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FRETHERNE WITH SAUL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Fretherne with Saul Parish Council Meeting held at Saul Memorial Hall at 7:30pm on 30th November 2022.

Present: Cllr B Findlater (Vice Chairman), Cllr Lever, Cllr Van Der Hooft, Cllr Cobb, Cllr Bierer, Clerk K Brown

In attendance: Nil

Register of General Public attending meeting: Three

Please be respectful of the proximity to other people attending the meeting and take relevant steps to respect their welfare.

Agenda

- 011122** **To receive apologies for absence.**
Apologies received from Cty Cllr Davies, Dist Cllr Jones, Alison Robinson (GAPTC) and Cllr Jeffries
- 021122** **Declarations of Interest on the Agenda**
Cllr Cobb declared an interest in agenda item 091122
- 031122** **To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 26th October 2022 as a true record.**
Proposed, seconded with all in favour
- 041122** **Public Question Time**
20 Minutes is allocated to allow members of the public to address the Parish Council, 5 minutes will be allocated to each person. Speakers are requested to keep their comments brief. Standing Orders item 3, para (e)(f)(g)(h)(k).
Two members of the public spoke during Public Question time, the questions raised were linked and are as follows –
- Why did Cllr Bierer fail to engage in our Code of Conduct complaint? Would you not expect an individual who is in public office to participate in this process?
 - We have no confidence in Cllr Bierer's conduct and these matters were raised by way of our complaint of 4 October – are you planning to consider and respond to this complaint? We would ask for consideration of our previous complaints raised which are yet to be fully considered.
 - Could you please provide details and associated records in relation to the authorisation process that the Clerk undertook to secure 3rd party funding on behalf of the Incumbent.
 - Could you please advise why all matters pertaining to ourselves, including planning discussions have always been held in private/closed meetings? Do you not consider this unusual?
 - We would question whether Cllr Bierer's continuing involvement in the Parish Council is tenable.
- As explained in the meeting, the next Parish Council meeting is not until the 25th January, these questions will be discussed by the Parish Council and a letter in response will be sent but this may possibly be after the New Year.
- The two Members of the Public left the meeting at 19:45pm.
- 051122** **To receive a report from County Councillor Stephen Davies.**
Cty Cllr Davies sent his apologies but did send a report.
- Gloucestershire County Council have taken a stand against Domestic Abuse by taking part in the International Awareness campaign, 16 days of action and aiming to become "White Ribbon" accredited.

Signed / Date  25/1/23



- Following Stagecoach's withdrawal from a number of routes, GCC have managed to retender 350,000 bus journeys.
- Gloucestershire Libraries have received £750k funding from the Arts Council.
- Gloucestershire Libraries are being used as "Support Hubs" providing a Warm space and other facilities during the cost of living challenge.
- County Council Trading Standards Inspectors are carrying out checks at Petrol Stations to ensure drivers are not short changed or over charged.
- You can now book a slot at the recycle centre on the day you want to go.
- A Waste Wizard website tool has been launched on the GCC website to help people identify how to dispose of items.
- GCC have committed to continue funding the Homes for Ukraine scheme.
- Scam victims will receive £8,000 back, following an investigation by Trading Standards.
- Gloucestershire County Council have approved to extend the funding for the Homes for Ukraine scheme as the war in Ukraine enters its 9th month.

061122 To receive a report from District Councillor John Jones.
No report was received from Dist Cllr Jones.

071122 Planning Applications

Application Number: S.22/1897/HHOLD Chance Barn, Saul Lodge West, Arlingham Road, Saul.
Description: Proposed rear free standing raised terrace, new windows & doors & upgraded / painted cladding to the dwelling

Respond by date: 22.11.2022 (extension granted to 2.12.22)
No comment

Application Number: S.22/2277/TCA Gardeners Pool, High Street, Saul, Gloucestershire.
Description: Removal of trees with Ash dieback. Removal of tree leaning over pool and pollard Willows.

