

**Minutes of the Meeting of Freethorpe Parish Council held
on Monday 17th January 2022 at 7.00pm at Freethorpe Village Hall**

Present: Nick Spencer (Chair, NS), Paul Bacon (PB),
Michael Blake (MB), Janet Church (JC), Grant Nurden (GN, also District
Councillor), Andrew Moll (Parish Clerk, AM))

Also present: Jackie Chambers (JaC, Norfolk Constabulary), John Fleetwood (JF, Tree Warden),
Steven Godden (SG, Norfolk Constabulary),
Lana Hemsall (LH, County Councillor),
Andrea Rowlands (AR, Tree Warden), and 1 member of the public

1. Apologies

David Lake (Vice-Chairman, DL)

2. Public Forum

a) Norfolk Police

NS welcomed representatives of Norfolk Constabulary, JaC and SG, Beat Managers for our locality. They introduced themselves and explained their engagement role across our district. Police priorities are set quarterly at area meetings which are open to all. Current number one priority is to reduce speeding. The Police have been working with Freethorpe Community Primary School, Highways and the Parish Council on children's road safety. The children's poster designs for speed safety in the village were on display at the meeting and much admired. Winning entries have been made into signs for display on 30mph posts. A prize presentation at the school is being scheduled. It was agreed that this should be on a date when the Head could be present, with JaC, SG and a Parish Councillor (NS, MB or GN).

ACTION AM

Concerns about speeding in the village were reinforced by the latest speed monitoring (detailed below in 10a). Although average speeds had reduced on Reedham Road, the 85th percentile is still nearly 10mph above the speed limit and there was one instance of 90mph. JaC offered to check whether that occurrence was a police car dealing with an emergency.

ACTION AM

There will be further Police speed checks in the village.

Volunteers are sought for a Freethorpe Community Speedwatch, beginning with a Volunteer Co-ordinator. Take-up for community speedwatch is low across the district. Ideas for improvement were discussed, including better equipment, smaller teams and cross-village groups, none of which were without issues.

The Parish Council agreed that the need for specific parish detail and visibility of scams in crime statistics should be raised with the Police and Crime Commissioner in a letter from Parish Council, GN and LH.

ACTION AM

b) County Councillor Report

LH reported that the County Council has produced a balanced budget. The savings to achieve this will not affect services. She is working with Highways to prioritise and expedite a backlog of work. She is also arranging key stakeholder discussions on A Million Trees for Norfolk.

ACTION LH

c) District Councillor Report

GN reported that food waste collection will be rolled out from October. Broadland have committed to match-fund use of hydrogenated vegetable oil fuel in the new environmental services contract. Charges and policies have been agreed for Fixed Penalty Notices, Street Naming and Numbering, Housing Allocation and Section 106 Monitoring. Details on the Broadland website. He attributed the Broadland 0% budget increase to savings made through collaboration with South Norfolk Council.

d) Tree Warden Report

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JF is showing the sentinel tree monitoring at Burlingham Wood on BBC's 'Green Planet'. Tree planting is under way in the district. More volunteers are needed. AR advised that it is hoped to restart Freethorpe Junior Tree Wardens soon. The invitation to the Network's AGM was extended to all.

JF and AR provided a report on the poplars at the Freethorpe Playing Field. Parish Council **agreed** that quotations be sought for deadwood removal. **ACTION AM**

Tree planting at Wickhampton Play Area was **agreed**, with Tree Wardens likely to be able to advise and provide trees. It was also **agreed** that JF and AR advise on the best location in Freethorpe for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Oak, either at the Village Hall or Brock's Meadow if the owner is happy. **ACTION AM**

e) Public Items

No items were raised by the members of the public.

3. **Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda**

As a substitute member of Broadland District Council's Planning Committee, GN is unable to discuss planning applications under agenda item 9. There were no other declarations.

4. **Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th November 2021**

The minutes were **agreed** as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

5. **Matters arising from the previous meeting**

- a) (5a) Concerns about a Million Trees for Norfolk (LH) – 2b refers.
- b) (5b) Local Nature Plan examples (AM) – item 10m refers
- c) (5c) Internal Finance check (MB) – ongoing
- d) (5d) Add MB as third signatory (AM) – paperwork has been sent, awaiting the bank to activate – GN advised that the process will be slow
- e) (5e) Review Village Hall donation (AM) – item 7c refers
- f) (10j) Invite residents to set up Community Speedwatch (AM) – advertised 10/01/22, item 10j refers.
- g) Other matters arising – none.

6. **Clerk's Report**

All items are covered on the agenda.

