

FRECKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Freckenham Parish Council held on
Monday 20th March 2023 at 7.30 pm in Freckenham Village Hall

Present: Cllr Cornell, Cllr Tucker and Cllr McCoig

In attendance: Nick Wooley (Chairman) on the NH Plan), Clerk, Jadi Coe, and sixteen members of the public

Cllr Cornell welcomed everyone to the meeting

23/03/01 Apologies for absence & approval of reasons tendered

Cllr L Stanbury and Cllr B Harvey gave their apologies.

23/03/02 Declaration of interest in any items on the agenda

None

Item 7.2 Neighbourhood Plan was brought forward to this point

23/03/03 Members of the public are invited to give their views on any item within the agenda

A member of the public asked if the Freckenham FB page could be used more to get important council information to residents.

The clerk confirmed she would do this.

23/03/04 To receive reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor and to receive the Police Reports

None

23/03/05 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2023 were proposed and agreed as a true record of the meeting held.

23/03/06 Matters arising from the Minutes not covered in the agenda

None

23/03/07 Planning:

7.1 To consider any planning applications

None

Application DC/23/0133/FUL, (change of use of agricultural land to enclosed field for dog training and exercising an associated access and parking) was received after the agenda was published. If the Parish Council wish to comment on the application another meeting will need to be scheduled before 8th April. The Parish Council did write a letter to the applicants confirming their support in November.

It was agreed to not hold an additional meeting and not comment on the application.

To note applications pending and determined

DC/23/0176/HH – detached garage at Sonunda House, Church Lane, Freckenham (pending at 3rd March)

DC/23/0004/HH - two bay cart lodge and log store at Horseshoe Barn, Mortimer Lane, Freckenham, IP28 8JD (approved 20th February)

DC/22/1827/LB – one internal double door between garage kitchen with blocking up of an existing door at The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Freckenham (approved 2nd March)

7.2 Neighbourhood Plan including correspondence from residents

The Parish Council and Nick Woolley answered various questions, including the below, as asked by various members of the public:

Q - why has Rob Hancock at SCC seen draft plans for the site on Fordham Road?

A - sketches were drawn as part of the NH Plan process as guided by planners, to show how the three most preferred sites could look, if they were developed. These should be available on the Parish Council website but if they are not the clerk will add these to the NH Plan page.

Q - If West Suffolk Council allocates a development site the parishioners have voted against

A - Every resident will have the opportunity when the Local Plan is published to comment on and, if they want, object to any allocation they might make. The Parish Council will also object as it is not the first-choice site of the Freckenham community.

Q - Enforce "policies [in its Neighbourhood Plan] that set out design and impact criteria for any new development, including housing", if West Suffolk Council or another other body opposes or ignores them in the future.

A - West Suffolk are bound to take into account the Neighbourhood Plan as it will have equal weight in the decision-making process as the Local Plan.

Q - Can the Parish Council please tell us when they were informed that the proposal that Freckenham be categorised as a Type A village in the new West Suffolk settlement hierarchy became a binding fact, and what consultation was undertaken between West Suffolk Council and Freckenham Parish Council in deciding this?

Set out the criteria for village classifications, set out which criteria Freckenham meet/do not meet, set out our current classifications and the correct classification, set out the exact steps the Parish Council has made to correct our classification and how objections were made, when made, to whom made, outcome?

A - West Suffolk Council classed Freckenham as a type A village as it had three sustainable indicators, play area public house and early years education provision (early years education provision no longer applicable). The Parish Council were made aware of this late 2020 and the Parish Council objected to this classification in the Issues and Options Consultation in December 2020 as follows:

'Although you state Freckenham Parish Council have three of the sustainability indicators, public house, play area and early education provision, the Parish Council believe Freckenham should remain a type B village. There is a complete lack of other services which would be required by residents. A very poor non[1]commutable bus service which does not give satisfactory time in the nearest town or indeed for further afield. No consolidation at all in respects of this or other services. Poor accessibility by public or no sustainable methods of transport available. Therefore, villagers have to use their own transport, or other means of help i.e., from neighbours.'

Following the above objections the Preferred Options of the West Suffolk Local Plan which was published in May 2022 still showed Freckenham being classified as Type A village. Both the Parish Council and The Neighbourhood Plan Group made the following submissions in in regard to this:

'Freckenham has not had a convenience food shop for many years and the bus service does not provide journey to work services. As such, the Parish Council is of the belief that Freckenham should be classified as a Type-B village in the Local Plan. Alternatively, if it is concluded that it is a Type-A village, it should not be the focus for as much development as those Type-A villages with a higher scoring of services.'

The Parish Council have not had a response to these objections and at the present time the Parish Council can do no more and must await the next stage of the Local Plan process. Within the next consultation the Parish Council as well as individuals will be able to have their say.

Cllr Cornell agreed to hold an EGM as soon as any further information was available and to ask a planner from West Suffolk Council to attend.

Q - Why is Worlington a type B village and not Freckenham?

A - The Parish Council are unsure why this is the case, but the Parish Council have robustly argued its case and will continue to, try and get this altered. It will also fully investigate the Worlington situation through Cllr Brian Harvey.

Q - Why have West Suffolk Council chosen site WS683 opposite the Village Hall as their preferred site?

A - The West Suffolk Local Plan preferred options document originally showed site 5.07a on Fordham Road (SCC land) as allocated for residential development. The Parish Council and the NH Plan group met with West Suffolk Council to discuss this, and informed West Suffolk Council of the residents preferred site, Mildenhall Road.

Comments submitted by the County Council on the Local Plan consultation stated that the site 5.07a was no longer available. West Suffolk Council then contacted the Parish Council in December 2022 to confirm site 5.07a was no longer available and that site WS63 was now being proposed for allocation in the West Suffolk Local Plan detailing capacity of 10 dwellings, despite being told by the Parish Council this was not the residents preferred site.

