

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Freshford Parish Council Meeting 9 September 2024, 7.00pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall

Parish Councillors Present: Elli Bate (Chair for items 50-56), John Adler, (Chair for items 57 onwards), Rob Kilgour, John Putt

Apologies: Julian Carpenter, Jennifer Clamp

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: Four

50. **Chair**

As the Chair was delayed, it was agreed that Cllr Bate would start as Chair of the meeting.

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

None.

52. **Minutes of Meeting**

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2024 as a true record.

53. **Matters Arising**

None.

54. **Planning Applications**

24/03284/FUL Oleander, Ashes Lane, BA2 7UW: Single storey rear extension, modifications to rear raised patio, replacement front dormer, new side/rear dormer, narrowing of driveway and new heat pump.

Resolved: No comment.

55. **Tree Applications**

24/03050/TPO Parcel 1350, Staples Hill: T1-T4 dismantle to ground due to Ash dieback; G1 crown lift to 6m all trees alongside road too aid clearance by vehicles

Resolved: Requested that every tree that is felled is replaced with the planting of two native trees.

56. **Communications**

The next edition of the Newsletter was due out in October and the deadline for articles was 15 September 2024.

57. **Chair**

Cllr Adler arrived and took over the role of Chair of the meeting from Cllr Bate.

58. **Open Forum**

A resident made the following points:

- During the closure of the A36 in 2008, National Highways had installed barriers at points into Freshford village to prevent drivers diverting through the village. He had asked National Highways to consider a similar approach during the current closure, but they said they did not have powers to stop anyone travelling on roads outside of the closure. The Chair reported that the Parish Council, and others, had also made this request to National Highways.
- The role of the Marshal at the road closure point was unclear as they did not prevent large vehicles entering the village. They had helped with turning round some larger vehicles when assistance was needed.
- There were two 30mph sections of Church Lane and the Parish Council was asked to request a temporary 20mph speed limit here.

- He had responded to the B&NES Traffic Regulation Order consultation supporting short sections of parking restrictions in Freshford.

59. **Grant request from Freshford Village Memorial Hall Committee**

Councillors considered a request from the Freshford Village Memorial Hall (FVMH) Committee for a grant towards the resurfacing of the Village Hall / Galleries car park. Three quotes had been received and the FVMH Committee had chosen a contractor who could undertake the works for £22,480. The contractor had been used to undertake previous works on the car park.

Earlier in the year, volunteers had helped to unblock the main drain in the car park. The FVMH Committee were confident that this had solved issues with water runoff in the car park so that replacement drainage was no longer needed. This had significantly reduced the scale and costs of the project.

It was noted that installing new drainage and resurfacing the car park was part of the original Community Right to Build Order.

Resolved: to award a grant of £7,496 to Freshford Village Memorial Hall Committee for the resurfacing of the car park. As a project to improve infrastructure, councillors agreed that all Community Infrastructure Levy funds held by the Parish Council (£7205.97) would be used towards this. As with any grant monies awarded, the grant must be returned in full if, for any reason, the project is not completed.

60. **Co-option of Councillors**

No applications had been received. Vacancies would continue to be publicised.

61. **Highways and Transport**

61.1 A36 Road Closure

Councillors noted an update on traffic issues arising from the A36 closure. The Parish Council had reported problems and attended meetings with National Highways, as had Ward Councillors and local MPs. The Parish Council would keep monitoring the situation and communicating to residents when appropriate. Cllr Carpenter was thanked for his work liaising with National Highways and others.

Freshford Primary School was working directly with B&NES and National Highways on initiatives to ensure safe access to the School during the A36 closure. To assist the School, proposals for some temporary 10mph speed limits and a closure of Pipehouse Lane had been drawn up by B&NES. As long as the School felt that these measures were appropriate and helpful, the Parish Council supported these measures.

61.2 Ralph Allen School and Centurion Bus

The Ralph Allen School bus, provided by Centurion, continued to drop students by the A36 and not in Freshford village due to problems with negotiating parked vehicles on the narrow village roads. It had been confirmed that students could alight on either side of the A36 and did not have to cross the A36.

61.3 Traffic Regulation Order – Staples Hill and Park Corner

B&NES had issued a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) proposing parking restrictions on sections of Staples Hill and at Park Corner. Councillors were disappointed that this had been proposed by B&NES without recent communication with the Parish Council. The Parish Council had undertaken a community consultation on possible parking restrictions in November 2023. This had shown split views within the community and the Parish Council had agreed not to proceed with parking restriction proposals at that point.

Resolved:

- i) Park Corner – to object to this specific parking restriction proposal as councillors did not support the installation of any parking restrictions at Park Corner.
- ii) Staples Hill – to object to the parking restrictions as presented in this consultation, although councillors accepted that there might be a case for a reduced parking restrictions scheme.

62. **Natural Environment**

Cllr Bate reported that:

- plans were progressing with a River Festival that would be taking place in 2025, involving a number of local parish councils and organisations.
- she had spoken to a resident who was in favour of removing the matting on The Tynning. Volunteers would investigate whether it was possible to remove the matting by hand and the impact this might have on the ground, by removing a small part of the matting. The issue would be reviewed in light of this.
- the long grass verges running alongside The Tynning were scheduled to be cut every few years and she would check when this was next due.

Cllr Bate

63. **Renewable Energy Project**

Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE) were planning to hold drop-in open days about the proposed solar energy scheme to engage with local residents.

64. **Finance**

64.1 The external audit had been concluded; no issues of note had been raised. The conclusion of audit notice had been placed on the website.

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

- £513.65 Selina Jobson for administration
- £148.32 John Adler reimbursement for Microsoft Office Business subscription.
- £600.00 Meadow in My Garden for station gardening

64.3 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation, noting the following payments and receipts since the last meeting: –

- £495.00 Alan Duck for grass cutting (Payment)
- £252 BDO for external audit (Payment)
- £770 Memorial Hall for hall hire & donation (Payment)
- £415.80 HL Mills for long grass cutting (Payment)
- £164.04 SSE electricity supply (Direct Debit)
- £34.31 Water2Business for water rates (Direct Debit)
- £349.63 Enerveo for street light repairs (Payment)
- £513.45 Administration
- £305.55 James Lock for grass cutting (Standing Order)
- £333.00 Matt Snelgrove Village Steward (Standing Order)

64.4 An interview had been arranged with an applicant for the role of Parish Clerk.

65. **Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported that repairs to several street lights had been undertaken and asked for councillors to report any issues with street lights.

A resident had reported problems with the new LED light outside their house shining into rooms in their house. The Clerk had discussed this with Enerveo; the light shields fitted were supposed to prevent this. Enerveo had looked into this issue further with the light shield supplier. The proposed solution was to install a baffle to the back of the light.

Resolved: to pay £206.07 for the purchase & installation of a baffle for street light 5, The Hill.

66. **External Meetings**

Cllr Putt would attend the FLISCA AGM on 16 October 2024.

67. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 14 October, 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall.

Meeting ended 8.50pm.