Respond by date: 07.12.2022
No comment

Application Number: S.22/2447/TCA Allotments, Park View, Saul, Gloucestershire.
Description: Ash trees - T1, T3, T5, T6 and T7 reduce the tree canopy by a maximum of four metres per tree.
Respond by date: 07.12.2022
No comment

Planning Decisions

Application Number: S.22/1202/FUL Site For Proposed Livery Yard Associated With Dunstalls Farm, Arlingham Road, Saul,

Description: Construction of livery yard with associated parking and paddocks (Resubmission of S.22/0331/FUL)
Decision: Awaiting Decision

Application Number: S.22/0882/HHOLD 1 Riveredge, Framilode, Gloucester, Gloucestershire
Description: Erection of rear two storey extension. Alteration to single storey garage annexe to raise floor level and demolition of rear conservatory
Decision: Permitted

081122 To note correspondence received

Member of the Public has raised their concerns about vehicles parking at the side of Arlingham Road adjacent to Fretherne Bridge. These area is used as parking for walkers or vehicles left overnight, they are being damaged and in the past there have been injuries to people getting out of the vehicles. Member of the Public also raised concerns about the large HGV's travelling through Saul towards the Anchor Trading Estate asking if the size of vehicle using the road could be restricted. The Member of the Public has tried speaking to the owner of the haulage company without success.

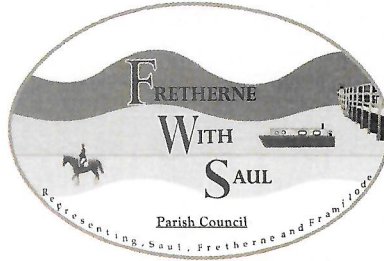
This will be added to the information being reported to the Highways Department. During the discussion, the Parish Councils attention was drawn to a red van which has been parked at the junction of Saul High St and Arlingham Road at Fretherne Bridge. There are concerns that it has been abandoned.

Action: Clerk to advise the authority's and request they investigate.

An email has been received from a concerned parishioner about the water levels in the River Frome at Upper Framilode, the highest they have seen in many years but water from the canal is still being pumped into the river at Saul Junction sluice. With a 10 metre high tide, the river flood gates will close and the concern is that this will increase the risk of flooding. This has been reported to the Canals and River Trust, raising the issue again.

Signed / Date

25/1/23



An email has been received from a member of the public in lieu of attending the October meeting. It raised four questions, which have been responded to by letter. The questions and responses (in blue italic) are below.

- Why was the Chair of the Parish Council unwilling to engage in a code of conduct investigation or attend the hearing – *The former Chairman of the Parish Council did engage in the process. It is not a requirement for Councillors to attend hearings.*
- The advising QC has confirmed Cllr Bierer had a clear conflict of interest and should not have acted on behalf of both the Parish and Parochial Church Council – how are you addressing this failure – *The Parish Council will arrange training as appropriate.*
- Who has attended the meeting as a representative of the Parochial Church Council – *Not applicable as no one from the Parochial Parish Council attended the meeting.*
- Why are these matters deemed to be covered under section 100(A) (4) Local Government Act 1972 as we have been advised these matters are in the public interest and should be available for public scrutiny/and subject to press reporting and coverage – *this will only occur when items being discussed are, or maybe, legally privileged or are deemed to be confidential as they relate to third party information/individuals.*

A letter has been received from a member of the public regarding suspected drug taking on or around The Pound at Upper Framilode. This information has been passed to the respective authorities who will continue to monitor.

091122

To receive an update on the points raised in Public Question time at the meeting on 28th September 2022 regarding HGV travelling along Moor Street.

The Parish Council has consolidated the information, supported by photographs, provided by the residents of Moor Street and sent this to the Highways Department.

The new Local Highways Manager has advised that DC Merretts have agreed to replace one section of the tubular fencing, other fencing along Moor Street is still fenced off and are under review by the Infrastructures Team. It is understood that DC Merrett will advise residents of any oversized HGV movement through the village. Concern was raised about the quality of repair carried out to the tubular fencing, noted that the plastic fencing has been removed.

Action: Clerk to reply to Local Highways Manager (LHM) asking about the repair, the lack of communication by DC Merrett and request a meeting with LHM to discuss this in situ.

101122

To discuss the draft Code of Conduct Charter.

Recently, the MO's of all the Principal Councils within the County and the CEO from GAPTC have been working to develop a single member Code of Conduct (CoC), with the ambition that it is used in each of the Councils (County, District and Town/Parish Councils). The intention behind this is to provide both clarity and consistency for both the Councils and their Members as well as ensure that all Councillors only need to pay regard to one set of rules reflecting upon the fact that many Members serve on multiple Councils within the County.

Whilst the draft Code of Conduct appears to be sound, has this been checked to be legally correct?

Action: Clerk to ask if this has been checked for legal correctness as in previous documents this has not been the case.

111122

Finance:

To approve the following payments in accordance with the budget.

Supporting documents have already been sent to councillors.

