

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council 19 July 2021 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall

Parish Councillors Present: Julian Carpenter (Acting Chairman), Annabel Batchelor-Wylam, Tania Pascoe, Nick Stevens, Ben Walters

Apologies: John Adler, Jean Hawker, Tom Maddicott

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: None

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

None.

37. **Minutes of Meeting**

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021 as a true record.

38. **Review of Actions**

Councillors noted an update on actions arising from previous meetings. A report on proposals for Dark Lane/Church Hill put forward by the B&NES Highways Engineer would be brought to a future meeting.

Cllr
Carpenter /
Stevens

39. **Open Forum**

No members of the public were present.

40. **Resignation of a councillor**

Councillors noted the resignation of Martin Walker from the Parish Council. His work over his six years as councillor was noted, particularly his work on the Parish Council's assets, street lighting and on plans to move the bus stop. The Acting Chairman to write to Martin Walker to express the thanks of the Parish Council for his work.

Cllr
Carpenter

A notice of vacancy had been published and would expire on 22 July 2021. If no election was called, councillors agreed that the post would be advertised immediately with the aim of co-opting a new councillor at the September meeting.

41. **Planning Applications**

- 21/01404/FUL 11 Upper Mount Pleasant, BA2 7UG: Erection of first floor extension.
Resolved: To comment only. That the revised scheme was much improved.
- 21/02750/FUL The Cottage, Pipehouse Lane, BA2 7UH: Creation of additional off road car parking space and waste bin store area including moving steps.
Resolved: To comment only. That the applicant already had the benefit of permission for the erection of a garage on another part of the property and therefore the need for additional car parking spaces was questioned.
- 21/02843/FUL Parcel 2080, Pipehouse, Freshford: Conversion of a redundant existing agricultural stone byre into an off-grid 2-bedroom holiday home.
Resolved: To comment only. Noting that there were very few uninhabited stone byres left in the area, this barn was considered to form part of an iconic view. Whilst an investigation had not found evidence of the presence of Barn Owls and Bats, ecological commitments in the area mean that it was likely to become a more attractive nesting area for both species and therefore the barn might be

used by Owls or Bats in the future. If planning permission was given, then councillors requested that this would be conditional on the provision of alternative nesting sites through the installation of nesting boxes in other appropriate locations on the property.

The building should be designed to ensure light pollution is kept to a minimum to reduce the impact of the building on local wildlife.

The proposal is well designed from a sustainability point of view; using renewables to remain off grid, and materials such as timber to minimise the embodied energy in its construction.

It was felt that the sensitive conversion of farm and industrial buildings could be successful in retaining something that has outlived its original purpose, making it relevant, restored and functional once again.

- 21/02824/AR Homewood Park Hotel, Homewood, Hinton Charterhouse, BA2 7TB: Display of 4 no. post-mounted externally illuminated direction signs, 2 no. post mounted externally illuminated entrance signs, 2 no. wall-mounted non-illuminated direction signs and 6no close boarded fence mounted non-illuminated photographic signs.

Resolved: To object on the following grounds - that the proposed signs would have a negative impact on: public safety; the character of the surrounding area; surrounding wildlife; and Dark Skies.

Substantial concerns were raised over safety for road users. The junction of Abbey Lane with the A36 was a recognised accident spot. The speed limit was 60mph. There was concern that a drivers attention could be drawn to the advertising boards when attention should be focused on the approaching junction. Signs advising motorists to do a 'U turn' or stating that 'You have just missed us' could encourage drivers to take immediate action to turn round at risk to themselves and others.

Concerns were raised over the illumination of the signs, as this went against Dark Skies policies, and the need to limit the spread of artificial light due to its negative impact on surrounding wildlife.

The Hotel's wish to publicise their business was understood, but it was felt that fewer, more discrete and non-illuminated boards would be more appropriate in this setting.

42. **Tree Applications**

21/03082/TCA The Hermitage, Sharpstone, BA2 7UA: Fell ash tree.

Resolved: To support, with a request for two trees to be planted in replacement.

43. **Decision Notifications**

21/01305/FUL The Surgery, Dark Lane, BA2 7TT: Change of use from doctors surgery to a dwelling (Use Class C3). *Permitted.*

44. **Chairman's Report**

Noted.

