

FREETHERNE WITH SAUL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting dated Wednesday 25th April 2012

Present: Councillors: Mr. C. Meredith, Mr. D. Skeats, Mr. J. Hewett, Mr. C. Robbins, Mr.T. Lever, Mrs. L. Griffiths, Mr. R. Findlater, District Councillor John Jones, Mel Glover (Parish Clerk), 8 members of the parish.

010412 Apologies for absence.

The police

020412 Election of chairman, vice chair and RFO

Councillor Meredith handed the meeting over to the current Vice Chair, Councillor Skeats, who asked for nominations for Chair. Councillor Hewett nominated Councillor Meredith, Seconded by Councillor Griffiths. Councillor Meredith elected chair and Vice Chair handed the meeting back to the Chairman.

Nominations were asked for Vice Chair, Councillor Griffiths nominated Councillor Skeats, seconded by Councillor Findlater. Clerk was nominated as RFO by Councillor Meredith and this was seconded by Councillor Skeats.

030412 Co-option of new councillors

After an interview process for four candidates Mr. Tim Lever and Mr. Chris Robbins were offered the post of Parish Councillor. Both accepted and were co-opted onto parish council.

040412 Approval of minutes from Parish Council Meeting dated 28th March

Approved

050412 Police report

Not available this month

060412 Councillors Declaration of Interests to Items on the Agenda.

None

070412 Matters arising from last month's minutes.

Councillor Skeats will e-mail a copy of the Emergency Plan to the clerk for forwarding to SDC and Councillors Robbins and Lever.

Councillor Skeats reported that he had not received any details for adding onto the parish website.

Councillors Meredith and Findlater have actioned the repairs to the playground. Community Payback have assessed the allotments. They will work from 9.30-3.00, approximately 8 people for two days, including a supervisor for a cost of £200 (the cost of the supervisor per day). The work will be undertaken later on in the year, October to November time. Clerk to advise allotment tenants in the rent renewal letter.

Clerk to contact tree officer at SDC for advice regarding the allotment trees.

Councillor Meredith reported that the annual parish litter pick had taken place on April 14th and that not much litter had been collected this year.

Photos of the rotting strut on the zip wire have been sent to Monster Play.

080412 Finance

All cheques were approved and signed.

Clerk to get a new signatory form from the bank.

M. Glover – clerks wages £223.20

M. Glover – reimbursement for present for Mr. Pocket £50.00

090412 District Councillors News

The Development Control Committee considered the DC response to the residual waste treatment facility.

The DC does not make the decision, that lies with County Council. DC are statutory consultees. The report contains 7 objections. After 2 hours of consultation all 7 objections were approved and two more were added.

1. The application should not be considered until after the Planning Inspector has issued his binding report following the conclusion of the Examination in Public of the Draft Waste Core Strategy.
2. The proposed development is detrimental to the character of the rural landscape by reason of its size, massing and materials. The proposal adversely affects the Severn Vale and the nearby Cotswold AONB both in terms of views from within but also views towards the Cotswold escarpment.
3. Further assessment is required to establish the forecast residual waste volumes in order to provide a compelling case (or not) to justify the need for the proposal. Based on the results further consideration should be given to reassessing other options and the timetable for delivery.
4. The proposal sits outside any plan for the utilisation of waste heat and is distinct from any front end processing facility. More efficient means of Advanced Thermal Treatment are available which provide for a lower environmental impact, can be part of a dispersed solution and are scalable.
5. Further information is required in order to categorically determine if noise levels will be acceptable.
6. Further clarification is required with regard to the modelling process, as is confirmation that the EA are satisfied with the model used for the human health determinant.
7. The proposed location fails to take into account future population growth patterns and therefore fails the proximity test.
8. The application must consider the economic factors on the local economy.
9. To request GCC to reply to the letters sent by Councillor Barbara Tait, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment and Barry Wyatt, Strategic Head of Development Services.

There is a council meeting Thursday 26th April when 7 motions will be considered including the culling of badgers for TB control, trees for jubilee celebrations, and discussing the civic fund and how it is spent. A long night is expected to discuss all the motions!