Payee	For	Amount
Clerk	Including clerks wages November 22	£362.70*
GAPTC	Inv 7466 Newsletter training	£35.00
Clerk	Final invoices and receipts for Queens Jubilee event	£174.11
Wold & Vale Tree Consultancy	Inv 11707 Visit to assess willow stump and tree at Upper Framilode	£35.00
Cullimore	Inv 2225 Sand for the bunker	£72.00
GB Sport & Leisure	Inv 11408 Maintenance to the play equipment at the Memorial Hall Playing Field	£5682.48
Smiths Skip Hire	Pro Forma Inv for Hire of skip for allotments	£330.00

- Based on previous monthly pay, November to be confirmed by accountant

Proposed, seconded with all in favour

To ratify payments made between meetings –

WaterPlus Allotment water supply

£317.82

Proposed, seconded with all in favour

Signed / Date

 25/1/23



To review and approve November bank reconciliation and accounts.

These have already been circulated to the Councillors.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour

121122

To discuss and agree the appointment of the Internal Auditor

The Clerk has circulated the details of three Internal Audit companies to the Councillors prior to the meeting. To discuss and agree which company the Parish Council should appoint for the Internal Audit in 2023. quotes

Three companies sent their quotes to carry out the Annual Internal Audit; one company, April Skies stood out as having looked into the Parish accounts in preparing their quote and offering two references. The Councillors approved their quote of £200.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

131122

To discuss the Bookkeeper information provided by the Clerk to carry out periodic financial review.

The details of Bookkeepers has been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting for their review. To discuss and approve who to appoint to carry out the periodic checks.

Clerk advised that from enquiries, only one quote was received. This was considered and the £50 for two half yearly accounts checks was approved.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

141122

Clerks Report - Feedback from items raised at the last meeting and other points to be discussed

GB Sport & Leisure have confirmed that the work on the Parish Council owned play equipment at the Memorial Hall Playing Fields will be done on 30th November. This has been delayed by two days due to rain and the wood needing to dry.

35percent have been contacted re providing another survey of the disused section of the Stroudwater Canal at Upper Framilode. An introduction between 35percent and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust representative has been made; following this introduction and discussion between 35percent and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, information has been received with regards to the potential presence of water voles and on-going work on the canal. This will be discussed in agenda item 211122.

The Clerk has advertised for the work on the allotment taps and stands to be quoted for. A member of the public in a voluntary capacity; the clerk is also meeting with accompany to quote for the work. The company has inspected the taps and has quoted £197 to replace two taps and one stand. Councillors approved the cost.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

A planning application has been submitted for the reduction of branches along the boundary of the allotments.

The trees sit along the boundary of the conservation area. Discussed in agenda item 071122

The Clerk has met with Wold & Vale Tree Consultant to assess the willow tree, and root, in the disused section of the Stroudwater canal at Upper Framilode. As the property predates the tree there is no issue with the removal of the root. Methods of removal were discussed being mindful of the location of the willow and impact on wildlife in the canal.

Action: Clerk to request the root advice to be put in writing. Alternative ways to be investigated to kill the root.

The allotment notice board is due to be installed in December.

A skip for disposal of general items from the allotments is being arranged for a two week period in December '22.

Aside from actions from the last meeting -

A further reminder re the waste bin at the Memorial Hall has been sent, the Committee have confirmed they are happy to pay 50% of the cost for a new bin.

Annual extraction figures have been submitted to the Environment Agency. They do not exceed the permissible litreage.

151122

To discuss the provision of flood preparation guidance, be it by sharing the Go Compare link on the website or providing every household in the parish with an information sheet.

Details of both the website link and draft information sheet have been shared with the councillors prior to the meeting.

Councillors agreed to share the link on the website.

161122

To receive an update on the Upper Framilode phone box.

There has been previous talk about a second defibrillator being located in the phone box. Fund raising is being organised by a member of the public. How much has been raised towards the final defibrillator costs?

It is still unclear how much remains to be raised but the persons raising the funds has confirmed that they understand there will be ongoing maintenance costs.

Signed / Date

25/1/23



Action: Clerk to draft letter to fund raisers confirming their responsibility to future defibrillator costs, batteries, services and servicing.

171122 To receive a further update on the Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) Community Speedwatch Safety Fund Application.

The speed survey equipment was installed along Moor Street during this past month.

A supply of 20mph stickers has been sent to the Clerk from the GCC Community Speedwatch Safety team.

The survey is inconclusive as to speeding along Moor St but it has been noted that the week the survey was carried out was school half term week and this would likely impact on the number of vehicles and the speed being driven along the road.

