

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council held remotely at 7pm on Monday 19 April 2021

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), Ward Councillors Neil Butters, Matt McCabe

Members of the Public: Eight

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

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

Cllr Adler declared an interest in planning application 21/01105/FUL High Meadow.

Cllr Walker declared an interest in planning application 21/01305/FUL The Surgery.

209. **Minutes of Meeting**

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

210. **Review of Actions**

An update on actions arising from previous meetings was noted. An issue with running water at the bottom of Rosemary Lane had been resolved.

211. **Open Forum**

A resident spoke on a number of matters:

- That Libra Travel had been awarded the No 94 bus service contract. A new bus that would meet the Bath Clean Air Zone requirements would operate from May 2021. In the meantime, the temporary bus was too large to be able to access all parts of the village route;
- To request an update on any developments since the Parish Council had agreed to look into proposals relating to Dark Hill/Church Lane. Cllr Stevens confirmed that the Parish Council's proposals had been forwarded to the B&NES Highways Traffic Engineer. It had not yet been possible to hold an onsite meeting.
- To request an update on remedying the uneven surface on the lower part of the footpath from The Glebe. Cllr Hawker would look into this again.
- To encourage the Parish Council to hold an Annual Parish Meeting.

212. **Planning Applications**

- 21/01105/FUL: High Meadow, Midford Lane, BA2 7GW: Single storey front extension and internal alterations including conversion of garage into annexe.

Cllr Jean Hawker took the Chair for this item only.

The application was for minimal amendments to a previously approved planning application.

Resolved: To support the application.

- 20/01404/FUL, 11 Upper Mount Pleasant, Freshford BA2 7UG: First floor extension and dormer.

There was concern about the impact the dormer window on the aesthetic of the building and the lack of sufficient justification for this addition to ensure it

complied with the Neighbourhood Plan Planning and Development Policy (c) Design. A Construction Management Plan was requested because of concerns raised over access during the building works.

Resolved: To comment, as set out above.

- 21/01305/FUL The Surgery, Dark Lane, BA2 7TT: Change of use from doctors surgery to a dwelling.

Although B&NES Highways had not raised any issues about the proposed change of use, councillors were concerned about possible parking issues if the property became a dwelling. The property did not have dedicated parking and there was limited on road parking at this point. It was noted that when the building was used as a Surgery there would also have been parking needs. It was suggested that the building could be divided to provide affordable flats to address the shortage of such properties in the village as identified in the Village Plan. It was noted that this might have a bigger impact on parking issues.

There were no comments from residents on the B&NES planning portal and this considered surprising, given previous interest from residents in this property. It was agreed to send out a Parish communications, bringing this application to the attention of residents and setting out the Parish Council's response.

Resolved: To comment, as set out above.

213. **Tree Applications**

None.

214. **Decision Notifications**

- 20/04186/20/04079/FUL Vine Cottage, High Street, Freshford: Demolition of existing stone wall. Replacement with new stone wall to improve vehicular access and parking provision. Permitted.

215. **Chairman's Report**

215.1 Land behind The Glebe

B&NES would consider a request to outsource the maintenance of the land behind the Glebe to the Parish Council at zero cost at the next Management Committee; there was currently no date for this meeting.

215.2 Website Update

No issues had been raised by councillors with the redeveloped website going live. It was therefore intended that the new site would go live this week. A Parish Council communications had advised residents of the upcoming changes to the website.

215.3 Renewable Energy

FLISCA would consider the Parish Council's application for funding at a meeting on 26 April. Limpley Stoke Parish Council had expressed informal interest in joining the scoping project for community renewable energy sites, to be undertaken by Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE). BWCE had been asked to provide a quote for extending the scoping project to include Limpley Stoke.

215.4 Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging

A survey by BWCE and Electric Blue had indicated support within the village for community EV charging points. A meeting was being arranged with Cllrs Pascoe and Maddicott, Phillip Haile and BWCE to consider the potential for EV charging points at the Freshford Village Memorial Hall.

215.5 Village Fete

The Village Fete would be held on 26 June 2021 and councillors were asked to bring forward ideas for the Parish Council stall.

All cllrs

215.6 River Avon Bioregion Groups Proposals

Councillors supported engagement with the River Avon Bioregion Group. It was felt that a talk from the Group on the details of the project would be useful.

215.7 Station Garden

Station volunteers had received safety training which should help enable the application for funding from Severnside Community Rail to be processed.

215.8 The Tynning

With the planting of trees and laying of log barriers to prevent parking along the length of The Tynning, it was suggested that there needed to be a sign to deter parking in the passing place. Councillors agreed that a sign stating 'No parking, passing place only' should be designed and installed. Cllr Pascoe to look into an appropriate sign.

Cllr
Pascoe

It was suggested that with the planting of trees and laying of log barriers, consideration should be given to whether a second passing place was required, given the distance of reversing that might otherwise be required when two vehicles met. It was agreed that Cllrs Pascoe and Hawker would look into the potential need for a second passing place. The need to make a decision on this before tree planting went ahead was noted.

