

Kay Brown – Clerk

1 French Burr Place
Gloucester
GL1 5PH

Tel: 01452 247040 or 07775 935739

Email: fwsparishclerk@gmail.com
www.frethernewithsaul.org.uk

FREETHERNE WITH SAUL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Assembly meeting dated 18th May 2021

Present: Councillors A Brown, B Findlater, P Van Der Hooft, R Findlater, C Bartlett and C Bierer and Clerk K Brown

Register of General Public attending meeting: Two members of the public attended.

- **WELCOME - Chairman Andrew Brown**
Cllr Brown welcomed everyone to the Parish Assembly Meeting and apologised for the lack of refreshments due to Covid Restrictions. Due to speakers being late to arrive he would change the order of the meeting and began with the Annual Parish Report.
- **Fretherne With Saul Parish Council 2020/2021 Annual Parish Report 18th May 2021 - Chairman Andrew Brown**

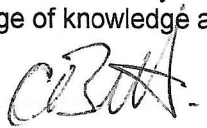
Thank you to County Councillor Stephen Davis and District Councillor John Jones for their reports and congratulations in their re-appointment in their respective roles. From a Parish Council point of view, I would also like to thank County Councillor Stephen Davies for all his help and backing at County level and to District Councillor John Jones for his guidance and advice and his wisdom.

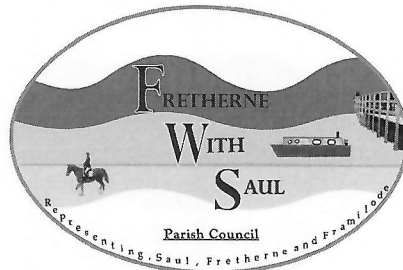
I would like to begin with thanking everyone on the council for their work over the last few years and to say thank you and goodbye to Cllr Rawdon Cowley who has already resigned from the council for his hard work and commitment. We had a new councillor in 2019 which is Pam Van Der Hooft and she has really hit the ground running particularly with the covid response, a big thank you for that and getting stuck right in, very well done. Basically the whole council has pulled together overcoming the difficulties of covid and other minor irritations we have had as well.

To give you a brief summing up of some of what the council has been involved with over the last 12 months - The uncertainty of the Covid situation meant that there were periods when the council were unable to meet in any format other than Zoom meetings; a couple of meetings were able to be held in the respite from lockdown last summer; latterly all meetings have been held via Zoom as we know until government legislation ended on the 7th May 2021 enabling us to once again meet face to face We have now resumed but covid restrictions obviously have to be observed which means that meetings may have to be restricted in numbers attending as is tonight.

The Parish saw heavy rains over the winter on more than one occasion, unprecedented rain fall caused great concern as water levels rose rapidly around the parish. I was taking phone calls until way after 11pm on the 23rd December from concerned parishioners. There were regular visits to the village pump throughout the afternoon and evening by members of the council to check that it was working, another proactive thing. I would like to particularly thank Cllr Richard Findlater because he went above and beyond going out in all sorts of winds and weathers and also Barry Findlater, who has had a few health problems but that didn't deter him at all as well as Mark James who isn't a councillor but a parishioner who was willing to help us as well. They made numerous checks throughout that very evening. And also Luke Smith from Malt House Farm who used who used a pump and his tractor helping to alleviate the water levels in the Church Lane/High Street area which was very welcome in deed. The Parish Council has been proactive in trying to sort the drainage problems and recently had a zoom meeting with representatives of the Inland Drainage Board for an exchange of knowledge and understanding of how the drainage system around the village works, the

Signed / Date

 21/6/21



capabilities of the village pump and the concerns the village faced particularly on 23rd December 2020. The Parish Council are putting together a Village Flood Plan and have already acquired a number of sand bag bags which are being stored with kind permission of one of our councillor's in his garage. We are working out better storage where we can direct members of the parish should the need arise.

There have been a number of planning applications over the past year, whilst some are still under review most have been dealt with in a timely manner. There have also been a number of trees in a conservation area planning applications as well. Whilst with all planning applications, the council reviews each and gives comments and feedback regarding the application, reporting any concerns that the parish council have, the final decision rests with Stroud District Council. So sometimes Stroud District Council take on what we say and sometimes it appears they don't.

