject to these two amendments, the survey would be circulated to residents ahead of the Climate & Nature Emergency Community Forum.

147. **PC Assets**

Trial of two LED lamps in Freshford street lights

SSE had provided quotes to fit two different trial LED light fittings in lamp No. 4 (Jasmine Cottage) and lamp No. 25 (Abbey Lane). Lamp No. 4 was currently not working. A trial of the lamps, which had different levels of orange light and brightness, was proposed to help gauge the most suitable type of LED lamp to fit in different street lights in Freshford. A balance was needed to ensure sufficient brightness, whilst not negatively impacting residents in local properties or local ecology such as bats. A proposed longer term project to replace all standard lamps with LEDs was in line with the Parish Council's Climate Emergency declaration.

It was agreed that advice should be sought from BANES Street Lighting Department. Ward Councillor Butters would also be contacted for suggestions on who to contact in BANES or to see if he knew of other similar schemes being considered by parish councils.

**Resolved:** to approve the trial of two different LED light fittings in Lamp No. 4 and Lamp No. 25.

148. **Communications**

An update on progress with redeveloping the website was noted.

**Resolved:** to approve using a separate URL as the address for the new website.

149. **Highways and Transport**

Cllr Stevens, in response to a Future of the Region Survey consultation being undertaken by the West of England Combined Authorities, had prepared a report summarising rural transport and road traffic issues in Freshford.

**Resolved:** to approve the paper on transport and highways issues in Freshford.

150. **Built Environment**

Cllr Walters agreed to be the Parish Council's representative on the Bath Preservation Trust.

151. **Exchange of Information**

Councillors agreed to a request from Cllr Hawker to purchase a new wheelbarrow for Ian Crocker as the current one had broken. A budget of up to £100 was deemed sufficient.

Cllr Hawker reported a resident's concerns about the difficulties of driving up Rosemary Lane.

152. **Date of next meeting**

Monday 11 January 2020, 7.00pm.

Meeting ended 9.05pm