

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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

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

Apologies: None

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: One

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

None.

87. **Minutes of Meeting**

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2024 as a true record.

88. **Matters Arising**

None.

89. **Open Forum**

A resident asked the following questions:

- Whether a noticeboard could be installed in Pipehouse, possibly in conjunction with Hinton Charterhouse Parish Council. Councillors would look into this and obtain quotes.
- When the temporary closure of Pipehouse Lane would be lifted. This was causing problems to residents from Pipehouse accessing the village and did not seem to be benefitting Ralph Allen students as intended. Councillors confirmed they were liaising with B&NES about this and a community email would be sent shortly asking for residents' views on re-opening Pipehouse Lane.

Cllr
Carpenter

Cllr
Carpenter

90. **Co-option of Councillors**

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

91. **Planning Applications**

24/04328/LBA Sharpstone Cottage, Sharpstone Lane, BA2 7UA: External alterations to include repair & refurbishment of existing roof including the replacement of existing asbestos tiles with natural slate.

Resolved: No comment.

92. **Tree Applications**

None.

93. **Planning**

93.1 Housing Needs Survey

Cllr Bate provided an update. Limley Stoke Parish Council had confirmed that they did not want to be involved with a housing needs survey. The funding situation was being looked into.

Resolved: to approve, in principle, to undertake a Housing Needs Survey, subject to confirmation of funding.

93.2 Proposal to Revise the Definition of Infill in the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP)

Limley Stoke Parish Council were concerned about the types of infill development being permitted in the village. They had asked a planning consultant to produce a revised

definition of infill for the joint NHP and draft wording had been circulated to Freshford parish councillors for review. It was not clear that the proposed wording would be approved as currently written.

Freshford Parish Councillors were keen to retain a shared NHP. The NHP was over five years old and councillors felt that it would be timely to undertake a wider review of the NHP, for example taking into account revisions to the B&NES Local Plan, as well as developments in the way climate and nature matters were being addressed. The results of a Housing Needs Survey would also feed into a NHP. B&NES Planning Officers had previously advised that changes to the NHP should wait until changes had been made to the Local Plan.

Councillors agreed to respond to Limpley Stoke Parish Council, emphasising councillors interest in maintaining a shared NHP, but stating that the Parish Council could not make a decision on the proposed amendment to the definition of infill at this point, because of a wish to review the NHP more widely.

93.3 Local Plan Viability Assessment & CIL Review

Councillors considered completing a survey circulated by B&NES about the Local Plan Viability Assessment and CIL Review, but decided that the questions were not relevant to parish councils.

94. **Highways and Transport**

94.1 A36 Road Closure

A community email would be sent out asking for opinions on the proposed lifting of a temporary road traffic order for one-way traffic on Pipehouse Lane. Responses would be sent to B&NES who would then consider whether to lift the temporary order.

Cllr
Carpenter

94.2 School Crossing Point

Cllr Clamp had talked to a resident who had asked for more warning signage, such as flashing lights, by Freshford Primary School and to the Headteacher of the School. She had met the B&NES' Highways Engineer on site. The main issues were with traffic coming down the hills on either side of the School and a lack of visibility of children or other vehicles. The Highways Engineer did not support the addition of more school warning lights, but he had committed to adding a school crossing sign to the 'slow' sign coming down the hill. Road markings and the raised road surface by the School junction had faded and could be renewed. It might be possible to extend the pavement on the corner by the Old School Surgery and to install bollards. Cutting back the hedge on the corner of the junction would help with visibility. Outline costs for undertaking all these measures were £10,000. Cllr Clamp would seek clarification from the Highways Engineer of options and costs, and would see if there were elements that would constitute road maintenance and should therefore come from the B&NES budget for highways.

Cllr Clamp

95. **Finance and Personnel**

95.1 Budget 2025/26

Budget figures had been circulated and were considered by Councillors. Councillors noted the total funds held in accounts and that a reasonable amount was being held as a general reserve.

Resolved: to approve the budget figures for 2025/26, subject to some minor amendments.

95.2 Precept 2025/26

The tax base figure was not yet available from B&NES so the setting of the precept was deferred to the January meeting.

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

- £721.99 Selina Jobson for administration
- £235.00 Alan Duck for grass mowing
- £770.00 Freshford Village Memorial Hall for meetings & donation

- £594.00 James Long (Masons) for cemetery inspection

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

- £7496.00 FVMH grant for car park repairs (Payment)
- £994.39 PWLB for Tynning repayment (Payment)
- £60.00 DM Payroll for payroll (Payment)
- £513.65 Selina Jobson for administration (Payment)
- £27.54 Zonkey for domain name renewal (Payment)
- £158.77 SSE electricity supply (Direct Debit)
- £305.55 James Lock for grass cutting (Standing Order)
- £333.00 Matt Snelgrove Village Steward (Standing Order)
- £5.40 & £6.00 Unity Trust (Service Charges)
- £380.00 Newsletter payments (receipts)
- £450.00 Cemetery fees (receipts)

95.5 Recruitment of a New Clerk

An application had been received for the post of Clerk and an interview was being arranged.

96. **Matting on the Tynning**

It appeared that the matting could be removed by hand by volunteers. Cllr Bate was looking into the recycling of matting. It was suggested that local stable owners should be contacted as they might be able to re-use the matting.

Cllr Bate

97. **Communications**

Councillors continued to look at moving to '.gov' email addresses. The website domain would need to be moved before a move to standard email addresses. The current website provider & other website companies would be contacted for further information.

Cllrs Adler & Clamp

98. **Cemetery**

James Long Masons had provided a cemetery memorials inspection report. Seven memorials required some work, although none were in need of immediate attention. Recommendations from the report would be followed up.

Clerk

The Clerk proposed joining the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management as they provided an advice service and general information about cemetery management.

Resolved: to join the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management, at an annual fee of £100.

99. **Natural Environment**

A resident had asked for treeworks to be undertaken to four trees on The Tynning adjacent to their land. He had provided a quote for the works. Advice and additional quotes for works needed to these four trees would be sought and brought to a future meeting.

Clerk

100. **Renewable Energy Project**

Bath and West Community Energy are planning to hold drop in sessions for residents to provide information and to answer questions relating to the proposed Homewood solar project:

6 February - Limpley Stoke; 8 February - Freshford; & 10 February - Hinton Charterhouse. These will be advertised to residents.

101. **External Meetings**

Cllr Bate had attended the online Bathavon Forum meeting on 25 November 2024.

102. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 13 January 2025, 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall.

Meeting ended 8.45pm.