There has also been on-going parking issues around Sandfield Bridge which has caused quite a lot of concern to people in the parish. Representatives from the parish council have met with a member of the Highways Department of Stroud District Council on a couple of occasions. The latest information from Highways is that repainting the yellow lines is on the list for the line painting team but a date cannot be given at this present time. Once the lines have been reinstated, there will be enforcement taking place and, I believe, this is mainly to be concentrated at the weekends. The road is to be swept so that the present road markings are more visible as well.

Other Highway issues around the parish have also been discussed with filling of potholes along Passage Road, a very speedy response to a grate in danger of collapse outside a property on the High Street, repair/replacement of wooden barriers along Moor Street and repair of the railings which were hit by a contractor's lorry also along Moor Street. Also under discussion is the drainage on Hells Corner with work to be carried out to try to alleviate the problem, I do actually believe that some work has been carried out already.

Water levels in the disused section of the Stroudwater Canal were severely depleted last summer with danger to the wild life and fish. The council hired a pump to remove water from the river Frome into the canal within the limits of the permissible literage. Can I also take this opportunity to thank the team who are working to clear a channel through the reeds and replace the capping stones along the edge of the canal, hard work by a very small team of volunteer's. Can I also say a big thank you as well once again to Cllr Richard Findlater for helping myself, and if there is anybody I have missed on that one, for setting up the pump etc. for the canal. More recently, there has been an issue with a member of the public repeatedly removing fish from this section of the canal, this action contravenes various Environment Agency legislation regarding the removal of fish and water from one section of water to another. A member of the parish Council, myself, promptly responded to a parishioner's telephone call, attended and spoke to the gentleman. He was actually apologetic and didn't realise he was doing anything wrong and to our knowledge he has not been back so that problem seems to have been stopped. The police were made aware and will respond to any further incidents.

A number of letters have been received over the past year. One of note, a member of the public recently reported the ploughing of a section of a ridge and furrow field in Upper Framilode. This was looked into with Gloucester County Councils Archaeological department. As there was no archaeological or historical note of this area, the ploughing whilst regrettable was permitted. Throughout the year the allotments holders have enjoyed the ability to work the allotments whilst observing social distancing, it is actually looking very, very nice up there now and very tidy certainly compared to what it was this time last year. This is certainly showing with how well the vast majority of allotments are now looking. Two allotments are now being cleared by a team from Community Payback, in fact the work started today, which is largely made up of the office staff in a social scheme they are all supporting. As soon as the work is complete, the allotments will be offered to two people on the waiting list and I believe the waiting list is growing as well.

I am sure people have noticed, in fact we know people have noticed that there has been a regrettable increase in the parish precept. I am unable to go into detail about this other than the statement which has been officially made to the people who have asked for it so if anybody wants that official statement we are more than happy to release that. There have been six enquiries via email, of these two asked for further clarity which have been responded to with what information we are able to give at this present time. The other four enquiries, also by email, were more than happy with the statement of explanation and said they fully understood the circumstances.

Steps have now been put in to review Council procedures, this is on-going rolling work ethic now being followed though out the year to implement any updates and new legislation that may occur.

Signed / Date



One of the last things, but not least, in October in fact before that we lost our previous clerk which obviously the clerk is the nucleus of the council. Kay kindly stepped in and took on the role with no previous experience of being a parish clerk and I think the whole council agrees that she is doing an absolute sterling job and I obviously know the amount of hours she is putting in which is a tremendous amount of work and she is certainly licking us all into shape so I would like to say a great big thank you for not only Kays support to me as chairman but Kays support and diligence to the whole council as well.

I hope this has given you a small insight into some of the work of the parish councillors who all commit time on a voluntary basis for the good of the parish. We've all got our strengths and I'm sure we've all got some weaknesses as well but what we have found is that together we've all got a role that we tend to fit into and try to go in the right direction.

I have very much enjoyed my time on the parish council over I think it's the last four years and tonight I will be stepping down and I wish the remaining members of the council all the best and I will still be supporting you in whatever way I can whether it be coming in and litter picking or whatever it may be but thanks to everybody, each and every one of you.

I am now going to hand you over to Council Councillor Stephen Davies for his recap of the year.

- **COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT – County Councillor S Davies**

The past twelve months have been by any reckoning challenging.