45. **Finance**

Payments and Bank Reconciliation

45.1 **Resolved:** to approve the following payments -

- £416.93 Selina Jobson for administration
- £300 James Lock for grass cutting
- £30 James Lock for passing place sign installation
- £630 B&NES for traffic counts

- £1774.82 Rupert Kirby for noticeboard & bench repairs
- £41.50 Winsley Parish Council as contribution to Clerk's SLCC membership

45.2 **Resolved:** to approve the following payments in August:

- £448.13 Selina Jobson for administration
- £300 James Lock for grass cutting

45.3 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation, noting the following payments:

- £300 Ian Croker for street cleaning – June (SO)
- £300 Ian Croker for street cleaning – July (SO)
- £76.74 SSE for electricity supply – June (DD)
- £113.96 SSE for electricity supply – July (DD)

46. Highways and Transport

46.1 Summary of Traffic Monitoring on Rosemary Lane

Councillors received a report on data collected during the Rosemary Lane traffic monitoring undertaken in June 2021. Monitoring had been undertaken to provide data on traffic flows before the Freshford Mill premises were fully occupied.

The majority of traffic movements appeared to be delivery vans and residents, with little evidence of external through traffic in Rosemary Lane.

The results of a recently undertaken recount of traffic at Site 4, Dunkirk Mill, would be included in an updated report.

The data demonstrated low traffic volumes in Rosemary Lane. Even with low traffic volumes traffic issues were already reported and it was suggested that a small increase in traffic flows could cause significant problems. The Parish Council now held baseline data on traffic volumes and could monitor the impact of increasing occupancy of the Freshford Mill development if necessary.

Cllr Carpenter reported that he was in liaison with Navtech to see if Rosemary Lane and Dark Lane/Church Lane could be removed from their SatNav systems.

It was suggested that having a central delivery point for residents' parcels could help to reduce the number of delivery vans driving through Freshford. The possibility of locating such a central point at the football club was raised. Examples of other villages that had set up a central delivery point would be useful. It was agreed that Cllr Walters would speak to the football club about the possibility of using this site for a central delivery point and that Cllr Pascoe would research examples of any villages who had set up similar delivery hubs.

Cllr
Walters

Cllr Pascoe

46.2 Quote for Village Bus Stop

Ten companies from the BANES approved list had been asked to quote for works to create a bus stop area outside the Galleries. Only two companies had provided quotes.

Resolved: To accept the quote from Green Trees Surfacing Ltd and that the works would be funded by the Parish Council.

The existing bench needed replacing and a new bench would be purchased by the Parish Council.

Cllr Carpenter would contact bus company to confirm arrangements for moving the bus stop sign and to clarify where the bus would stop in each direction.

Cllr
Carpenter

It was suggested that an enclosed bin, rather than an open bin, would be preferable in this location. The bin was provided by B&NES and they would be contacted about this.

Clerk

46.3 Signage for Passing Place

A new passing place sign had been installed on the lane on The Tynning. Thanks were recorded to a resident who had donated the sign. The Chair would write a letter of thanks.

Chair

47. Parish Council Assets

47.1 Renewal of electricity supply for street lamps

One quote had been secured from SSE. Utility Aid, a not-for-profit energy broker, had also been asked to look at obtaining quotes and had only been able to obtain one quote, also from SSE. The quote obtained directly from SSE was slightly less than that obtained by Utility Aid.

Resolved: To approve a two-year, green energy contract to supply un-metered electricity from SSE, starting from 1 August 2021.

47.2 Noticeboards and Bench

One bench and all noticeboards had been repaired. Keyholders were confirmed and it was noted that the names of keyholders should be displayed on the noticeboards.

It was agreed that there would be an item on the Parish Council's communication strategy at the September meeting.

48. Natural Environment

Councillors received an update report from the Friends of Freshford on The Tynning proposals. Some trees had been ordered and dates for planting in the autumn were provided.

The Parish Council would confirm a planting plan for the 'bollard' trees along the lane on The Tynning. This needed to take into account the location of a water pipe and electricity cable which had been confirmed through a survey commissioned by the Parish Council. It was suggested that the hand planting of trees was unlikely to disturb either the cable or the pipe.

49. The Cemetery

Councillors noted a report on mowing arrangements at Freshford Cemetery. A number of actions were proposed, some of which were in response to comments made and issues raised by residents. Strimming of grass that had been left to grow long around graves had already taken place in some areas to enable better access to tended graves and memorials. The remaining areas of long grass would be strimmed in August.

50. Upcoming External Meetings

The first meeting of a newly established Bathavon Forum, replacing the previous Cam Valley Forum, would take place on 12 August 2021.

51. Correspondence

The Clerk reported on the following correspondence received:

- Further details about the moving of the bus stop to outside the Galleries had been requested;
- Comments on the long grass affecting accessibility to graves in the Cemetery;
- Concerns raised over the use of pesticides by B&NES to kill weeds on verges etc.;
- A report of Japanese Knotweed in a residential garden and the measures needed to deal with this invasive weed.

52. Date of next meeting

Monday 13th September, 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall

Meeting ended 9.10pm