100412 Planning Applications

S.12/0600/Ful – Pike House, Saul

Removal of the existing aluminium framed conservatory. Erection of a garden room and the modification of internal layouts.

Councillor Skeats has looked at the application on line and could see no other problem with it other than the application seems to point out that the area is not on the flood objection.

Parish Council offered no objections to the application.

110412 School site update

Councillor Meredith has not yet written to the diocese or registered the site with land registry.

Ideally solicitors should be used regarding the land registry. Councillors decided to delay writing to the diocese or land registry until information from the barrister has been received.

120412 Playground

Councillor Meredith thanked Councillor Findlater for the health and safety reports on the playground. The springy thingy for toddlers has been installed as has two more bike stands. MHC has received a grant to purchase a playboat which will be installed over the next month or so.

130412 Village Design Statement

The Village design statement has received extensive comments from SDC. Councillor Skeats is working through the list and is hopeful to have an update for the next meeting.

140412 Jubilee Party

A meeting needs to take place in order to formulate timings for the party. Councillor Meredith reported that an enthusiast group has offered military equipment for the day.

Councillor Meredith stated that classic cars were also available.

150412 Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management

Severn Voice Group have been involved with the E.A. and managing the flood risk on the Severn Estuary.

Two Strategy Engagement Officers have been appointed to consult with Parish Councils. Councillor Meredith proposed that they are invited to the next meeting (7pm). Clerk to contact and arrange.

DC JJ reported that a local MP hosted a meeting between the E.A. and the A.I.V.

The E.A. Minister advised both parties to revise insurance policies and quotes.

Councillor Lever asked if the meeting would be an open meeting for all the parish. Parish will be invited, clerk to email Councillor Griffiths a poster advertising the meeting tonight.

160412 Fly Posting and Sellotape

Councillor Meredith reported that BT Open Reach have a new policy regarding advertising posters on telegraph poles. Drawing pins are no longer allowed to be used to attach posters to poles and any posters put up with drawing pins will be removed. Posters can be put up with sellotape.

170412 Fishing Lake

GUAA (Gloucestershire United Angling Association) are proposing to erect a fence alongside the footpath in Gardners Pool in order to protect their asset from the theft of fish.

There will be a meeting on Thursday at 6pm on the site to discuss contentious issues with the GUAA and affected residents. Parish Council will attend (Councillors Meredith and Robbins).

SDC conservation officer has been approached for advice by Councillor Meredith and the GUAA.

Councillor Skeats reported his concerns regarding parish rights of access. Clerk reported that it is very difficult to prove rights of access for land that has been walked for a relative length of time. Councillor Skeats reported his concerns regarding possible conservation action. Mark Hemmings (TPO at SDC) reported that GUAA had no knowledge of Gardners Pool being a conservation area.

Chairman closed the meeting to allow for public input and an extensive discussion ensued.

Chairman re-opened the meeting.

180412 Bird Scarers

Chairman closed the meeting to allow Mrs. Smith to report on the continuing vandalism of her birdscaring machine and the harrasement of livestock by dogs in the area.

Chairman reopened the meeting. Clerk to write an advert for the parish magazine concerning the above.

190412 Highways Report

Councillor Meredith read out the following report from Highways:-

I refer to our recent site meeting, on the 13th April, to discuss the issues of concern which have been raised by your Parishioners. Firstly I would like to thank you and Councillor Meredith for taking the time to meet with me and my colleague David Portlock and for identifying these issues, I appreciated both of your local knowledge and input.

Our discussions and Parish tour covered a variety of topics and issues and for brevity I list them below along with any proposed actions.

1. I have noted the indiscriminate parking occurring on the bend by Smiths farm and I acknowledge your request for the faded edge of carriageway marking to be reinstated. As you will be aware this road is due to surface dressed shortly and it is usually our practice to reinstate and lines and markings after this treatment. However I am obliged to review the necessity of any markings upon the network as they can be a maintenance liability. Notwithstanding this I would agree with you that there is a clear safety need for this line to be replaced and I will therefore arrange for this to be included on a future programme. As this process is weather dependant there may be a delay and I would ask you be to patient.