7. **Finance**

a) Monthly Financial Update

AM report the current 2021-22 financial position in summary:

Bank balance, including deposit account	£31,100.07
Forecast balance by end of March 2022	£10,964.60

GN is advising on the best way to schedule VAT reclaims and show VAT paid and reclaimed in the accounts.

b) Payments - it was **agreed** to make the following payments:

Ref	Payee	Description	Amount (£)
1	Andrew Moll	Salary November & December 2021	317.54
2	Andrew Moll	Administration Expenses - postage	4.85
3	HMRC	PAYE November & December 2021	79.40
4	NGFPlay Ltd.	PAID December 2021 with Chair & Vice-chair approval	161.28

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		<i>New cradle swing seat for Wickhampton Play Area as agreed at November meeting Invoice 4347 Inv Date 23/11/2021 VAT £26.88</i>	
5	Playdale Playgrounds Ltd.	50% deposit for new Giggleswick Plus Equipment Invoice 44234 Inv Date 02/12/2021 VAT £1000.07	6,000.42
6	The Sign Shed Ltd.	Sign production for school road safety competition. Invoice 731181 Inv Date 06/01/2022 VAT £20.47	122.81
7	Kevin Monsey	Final batch of work at the two play areas Original quote was £1590. First bill was £680. Second bill £825 (including £75 for repairing the vandalised shelter). Total billed £1505.	825.00
8	Andrew Moll	Reimbursement for 7 £20 Book tokens for school road safety prizes + £5.50 postage	145.50
9	Signs of the Times	Wickhampton Village Sign replacement Invoice 32462 Date 17/01/22 VAT £349.75 As per original quotation.	2,098.50

c) Village Hall Donation

A paper on the Parish Council donation to the Village Hall running costs was considered. NS affirmed that the Parish Council must ensure that the hall remains a viable parish asset. JC advised that the picture post-pandemic is not yet clear. Fixed overheads such as insurance are significant and income from use of the hall going forward remains to be seen. GN proposed, and it was **agreed**, that the budget is maintained but the situation is assessed again before the September meeting.

d) Precept

Parish Council considered the following proposed budget for 2022-23:

Cost Ctr	INCOME	0% Increase Budget (£)	Comments
IN0100	Precept	15,299	Unchanged
IN0110	Grants	0	Unchanged
IN0120	Recycling	200	Unchanged
IN0130	CIL	0	No known CIL
IN0140	Other	0	Unchanged
IN0150	Interest	5	Reduced from £32.11
IN0160	VAT Reclaim	2,000	Increased from £750 based on reclaim for 2021-22
	TOTAL	17,504	
Cost Ctr	EXPENDITURE	0% Increase Budget (£)	Comments
EX0100	Clerk Salary	2,037	3% increase for pay award
EX0110	HMRC	509	3% increase for pay award
EX0120	Mileage	0	Unchanged
EX0130	Administration	200	33% decrease based on 2021-22 actuals
EX0140	Training	150	Unchanged
EX0150	Subscriptions	250	Unchanged
EX0160	Audit	300	Unchanged
EX0200	Speed Management	288	Increased from £240 to cover operation of second SAM machine
EX0210	Grounds Maintenance	2,600	Increased from £2000 to cover additional cost of Wickhampton Play Area grounds mtce + inflation

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EX0300	Insurance	450	Reduced from £600 to reflect 3-year insurance agreement
EX0400	Church Grass Cutting (3)	2,055	Unchanged
EX0500	Recycling	100	Increased from £50 to reflect price increase
EX0700	Play Equipment	2,825	6% increase to cover inflation
EX0600	Village Hall Hire / Donation	3,600	Unchanged
EX0800	S137	815	Unchanged
EX0900	Miscellaneous	125	Unchanged
EX0990	Audit writeback	0	None
	VAT	1,200	Increased from £750 to reflect anticipated expenditure, for reclaim in 2023-24
	TOTAL	17,504	

The reserves position was as follows:

Date	Reserves (£)	Comments
April 2021	27,946	Included CIL, bolstered by back-dated S106 and VAT claims
April 2022 (estimated)	10,388	CIL fully spent and completion of other Earmarked Reserves projects, including Wickhampton Sign and second SAM machine. As a guide, £10,000 is around the minimum reserve that the Parish Council should be operating with.

The following additional income and expenditure may occur in 2022-23:

Item	Value (£)	Comments
CIL	Unknown	If the garage site is developed, some CIL income will be received
Wickhampton Pond	2,000	Legal costs may arise from decisions about the responsibilities for the pond
Allotments set-up & rental	5,000	A scenario of renting the land for 2022-23, costs of providing services and creation of allotments. Minimal income to offset.
Village sign & pump repairs	2,500	Repaint and replace as needed
Play Equipment 5-year replacement fund	2,000	Would generate £10,000 (one significant item replacement) in 5 years time.