West Suffolk Council omitted site on Mildenhall Road due to potential issues with Highways and its connection to the village services.

Q - What will the Parish Council do to stop the site opposite the village hall being developed?

A - The Parish Council will object to this for reasons as set out in the NH Plan, this is why it is important for the NH Plan to be completed. The NH Plan group and the Parish Council have agreed to not allocate a site in the NH Plan. If the plan allocated the residents preferred site, Mildenhall Road, then West Suffolk Council would not support the Plan, and if it allocated West Suffolks preferred site, opposite the village Hall, then the Plan would not be approved by residents. The NH Plan will set out all the evidence gathered on the sites without recommending a site. The NH Plan would also set out aspirations, and how new homes should be as sustainable as possible.

The timeline of the NH Plan was confirmed:

-15th May 2023 - Draft plan to be approved and signed off by the Parish Council for public consultation

-June/July 2023 – Formal public consultation for a period of at least 6 weeks

-September 2023 – Parish Council review comments on Plan and approve amended Plan to be submitted to West Suffolk Council (There is no control on West Suffolk’s timetable but once they receive the Plan it will be subject to a further 6 weeks consultation, followed by examination by an Independent Neighbourhood Plan Examiner and, subject to the outcome of the Examination, a Parish Referendum would be held, open to those entitled to vote. This usually takes around 5 months to complete).

-February 2024 – Parish Referendum

The clerk confirmed she would update the Parish Council website with any updates and some links to West Suffolk Council documents regarding the Local Plan.

7.3 Sunnica Proposal

The examination period closes on 28th March 2023, this will then go to the planning inspectorate for 6months before going to the secretary to state for a further 6 months.

23/03/08 Recreation Ground and other assets:

8.1 Playground/Recreation Ground Report

DM Landscapes were given access to residential gardens via the playing fields and in return the have lopped a tree on the playing field free of charge.

8.2 Update on grass cutting

Cllr Cornell confirmed the lawnmower had not yet been returned following its service. The clerk to find out when this is to be returned.

8.3 Any other matters including litter pick

A litter pick has been arranged for 1st April at 10:00am, meeting at the Village Hall. 10 litter pick sets have been requested from WSC.

The quote for the memorial bench has increased from £362.00 (funded by Cllr B Harvey and Cllr L Stanbury) to £365.56 and now also shows £50.00 for carriage. It was proposed and agreed to accept the extra expense and purchase the bench.

23/03/09 Highways reports

The clerk confirmed she had reported the dipped pavement on Mildenhall Road to SCC. SCC have confirmed that they have visited the site and believe at this time it does not warrant remedial action.

A member of the public confirmed that he has reported a large pothole on Chippenham Road that is within Cambridgeshire but not had a response.

23/03/10 Chippenham Road Wall

Cllr Cornell confirmed the works had been carried out but the work was of a poor standard. Cllr Cornell to provide the clerk with pictures in order to report to Flagship.

23/03/11 Allotment including pump

There has been a small amount of water available from the pump. To bring item forward following investigation of the issue.

23/03/12 Financial Matters:

12.1 To approve any quotes received

None

12.2 To confirm payment of invoices:

The following invoices were proposed and agreed for payment:

Payee	Details	Amount
SALC	Payroll service	£22.80

It was agreed not to renew the Parish Online subscription as it had not been used in the previous year.

12.3 To consider any invoices received after the agenda was issued - to be tabled on the night

The following invoices were proposed and agreed for payment:

Payee	Details	Amount
Jadi Coe	Salary	£1,010.00
HMRC	Clerk PAYE/NI	£90.00

The annual donations have not been made in line with the 2022/23 budget which details £330.00.

It was proposed and agreed to make the same donations as made in 2021/22:

Payee	Details	Amount
Alzheimer's Society	Donation	£50.00
The Samaritans	Donation	£50.00
British Legion	Donation	£75.00
EA Childrens Hospice	Donation	£50.00
EAAA	Donation	£50.00
St Nicholas Hospice	Donation	£50.00

12.4 Defibrillator Clerk to update on bank balances held

The clerk reported that £660 is held in the current account and £21,226 in the deposit account.

23/03/13 Working Groups Report:

13.1 Circular Walk

No issues to report

13.2 Emergency Plan

No update

13.3 Defibrillator monthly check Report

The volunteer continues to carry out the monthly checks and has no issues to report.

13.4 Community Speedwatch

The teams intend to start again once the weather improves and the days get longer.

23/03/14 Correspondence Received:

None

23/03/15 Confirm important dates for the upcoming local elections

On Thursday 4 May 2023, there will be parish elections in West Suffolk.

The elections notice will be published on Wednesday 22nd March and those who wish to stand need to deliver their nomination papers by 4pm on Tuesday 4th April.

If there are more than 5 candidates, it is a contested election, and a poll will take place on Thursday 4th May alongside the District Poll.

There will be no poll if there are 5 candidates or less, as this will be an uncontested election.

The new members will take office from Tuesday 9th May 2023 for four years.

More detailed information including nomination packs can be found on West Suffolk Council's website.

Elections Timetable

22nd March – election notice is published

23rd March to 4pm on Tuesday 4th April 2023 – nomination packs can be delivered

5th April – statement of persons nominated is published

4th May – poll, if the election is contested

Voting Timetable

11th April - The deadline for registering to vote

18th April - The postal vote deadline is

25th April - The proxy vote deadline

To vote at a polling station, you will now need to bring photo ID.

23/03/16 Parish Pump

All articles are now with the publishers, and hopefully the final version will be confirmed before the end of the week.

23/03/17 Urgent Business

None

The meeting closed at 21:40

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