

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council

10 July 2023, 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall

Parish Councillors Present: John Adler (Chairman), Elli Bate, Julian Carpenter, Jessie Forbes, John Putt, Richard Tibbles

Apologies: None

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk), Ward Councillor Fiona Gourley, two representatives from Truespeed

Members of the Public: One

Presentation by Truespeed

Truespeed, a Bath-based broadband company, gave a presentation about their forthcoming project to install full-fibre broadband across parts of Freshford. It was noted that:

- the project was due to start in October and finish in November 2023.
- the project did not cover all of Freshford as it did not follow parish boundaries. Later projects to cover outstanding areas were likely;
- existing infrastructure and poles would be used wherever possible and a survey of the current infrastructure in Freshford had been undertaken;
- Truespeed would need to install two additional poles and lay cables in some parts of the footway;
- Truespeed were liaising with B&NES to obtain appropriate streetwork permits and to ensure that any highway works did not clash with any other local roadworks;
- residents would receive individual leaflets about Truespeed works in their area and notices would also be posted;
- the Parish Council had contact details for Truespeed for any queries or issues. If residents had any queries or issues they should use the contact details on the Truespeed website;
- Truespeed offer free connection to community hubs and might be able to offer support or sponsorship of local clubs, such as sports teams.

Following the presentation, the meeting started at 7.25pm.

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

Cllr Adler declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 23/02381/VAR Stoke Hill Mine.

39. **Minutes of Meeting**

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2023 as a true record.

40. **Review of Actions**

A road closure at Park Corner had been postponed due to issues with roadworks already taking place on diversionary routes. Roadworks on Freshford Lane were taking place from 18 July, followed by the postponed roadworks now starting at Park Corner on 24 July. Cllr Carpenter had contacted B&NES about the need for adequate signage for diversionary routes to mitigate risks to people and property.

Cllr Gourley asked for details of the roadworks as some residents had raised concerns.

41. **Co-option of Councillors**

The vacant positions had been advertised and flyers had been produced for distribution by councillors. Consideration could be given to having flyers delivered to every house in the village.

The need for support with publicity to recruit more councillors had been raised at the Bathavon Forum, as this issue was faced by many local parish councils.

42. **Open Forum**

No one requested to speak.

43. **Planning Applications**

23/02167/FUL & 23/02168/LBA Freshford Hall, Staples Hill, BA2 7WJ: Addition of a replacement bespoke, timber and double-glazed conservatory.

Resolved: No objection.

23/02326/FUL Freshford Hall, Staples Hill, BA2 7WJ: Installation of ground mounted photovoltaic modules (Solar Panels), together with back up batteries, to generate carbon free electricity for the dwelling.

The ground mounted solar panels were located at the bottom of a field and should be mainly hidden from view. They would provide renewable energy.

Resolved: Supported as this was considered in line with the Parish Council's declaration of a climate emergency.

23/02381/VAR Stoke Hill Mine, Midford Lane, Limpley Stoke, BA2 7GP: Variation of condition 24 of application 04/03910/MINW (Extend the planning boundary and the end date of the existing permission ref:- 96/02045/FUL for mining).

The application was to permit the underground dressing of some of the waste stone, which was prohibited under a previous planning condition. The application stated that proposed underground works would be 'entirely non-visible and inaudible at surface level'.

Resolved: No objection, on the grounds that works would be non-visible and inaudible at surface level. *[Cllr Adler did not vote on this application].*

44. **Tree Applications**

None.

45. **Planning Decisions**

23/01651/FUL Haywards Water Tower, Pipehouse: Upgrade to existing Rooftop installation. Removal and replacement of existing 3 antennas with 3 antennas. Installation of 1 GPS module. Equipment Cabin to be refreshed internally and associated ancillary works. *Permitted.*

23/03539/FUL Glen Cottage, Rosemary Lane: Replacement single storey side extension with PV panels to the roof. First storey & side extension to the existing rear room. Internal reconfiguration, recladding of existing dormers and replacement of existing windows with double glazed units. *Permitted*

46. **Highways and Transport**

46.1 Number 94 bus service

A residents' Freedom of Information Act request had shown that the total funding required for the 94 bus service contract for 2023-24 was £114,594. Wiltshire Council would fund 50% of this cost, which currently left £57,297 uncovered.

Wiltshire Council had written to the West of England Combined Authority about the future of the 94 bus service and discussions were continuing, but there was no clear decision at the moment. The 94 bus service was fully funded until the end of August 2023.

Cllr Gourley reported that a cross-party letter was being sent to WECA and if no decision was forthcoming a public campaign would be launched.

46.2 Proposals for double yellow lines

Updated parking restriction proposals from B&NES had only just been received. It was agreed that councillors would meet to consider the proposals in more detail and to consider the process for public consultation and putting final proposals to B&NES.

46.3 Radar Speed Signs

Data on vehicle speeds and volumes recorded by the radar speed sign had been circulated.

46.4 Other highways matter

National Highways would meet local parish council representatives on 14 July to discuss crossing proposals arising from the Severance Study. Cllr Adler would attend from Freshford Parish Council.

47. **Street Lighting**

47.1 Trial to turn off some street lamps

Comparable quotes from Volker and Enervo to trial switching off some street lamps in Freshford were still awaited. It was hoped that information would be available at the September meeting.

47.2 Electricity Supply Contract

Quotes from SSE for 1-year, 2-year and 3-year contracts for the Parish Council's unmetered electricity supply had been received. Comparable quotes from energy broker Utility Aid were due within the week.

Resolved: to approve the lowest cost 3-year contract, once quotes had been received from Utility Aid.

48. **Natural Environment**

Volunteers had undertaken some grounds maintenance in the Cemetery as agreed, and had also liaised with the contractor about the Cemetery grass cutting. The trial of a different approach to maintenance in the Cemetery would continue until October.

An interment of ashes was taking place at the Cemetery on 11 July 2023.

Councillors reported a significant improvement in a number of footpaths across Freshford, which had been cut back and maintained.

49. **Finance**

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

- £500.72 Selina Jobson for administration
- £17.50 Selina Jobson reimbursement for leaflet printing

49.2 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation, noting the following payments and receipts –

- £355 James Lock for grass maintenance (Standing Order)
- £113.96 SSE for electricity supply (Direct Debit)
- £300 In My Garden (Payment)

49.3 The bank mandate would be updated and Cllr Carpenter agreed to be the second signatory. The Clerk would contact the bank about the changes required.

Clerk

50. **Clerk's Report**

Cllrs Forbes and Putt would plan the next Freshford Newsletter for publication in the autumn. Residents and local groups would be asked for articles.

51. **External Meeting**

Notes from the Bathavon Forum meeting held on 5 July 2023 had been circulated.

The next Parish Liaison meeting would take place on 19 July 2023.

52. **Exchange of Information**

- With no meeting scheduled in August, any planning applications received would be circulated to councillors for comment. Should councillors wish to raise concerns or object to an application where the consultation deadline was before the date of the September meeting, then an additional meeting would be called.
- There had been no response from Limpley Stoke Parish Council on whether they supported the approach proposed by Bath and West Community Energy to the community renewable energy project.
- Councillor roles and responsibilities would be considered at a meeting in the autumn, hopefully once councillor vacancies had been filled.
- Cllr Adler was meeting with Cllr Forbes to go through email and web communications.

53. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 11 September, 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall.

Meeting ended 8.45pm.