Three options for precept increase for 2022-23 were presented:

Increase	Precept	Band D Council Tax	Comments
0%	£15,299	£46.50	
3.26%	£15,799	£48.02	Allows £500 to build up reserves
6.53%	£16,299	£49.54	Allows £1000 to build up reserves

Having considered the above figures, the Parish Council unanimously **agreed** the proposed budget. It was also unanimously **agreed** to increase the precept by 3.26% to allow £500 to build up reserves given the additional likely future expenditure. GN observed that the Parish Council had previously opted out of Broadland's Special Expenses Levy, which reduced Freethorpe Council Tax bills by £1.67 per household.

8. Correspondence

- Citizens Advice (CAB) Norfolk – speaker offer & donation request – it was **agreed** that a speaker be invited to the Parish AGM. Section 137 donations are agreed at September meeting. A donation was made to CAB in 2021-22 and they will be considered in 2022-23 discussions, reflecting their support to our parish. **ACTION AM**
- Great Yarmouth Local Plan adoption – was shared for information.

- c) Platinum Jubilee Oak location – item 2d refers.
- d) Overhanging trees in Wickhampton – has been resolved and residents thanked.
- e) Norwich Western Link Update – shared for information.
- f) Fly-tipping tyres at Wickhampton – shared for information.
- g) Meetings must be in person – shared for information.
- h) Wickhampton Play Area Planting – item 2d refers.

9. Planning

- a) New Applications – none.
- b) Decisions were noted reference 20211969 (47 Chapelfield) and 20210479 (2 Church Farm Cottages, Wickhampton)
- c) Enforcements – no further updates, but continuing concern at the Plantation was noted.

10. Update on Ongoing Matters and Projects

- a) Speed Management
The latest speed monitoring figures, for November and December 2021, showed small decreases in speed for the fourth consecutive month. The Green showed a small decrease in volume and a small decrease in 85%ile speed to 33.6mph; however 1 in 3 of drivers still exceeded the 30mph limit. On Reedham Road incoming speeds decreased by 2mph, 85%ile speed to 39.8mph. This is possibly the first time this figure has dipped below 40mph in a 30mph limit since records began in 2017. However a top speed of 90mph is very worrying. PLEASE DRIVE SAFELY.
- b) Second SAM2 machine
Is being delivered in February.
- c) School Road Safety Project
Item 2a refers.
- d) Play Area Works (and two new benches)
The package of works to bring Freethorpe and Wickhampton Play Areas up to standard has been completed. The shelter roof at Wickhampton which was damaged by vandalism has been repaired. A new cradle swing seat has been fitted at Wickhampton. A decision paper for the replacement of two broken benches was discussed. Four costed options were presented for each bench. It was agreed that the Glasdon Phoenix bench be ordered for Wickhampton Play Area (£594.27 including plaque and fixings) and the Costcutters Dale-TDP bench (around £362.47 depending on fixings) be ordered for Palmers Lane. Both are recycled plastic which will save on maintenance in the longer term.
- e) Freethorpe Play Area new equipment
Delivery is scheduled for week commencing 28th February.
- f) Play Area Inspections
No new or urgent issues have been identified in inspections.
- g) Wickhampton Village Sign
Is being delivered on 18th January.
- h) Wickhampton Entry Sign
Awaiting installation schedule from Highways.
- i) Parish Partnership bid 2022-23
AM reported that the gating approved at the previous meeting proved more complicated and costly than expected on inspection and measurement of the site. Therefore the Parish Partnership bid was not submitted.
- j) Community Speedwatch
Now requires a member of the public to come forward as volunteer co-ordinator.
- k) Allotments
AR gave an update on progress. One landowner is open to proposals to rent a piece of land for the creation of allotments. Various considerations were discussed by Parish

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Councillors, including water services, fencing, gating, financing and the need to avoid the area becoming unsightly. AR will develop a proposal for further consideration.

A piece of waste ground on the Common, owned by Clarion Housing, was discussed in the context of needing to be tidied up. AR has the details. AM to write. **ACTION AM**

l) Freethorpe Village Sign

Estimate for cleaning and repainting is being developed.

m) Parish Nature Plan

Some examples have been provided for Parish Councillors to read.

11. Other Matters

None

12. Reports from Parish Councillors and items for next agenda

Parish Councillors notified potholes on Halvergate Road and the junction of the Common and Old Chapel Road. AM to report to Highways. NS confirmed to PB that Highways, not Parish Council, are legally responsible for the safety of the road surface.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 21st February 2022, 7:00pm at Freethorpe Village Hall.

14. Exclusion of the Press and Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to consider the following item of business:

None

The meeting closed at 8:55 pm.

Signed after approval by the Parish Council as being a true and accurate record by the Chair of the meeting or authorised deputy	Chair Nick Spencer	Date
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