First, I want to thank everyone who has been involved in any way in helping our communities and residents through this dreadful pandemic. My special thanks to all of those who work in the NHS and as carers, also to so many others - our teachers, police, firefighters and other key workers; to everyone who maintained food, medical and other essential supplies, to all the volunteers who helped in any way. Further thanks to all those who are now involved in the vaccination programme and thank you to every one of you who gave time to help others and for the millions of acts of individual kindness. Finally, I would like to thank everyone who followed the Lockdown restrictions in good spirit.

Like many of you as your District and County councillor I have taken part in hundreds of “zoom” meeting in the past year. The county council has done it's best to try to keep its services running - particularly to the vulnerable members of our society, both adults and children services, for whom we deliver care packages. Our Children Service and Fire Service were recognised for their work during the Pandemic by their appropriate Inspection authorities.

Going forward the County Council is now working on the “Build back better” plan with money available to help those industries that were worst impacted by the pandemic.

On to matters local.

Highways: The county council has continued with a comprehensive road improvement and resurfacing programme. In the past year we undertook quite a bit of work on our B road network; road network with more scheduled for this year. Locally we have seen modification to the Cross Keys Roundabout, and the A419 as well the work done on the Fromebridge Mill Roundabout to enable the Canal missing mile.

Locally I have worked on:

Secondary School Capacity – There is agreement to build a new school but it is not decided where or when this will be completed. I am working to make sure this works for our community.

Slimbridge Parish Council on their “Quiet Lanes” Project including support for their

Variable Speed Camera

Perry Way junction.

Frampton Parish Council on their Perry Way Project.

Flooding issues in Epney, Frampton and Hardwicke

Air Monitoring around the Energy from Waste Facility at Javelin Park.

If you think I can help in any Gloucestershire County Council related matter please contact me.

Email: stephen.davies2@gloucestershire.gov.uk Phone: 07802 595 307

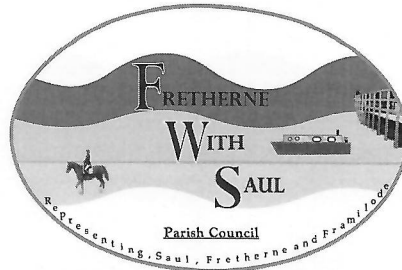
- **DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT – District Councillor J Jones** read out on his behalf by County Councillor Stephen Davies.

The report was read out by County Councillor Stephen Davies on behalf of District Councillor J Jones.

To say this last year has been unprecedented is probably the biggest understatement made for a very long time.

Signed / Date

CB 21/6/21



Stroud District Council has done all it can to continue providing the services it does in normal times, plus many more.

Firstly, the Elections that were due to be held in May of 2020 were postponed by the Government for one year. At the start of the pandemic, the vast majority of staff were switched over to working from home, with extra duties for many of having to look after their children, and home schooling, while working at their SDC job as well. This has led to delays in some parts of the Council's decision making, in particular in Planning, where Site Visits were not possible for several months, resulting in decisions being delayed when they normally would not be. A number of staff were kept on in Ebley Mill, particularly in Customer Services to take all telephone calls and or emailed enquiries, and in the Revenue and Benefits department, which has handled all the Grant monies handed down from central Government. In total, over £40million of Government funding has been distributed by SDC to local businesses, voluntary groups, local charity foundations and the like, in order that as many as possible can stay in business ready for when restrictions are fully lifted. This is on top of the Revs and Bens team operating its usual services, such as Universal Credit, Homelessness, Housing Support, and getting the Council Tax demands out before the end of March. In addition, all Waste and Recycling collection services have operated as near normal as possible, with very few collections if any, being missed because of the pandemic. The Neighbourhood Warden service has provided the eyes and ears for Council during the last year, being out and about giving and sourcing help to those in need, very often being the link between vulnerable residents and further services.

All this time, behind the scenes work carried on with preparation of the next Local Plan. Because of Covid restrictions, it was not always possible to hold the usual public consultations, so other ways had to be found and eventually a Draft Local Plan was put together. Similarly new ways were found to hold Committee meetings and full Council meetings, in other words, by Zoom video, as have many local Parish and Town Council meetings. Staff face to face meetings have been using this method as well.

Overall, a very trying experience for all involved, but it now seems as though the road to recovery is showing, and normality is just around the corner.

- **POLICE REPORT – PCSO Mike Trebble**

PCSO Mike Trebble was unable to be present at the meeting as it was his rest day. No crime figures or statistics were provided.

The Parish Assembly closed at 19:20pm.

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

Signed / Date