Cllrs
Hawker &
Pascoe

216. Finance and Personnel

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

- £416.73 Selina Jobson for administration
- £300 James Lock for grass cutting
- £247.25 SSE street light repair
- £35 ALCA training
- £700 FVMH Donation and hire of hall
- £19.99 Selina Jobson for Bitdefender computer security
- £1016.96 SSE for replacement LED bulbs in lamps Nos. 4 and 25

216.2 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation & note the following payments:

- £300 Ian Croker for street cleaning (SO)
- £140.90 SSE street lighting electricity supply (DD)
- £135.36 Microsoft for renewal of Microsoft Office (DD)

217. Meetings

217.1 Date of May Meeting

Temporary legislation permitting Parish Council meetings to be held virtually would end on the 6 May 2021. Given the difficulties of holding a physical meeting in line with Covid restrictions it was agreed that the May Parish Council meeting, to include the Annual General Meeting, would be held on Wednesday 5 May.

217.2 Annual Parish Meeting

In light of the requirement to hold an Annual Parish Meeting before the 1 June and the difficulties of holding a physical meeting in line with Covid restrictions before that date, it was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting be held virtually on Wednesday 28 April. The meeting would be run as a Question and Answer session. It might be desirable to hold a physical meeting with residents later in the year, when permitted.

218. Website

Considered under Chairman's Report – see Minute 215.2.

219. **Natural Environment: Friends of Freshford Proposals**

Councillors considered proposals from the Friends of Freshford for the War Memorial, Cemetery and for grass maintenance of The Tynning.

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

War Memorial

- A proposal for bulbs to be planted under the hedge line, subject to agreement from the British Legion, was considered. As the Parish Council was responsible for the War Memorial it was agreed that contact with the British Legion should be made directly by the Parish Council.

Resolved: to approve the proposal to plant bulbs under the hedge line at the War Memorial, subject to support from the British Legion.

Cemetery

- Proposals were set out to remove ash saplings from graves, mow wide paths amongst longer grass in the main part of the cemetery and to plant three small trees and a hedgerow in the 'triangle' of land at the top of the cemetery.
- It was suggested that the operation and maintenance of the cemetery needed to be reviewed and clarified ahead of any proposed changes being made. The Clerk was asked to consider when a review of the operation and maintenance could be undertaken.
- The review of the cemetery was needed before consideration could be given to planting any additional trees or hedgerow in the 'triangle' at the top of the cemetery.
- Clarification of the exact layout of the paths was requested, noting the importance of access to graves.
- The potential benefits of the proposal on insect life and biodiversity was highlighted.
- If any problems arose with the long grass proposal it would be straightforward to mow the long grass and return to the current maintenance regime.
- Consideration would need to be given to the impact of this proposal on the current contract for grass maintenance in the cemetery.
- Clarification would be sort on the current arrangements for removing brambles and saplings from graves.

Clerk

Resolved: to approve the proposal to cut wide mown paths amongst longer grass in the cemetery. Cllrs Pascoe and Walker would meet at the cemetery to identify the exact layout of the mown paths; the grass contractor would be asked if he could attend.

Cllrs
Pascoe &
Walker

Grass cutting on The Tynning

- It was proposed that the existing pattern of wide, shortly mown paths and flat areas would continue, leaving longer grass on the slopes to grow and flower in summer. This grass would be mowed twice a year with grass cuttings removed.
- A quote from the company who currently cut the main grass on The Tynning showed that removing grass cuttings would increase the costs of each cut.
- As the Parish Council was responsible for The Tynning it was agreed that the Parish Council should obtain three quotes for the grass cutting proposals. Cllrs Hawker and Pascoe agreed to look into obtaining two more quotes.

Cllrs
Hawker &
Pascoe

Resolved: to approve the cutting of wide, shortly mown paths and the twice yearly cutting and removal of longer grass on the slopes.

220. **Parish Council Assets**

A quote had been received of £1000 plus materials to repair the four noticeboards and a bench. Councillors and the Clerk had not been able to identify anyone else to quote for this work. The quote was felt to be appropriate for the work required and the noticeboard at the old Surgery was in need of urgent repair.

It was agreed that the noticeboard on the old Surgery would continue to have a lockable side and an unlocked side for residents to use. Other noticeboards would include locks. It was suggested that a yearly maintenance regime should be established for the noticeboards.

Resolved: to approve the quote for repairs to the noticeboard and bench.

221. **Highways and Transport: Village Hub Bus Stop**

Councillors were asked to consider the next steps regarding proposals for a Village Hub bus stop, in light of clarifications to the plan and feedback from B&NES' Public Transport Officer and Chief Highways Engineer.

It was clarified that there would not be a kerb alongside the retained grass area and that, in light of advice from the Chief Highways Engineer, the surface of the hardstanding area would be tarmac.

A suggestion for wildflower planting in the retained grass area had been received and would be considered as part of the proposals; the timing of planting and possible disruption caused by works would need to be taken into account.

Resolved: to bring a revised plan and details of quotes received to the next meeting.

Cllrs
Carpenter
& Walker

222. **Freshford Village Memorial Hall (FVMH) Update**

Councillors received an update on FVMH noting that:

- The Referendum on the Community Right to Build Order about the planned redevelopment of FVMH would take place on 6 May 2021.
- That the FVMH Committee was currently tendering for quotes to reclad and reglaze the main hall.
- A new Chair, David Wright, had been appointed at the May AGM.
- The Village Fete would take place on 26 June 2021.

223. **Exchange of Information**

The death of Mr Paddy Fitzgerald was reported and in particular his work as Chairman of the Parish Plan was remembered.

224. **Deferral of Item**

There was not time to consider the following item which would be deferred to the next meeting:

- Natural Environment: To consider Terms of Reference for a Working Group to oversee actions on The Tying.

225. **Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 5 May 2021, 7.00pm, to include the Annual General Meeting.

Meeting ended 9.30pm