2. With regards to your query about farmers depositing mud and detritus upon the road I explained that it will be inevitable in rural areas where farming is the main activity for some mud and other organic material to be deposited upon the highway. However, it is an offence to allow soil or refuse from land adjacent to a public highway to fall, be washed, or carried onto the road. As mud from vehicles and animals can be a potential hazard to other road users, and can be the cause of accidents. There are a range of powers which are available to both the Police and the Highway Authority, with respect to materials left upon the highway which have the potential to cause a nuisance or hazard, these are primarily the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Act 1988. Within both pieces of legislation there is the possibility of punishment for offences ranging from fines to imprisonment. However in both cases the burden of proof can be difficult to progress and is resource heavy, it is often very difficult to identify the farmer or agricultural sub contractor which has caused the nuisance or indeed catch them in the act. I would in the first instance respectfully suggest that as a Parish you may wish to approach them direct, as many farmers wish to be good neighbours. If this fails to produce any noticeable impact and if you have any information on the farmer or agricultural contractor which you believe has deposited mud on the highway please forwarded this onto me and I will also write to them more formally.

3. I am pleased that your Parish has seen the merit in the use of the salt Hand Spreader I will ask my colleague David Portlock to make arrangements for 10 additional bags of the salt/grit medium to be delivered to Chris's nursery in Fretherne. I would urge you to use this material appropriately for the wider community's benefit as I cannot guarantee replenishment in the future.

4. You raised some concerns about the condition of Passage road and I am sure you are aware that to maintain the extensive highway network within Gloucestershire, approximately 3300 miles, all roads are regularly inspected by the Safety Inspection team, who work to an inspection policy with set intervention levels based upon a National Code of Practice. The Safety Inspection Policy is designed to identify all defects which are likely to cause danger or serious inconvenience to users of the network or the wider community and allows the County Council to provide pro-active maintenance to reduce risk and provide the public with a safe highway network. Any defects which meet with the intervention levels are identified and a repair programmed. However I am aware that defects can occur between these programmed site visits and I will ensure that the safety team is made aware of your concerns for when they next visit this Parish.
5. David has noted the fencing which has been damaged in Moor Street and a repair will be programmed. If you have any information regarding how this was caused I would be most grateful for details as I would like to recover our costs.
6. I can confirm that in the absence of rebutting evidence the maintenance responsibility of road side ditching lies with the adjoining riparian landowner. Notwithstanding this I have noted the ditch edge in Church Lane has been compressed by a large vehicle. I will arrange for the Bollards, which are leaning, to be re-erected upright.
7. The damaged road sign at the junction of Church Lane and High Street has been noted and David will arrange for it to be re-erected.
8. The defect within the entrance to Sandfield farm is not the responsibility of Gloucestershire Highways, however as its directly adjacent to the edge of the carriageway I will arrange for the safety inspection team to give me a formal view as to whether it represents a hazard for the adjoining highway.
9. We had a discussion on how schemes are identified I explained that this Authority receives many requests for highway improvements but does not have an unlimited budget. Given the extensive road network that this Authority has to maintain and with over 20% of the rural road network in need of some form of structural repair we, consequently, have to prioritise and target our resources carefully. In order to filter these requests Gloucestershire Highways use a priority assessment process. When a scheme is forwarded for priority assessment the section of carriageway in question is inspected by a Pavement Engineer and a series of weighting factors are applied, all this information will influence the outcome and this process produces a "rating" for each particular site, which is then compared to other bids for improvement works and a programme is then formulated. It is regrettable that in some circumstances hard decisions have to be made to ensure that the resources are directed towards the most needed locations and unfortunately this can sometimes be difficult for people to appreciate. If you have any particular locations within your Parish I can arrange for them to be appraised, but I would remind you that even if they are in need of attention there could be others which are in far worst structural condition and would rank higher in any future programme.
10. I can confirm that the popular tree by the recycling bins is within the highway boundary. I can also advise you that this tree has been inspected by Gloucestershire Highways arboriculturalist with no maintenance issues currently being required. As this is now on our list it will be routinely inspected.
11. I will arrange for the unauthorized signs to be removed from Fretherne Bridge.

