

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Freshford Parish Council Meeting 8 July 2024, 7.00pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall

Parish Councillors Present: Julian Carpenter (Chair), Elli Bate, Jennifer Clamp, Rob Kilgour, John Putt

Apologies: John Adler

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: Four

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

None.

36. **Minutes of Meeting**

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2024 as a true record.

37. **Matters Arising**

None.

38. **Open Forum**

A resident asked the following questions in relation to the community energy project:

- whether any councillors had a vested interest in the project or were shareholders in Bath and West Community Energy.
- if they could be provided with the details of the original community survey about a local energy project.
- if the Parish Council could clarify what it understands the meaning of local community to be.

A response to the questions would be emailed to the resident by the end of the week.

A resident spoke about the following matters:

In relation to the proposed closure of the A36, they reported that the road had been shut previously in 2003 and 2008 and that measures taken during the 2008 closure had reduced the amount of traffic diverting through Freshford. He asked that adequate measures be put in place to minimise traffic diverting through Freshford.

That he had used a speed gun to monitor driver speeds on Freshford Lane and New Road. Speeds had averaged around 30mph on both roads, despite the 20mph limits. He asked if the local Speedwatch group was still operational. He asked for practical measures to be undertaken to reduce speeding.

Dark Lane had been closed for several months for repairs to a stone wall. He felt that the closure had not caused any inconvenience to drivers and suggested that the road should be closed to traffic on a permanent basis, as drivers were currently directed by sat nav systems to use the narrow lane rather than the main road through Freshford.

That the recently installed LED street lights provided a better light, that was clearer for walkers as well as being less intrusive.

Councillors confirmed that further action on the street lights project was currently on hold until more councillors were recruited.

39. **Planning Applications**

24/02497/FUL Pear Tree Cottage, Park Corner, BA2 7UQ: Internal alterations, replace existing flat roof, new windows and doors and new cladding.

Resolved: No comment.

40. **Tree Applications**
24/02397/TPO Walnut House, Midford Lane, BA2 7GP: Walnut T1 - thin tree and remove two lower limbs to balance crown improving the shape of the tree.
Resolved: No comment.
41. **Co-option of Councillors**
 No applications had been received. The Parish Council would continue to publicise the vacancies.
42. **Highways and Transport**
 National Highways were closing the A36, between Limpley Stoke and Monkton Coombe, from 12 August 2024 for six months to stabilise the carriageway. National Highways were arranging a meeting with Councillor Carpenter and a Limpley Stoke Parish Councillor to discuss the closure. Confirmation would be sought of alternative routes and measures being put in place to divert drivers from using Freshford lanes, and of measures to mitigate the impact of any additional traffic through the village. It was suggested that traffic marshals should be positioned at key points to ensure that drivers, particularly drivers of larger vehicles, used the official diversionary route. It was also suggested that there should be liaison with sat nav companies to ensure that village lanes were not shown on sat navs as diversionary routes. Cllr Carpenter
43. **Natural Environment**
 Councillors received a summary of a meeting with two volunteers who were willing to help manage and undertake works to trees on land owned by the Parish Council. The volunteers helped out at a number of local woods and reserves. They had undertaken a visual inspection of the trees, taking into account a professional tree survey undertaken in 2022 and subsequent treeworks.
 Councillors appreciated the offer of help from the volunteers. It was agreed that a councillor would liaise with the volunteers to identify tasks to be undertaken before any works were undertaken, which was likely to be in the Autumn. Cllr Bate offered to liaise with Friends of Freshford who had planted trees on The Tynning a couple of years ago. Cllr Bate
 There were a couple of instances where broken off tree branches were overhanging paths. These had been reported on the B&NES Report It portal and the B&NES Footpath Officer would also be contacted. Cllr Bate
 A resident had raised concerns about the long grass on The Tynning and these would be responded to, noting that the long grass would be cut next month. Clerk
 HL Mills had provided a quote of £346 to cut the long grass on The Tynning in August.
Resolved: to approve the quote from HL Mills to cut the long grass on The Tynning.
44. **Renewable Energy Project**
 Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE) had repeated the community information event, this time in Hinton Charterhouse. BWCE would keep the parish councils involved with the project updated on progress.
45. **Matting on The Tynning**
 Cllr Bate would liaise with a resident who had expressed views against retaining the matting on The Tynning and would see if there were others with similar views. It was suggested that an update on the situation via a community email and a request for views and feedback might be suitable for gauging residents' views on this issue. Cllr Bate
46. **Finance**
 46.1 Councillors received a report on spending to date against the 2024/25 budget; there were no matters of note.
 46.2 **Resolved:** to approve the following payments -
- £513.65 Selina Jobson for administration

- £148.32 John Adler reimbursement for Microsoft Office Business subscription. Confirmation was requested of what the subscription covered before approval.

46.3 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation, noting the following payments, receipts and transfer of money between accounts since the last meeting: –

- £217.57 SSE electricity supply (Direct Debit)
- £305.55 James Lock for grass cutting (Standing Order)
- £333.00 Matt Snelgrove Village Steward (Standing Order)
- £18.00 Unity Trust for banking fees (Charges)
- £292.09 Bank interest (receipt)
- £2652.81 VAT reclaim (receipt)

46.4 The notice stating that the period for the Exercise of Public Rights would take place from 17 June to 26 July 2024 had been placed on the noticeboard and on the website.

47. **Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported that:

- she continued to liaise with Enerveo about street light repairs and an issue with glare from a new LED light on The Hill.
- SSE had been supplied with details of the new LED lamps and had been asked to revise the unmetered charges accordingly.
- the next edition of the Freshford Newsletter would be published in September and local groups would be contacted about articles. Articles of general interest from individuals were welcome.
- a resident had asked if the Parish Council would consider installing a piece of outdoor gym equipment in the park. The park was managed by the Freshford Village Memorial Hall and it was suggested that they approach FLISCA for funds.

48. **External Meetings**

A meeting with National Highways to discuss the A36 road closure was being arranged.

The next Parish Liaison Meeting would take place on 17 July 2024.

Cllr Bate had attended a meeting of local parishes and climate and nature organisations that was planning a river festival in Summer 2025. Each parish had been asked to organise three different events. The objective was to bring together groups across the community on a broad theme.

Cllr Bate was working with a group who were considering running an allotment or market garden in the village.

Cllr Kilgour had attended the Freshford Village Memorial Hall Committee meeting on 18 June 2024. The Committee was currently focused on improvements to the hall flooring and buying new chairs. The Committee had received quotes for car park resurfacing and were looking at costs, with the suggestion that costs would be divided between the Hall Committee, FLISCA and the Parish Council. In discussion it was noted that Councillors would need details of quotes and works before agreeing any contribution to the car park resurfacing project. An explanation of why the scope of the original works had been significantly reduced would be needed, along with a report from a hydrologist or engineer that the drainage problem with the car park had been resolved. Quotes from three companies would be required.

49. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 9 September, 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall.

Meeting ended 8.35pm.