Action: Clerk to request another survey to be carried out after the New Year at a time when the schools will not be on holiday.

181122 To discuss and agree Saul Pound Christmas Tree arrangements

Traditionally the Christmas tree on Saul Pound is decorated with lights; Council to discuss the details for this year, do the lights need replacing/repairing? When will they be hung and switched on? Is anything else to be arranged in conjunction with the switching on?

It has been agreed to decorate the Christmas tree on 11th December. It is too late to arrange any social gathering for this year; in future, this will be an agenda item for September meetings.

191122 To discuss and approve a donation to the RBL Poppy Appeal in lieu of the three wreaths laid on Remembrance Day.

The cost to produce each wreath is £20, does the Parish Council wish to make an additional contribution to the Poppy Appeal.

Councillors approved a donation of £100 be made to the RBL Poppy Appeal was approved.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

201122 To discuss renewing the agreement with the Memorial Hall Committee to hold the Parish Council meetings at the Memorial Hall, Saul

The ten year agreement with the Memorial Hall Committee to hold Parish Council meetings at the hall has now expired. Hall charges are £6.50 per hour. Councillors to discuss renewing this agreement, for how long and at what cost.

Discussion summarised in that the Parish Council could offer to install equipment in lieu of rent for an appropriate period of time.

Action: Cllr Cobb to look into the cost of CCTV and/or a projector.

211122 To discuss the on-going work plan for the disused section of the Stroudwater Canal at Upper Framilode and the quote for fencing and strengthening to the bank along the Moor Street towards Saul Junction side.

Further guidance has been received from 35percent and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust with regards to the work being carried out on the canal. Councillors to discuss this guidance and potential ways forward. Also a quote for repair/replacement of fencing along the side of the Stroudwater Canal towards Saul Junction, has been requested; the quote is to include the cost of putting sand bag reinforcement along the canal bank. Quote to be discussed and further action agreed.

It was agreed at the meeting to get a further, independent survey by Acer Ecology on the canal for sign of Water Voie activity and advice on work which can be carried out over the winter. The cost for a site visit and an initial survey is £400 +vat with a possibility of a more in depth survey in the Spring at a cost of a further £500 +vat. This was approved.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

The cost to repair/replacement of fencing and bank strengthening was between £800 - £1000. However, the public footpath may have to be closed while the work is carried out and the closure may incur a cost. The maximum budget of £1000 for the work to the fencing with a contingency of a further £600 in case of a cost for path closure was agreed.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

Member of the public left the meeting at 21:25pm.

221122 To begin discussion on the budget for 2023-24

The accounting spreadsheet, draft Allotment Tenancy Agreement, draft Village Maintenance Tender and other relevant documentation has been circulated to the Councillors for their review prior to the meeting, this includes the proposed budgeted figures for 2023-24. They will review the figures, raising any concerns and proposing any other items which should be included in the Parish Council expenditure for the next financial year.

Signed / Date

25/1/23



Normal income and expenditures were reviewed and increased as per budgetary needs, inflation, known increases in costs including possible cost for King Charles III Coronation celebrations. Items to be added to the budget were considered including one large project and two smaller projects. Allotment rental terms to remain the same as 2022-3 with some small amendments to the Tenancy Agreement. The Village Maintenance contract is to be put to Tender in January, no changes to the wording of the Contract. Also discussed, due to Microsoft advising of end of support for Windows 8.1 security and technical support, the Clerk should purchase another laptop. A budget of £900 +vat to replace the laptop was agreed, this too be purchased immediately as Microsoft support ending on January 10th 2022.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

Action: Clerk to look to replace laptop within the agreed budget.

231122

To begin discussion on the Precept to be set for 2023-24

Initial discussion to begin on the level of Precept for the next financial year.

In line with the budgeted expenditure figures and inflation, initial discussion agreed to keep any changes to the precept to a minimum.

241122

The Chairman will move the adoption of the following resolution; That under section 100(A) (4) Local Government Act 1972, the public and press will be excluded from the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act

- Staffing review
- **To review and approve the Local Government Association (LGA) pay offer awarded to Clerks.** The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has been notified by the Local Government Association (LGA) that it has come to an agreement on the 2022/23 pay offer with the unions representing local government employees. The details have been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

Following the Clerks recent review, an increase in two pay grades was agreed and a further review advised following completion of CiLCA.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

The LGA pay offer was approved.

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

251122


Date of next meeting is 25th January 2023.

Meeting closed 22:25pm

Signed:

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


25/1/23