12. The Boundary wall adjoining Saul farm would be the responsibility of the landowner and I have noted that your Parish wishes to make this a community clear up project. Gloucestershire Highways would have no objections to the Parish and landowner removing the ivy which, I understand, is damaging this historic wall however I must caution you and remind you of the Health & Safety issues associated with working upon a carriageway and I would strongly recommend that any works are undertaken filed side.

13. As I have explained above all road side ditches are the responsibility of the adjoining landowner. However it is often very difficult, from a highway perspective, to decide when a ditch has been neglected and action required. I am aware that your Parish wishes to clear out the old pond and feeder ditches in Church Lane and in the first instance you will need to liaise and get approval from the landowners of Sandfield farm. I would suggest that you arrange a meeting with them, and I am happy to attend, so that your offer of assistance can be made and discussed.

14. The damage being caused to the verge by the bus turning in the junction of Arlington Road and Fretherne Lane is quiet clear. I am reluctant to arrange for the verge to be reinstated or for bollards to be erected as I suspect this will not resolve the issue. I will seek a meeting with my colleague in public transport unit to see if the operator can be identified.

15. It is regrettable that the "Toad" sign has been removed; unfortunately I have no permanent sign available to replace this. I will make arrangements for a correx sign to be delivered to Chris.

16. To prevent the indiscriminate parking at the entrance to the British water Ways car park at Saul/Sandfield bridge a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would need to be considered. As part of this process Gloucestershire Highways take into consideration empirical evidence in the form of accident data, road safety considerations, consultation is undertaken with Gloucestershire Police and the Civil Enforcement Parking Manager and any local residents/businesses who are likely to be effected by any orders. Gloucestershire County Council maintains a data base of all recorded personal injury accidents which occur upon the highway network, after interrogating this data basis I note that within the last five years there have been no personal injury accidents at this location. This maybe why when this matter has been previously considered the TRO was not progressed, I would also suspect that enforcement would also be an issue. Motorist should be aware that there is no right to park a vehicle on the highway unless it's within a designated bay, however custom has developed particular in urban/residential areas and the Police tolerate on street parking were it does not cause an obstruction. Indeed The Highway Code (sections 242 & 243) places the responsibility with the individual driver to ensure that their vehicle is parked on the carriageway in such a position or location so as not to represent a hazard to other users of the network. If indiscriminate or inconsiderate parking is causing an obstruction or significant highway safety issues then, as I explained this is a matter for the Police to deal with who I understand have powers under The Road Traffic Act. I will arrange a review of this however whilst I am not pre judging the outcome my experience in dealing with these matters tells me that should one be considered at this location it would have little success of completion because this road has a very low accident indicator and it would be unlikely to receive the support of the civil enforcement team.

17. I will arrange for the Safety Team to undertake an inspection of the

overhanging vegetation in Church lane to see if a hazard is being caused. If this is indeed the case I will arrange for a letter to be written to the land owners, who I understand are British Water Ways.

I believe this covers all the points discussed and if I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me again.

200412 Litter Pick Report

As reported earlier litter was picked.

210412 Information Exchange

None

220412 Public Forum

Mrs. Penny Lidstone has written to the Parish Council asking for funding for a lawn mower for Framilode Church.

Charitable donations to be added to the agenda for the next meeting when councillors will discuss the mower.

Mrs. Mandy Crawford has requested a donation towards the purchase of a gift for the children of Framilode for the jubilee.

Parish council has received a grant for jubilee celebrations but this has been allocated for a party for the entire parish.

Council agreed that funds could not be offered to Framilode for their children as the Parish Council has to work for the whole community and as discussed at previous meetings all funds were ploughed into the parish party for the benefit of the entire community.

Mrs. Hilary Smith asked for a dog waste bin to be located by the stile on the corner into the canal. Clerk to contact SDC.

DCJJ reported that there is to be an election next Thursday.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.24 p.m.

..... Chairman

Date of next meeting 30th May 7.30 p.m

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in exercising any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.