

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Freshford Parish Council Meeting 21 October 2024, 7.00pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall

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

Apologies: John Adler, Rob Kilgour

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk), Unitary Councillor Fiona Gourley

Members of the Public: One

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

None.

69. **Minutes of Meeting**

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2024 as a true record.

70. **Matters Arising**

None.

71. **Open Forum**

A resident made the following points:

- A request that the Parish Council allocated funds for more LED streetlights in the next year's budget, as the new street LED lights cast a clearer light than the sodium lights.
- That he had been involved in discussions about school warning signage and flashing lights a number of years ago. Warning signs some distance ahead of the School road junction were considered to be more useful to drivers.

72. **Planning Applications**

None.

73. **Tree Applications**

24/03552/TCA The Old Rectory, Crowe Lane, BA2 7WB: T1 Quercus cerris - Section fell. A resident had submitted comments supporting the felling of the tree due to its poor state.

Resolved: That the felled tree was replaced with the planting of two native trees.

74. **Co-option of Councillors**

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

75. **Highways and Transport**

75.1 A36 Road Closure

National Highways had led a useful meeting with representatives from B&NES and local parishes, which Cllr Carpenter had attended. National Highways had undertaken additional mitigation measures and had responded to questions from the Parish Council relating to local traffic issues created by the closure. Problems with the Libra bus getting through Freshford appeared to be improving, although some issues with the morning school run had been reported.

Cllr Carpenter was thanked for his continuing work on these highways matters.

75.2 Traffic Regulation Orders – Staples Hill and Park Corner

In light of responses from the Parish Council and residents, B&NES had withdrawn the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders for Staples Hill and for Park Corner.

75.3 Request for Signage on the Junction by the School

Councillors considered a resident's request for additional school warning signage on the road junction outside the School to highlight pedestrians crossing at this point. School

warning signs were situated on the roads leading to the School. The School had asked parents not to park on the junction.

Cllr Clamp would liaise with the resident and the School and would look into possible options.

Cllr Clamp

Cllr Carpenter would contact B&NES Highways for advice on the possibility of installing warning signage at his junction.

Cllr
Carpenter

B&NES had launched a consultation on proposed walking and cycling routes in Bath. Although these routes were not in the Freshford area, residents with an interest in cycling and walking were encouraged to respond by 29 November 2024.

76. **Communications**

76.1 Autumn edition of the Freshford Newsletter

The Autumn edition of the Freshford Newsletter had been delivered to residents at the beginning of October and was available on the community website. The majority of the costs had been covered by advertising. The next edition was scheduled for Spring 2025. Cllr John Putt, the Clerk and Jessie Forbes were thanked for their work on the Newsletter.

76.2 Standard Councillor email addresses

Councillors considered a number of options for moving to standard email addresses. Government advice was to use '.gov' email addresses, although this was not mandatory. Costs and technical aspects of moving to standard email addresses and the implications this would have on the website would be looked into further.

Clerk

77. **Rural Affordable Housing**

Cllr Bate had attended a meeting on Rural Affordable Housing. The West of England Rural Network (WERN) were offering to undertake housing needs surveys for local parishes, with time-limited funding available. Councillors considered that undertaking a housing needs assessment would be a first step in pro-actively shaping any future development of Freshford.

Cllr Bate would find out more about what was involved, whether funding was still available and would contact Cllr McCabe for advice.

Cllr Bate

78. **Cemetery**

78.1 Cemetery Memorials Inspection

Councillors considered a quote for an inspection of cemetery memorials, noting that an inspection was last undertaken by James Long Masons and was now due. It was likely that the costs of any remedial works would have to be funded by the Parish Council.

Resolved: that James Long Masons undertake an inspection of the Cemetery memorials, at a cost of £495.00.

78.2 Cemetery Fence

Councillors considered a proposal from Friends of Freshford for a wooden fence alongside the top path in the Cemetery, to replace the old fence that was removed some time ago when it started to fall into disrepair. The Parish Council had not received complaints about a lack of fence. Councillors appreciated the putting together of a proposal for a new fence and the offer of volunteers to install the fence, but did not see a need to install a new fence at this current time. The proposal would be borne in mind in any future discussions about fencing and the Cemetery.

79. **Natural Environment**

Several volunteers had undertaken remedial tree works on The Tynning and would undertake more work in the Spring. The volunteers were thanked for their time and work.

80. **Tynning Matting**

Volunteers had trialled the hand removal of a small section, about 8m, of plastic matting on The Tynning. It had been removed successfully and the grass replaced. The matting had not been in alignment with the path in some places.

Cllr Bate would undertake some further investigation into the potential removal and recycling of the plastic matting and would put together a proposal. Any proposal would be shared with the community before a decision was made. Those who had previously raised concerns with the Parish Council would be contacted.

Cllr Bate

81. **Renewable Energy Project**

No update.

82. **Finance and Personnel**

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

- £513.65 Selina Jobson for administration
- £170.00 Alan Duck for grass mowing

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

- £120.00 Meadow in My Garden for station gardening (Payment)
- £235.00 Alan Duck for grass cutting (Payment)
- £541.75 Parish Magazines for Newsletter printing (Payment)
- £247.50 Enerveo for a shield for light No5 (Payment)
- £164.04 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 (Service Charge)
- £350.89 Unity Trust quarterly interest (receipt)
- £19,051.38 B&NES Precept, 2 of 2 (receipt)

82.3 The Parish Council continued to recruit for a new Clerk. The role had been advertised in the Freshford Newsletter and to neighbouring parishes, and advice had been sought from the Avon Local Councils Association.

Councillors considered a request to pay the Clerk five hours overtime for the time spent on recruiting a new Clerk.

Resolved: to pay the Clerk an additional five hours for time spent on recruitment activities to date.

83. **Clerk's Report**

Bulb planting was taking place across Freshford in a project led by Paul Jupp with support from Friends of Freshford and Nature Chain. Various community groups had helped plant bulbs in areas of The Tyning and Cemetery and other parts of the village.

Freshford Station volunteers had been presented with a Gold Award at the GWR Stations in Bloom competition and were congratulated on their success.

Condolences were expressed to the family and friends of Hugh Delap, a previous Chair of Freshford Parish Council, who had passed away at the end of September. He had been particularly involved in planning matters and instrumental in developing the Neighbourhood Plan. A card of condolence would be sent.

Cllr
Carpenter

84. **External Meetings**

The FLISCA AGM had taken place on 16 November 2024.

The Bathavon Forum was being re-established and the next meeting would take place online, on 25 November 2024.

Cllr Gourley encouraged councillors to attend Parish Liaison meetings.

[Note: the next meetings are on 19 March; 16 July; 15 October 2025].

85. **Date of Next Meeting**

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

Meeting ended 8.30pm.