

**Minutes of the Meeting of Freethorpe Parish Council held  
on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 7.00pm at Freethorpe Village Hall**

**Present:** Nick Spencer (NS, Chair), Paul Bacon (PB),  
Janet Church (JC), David Lake (DL, Vice-Chair),  
Grant Nurden (GN, also District Councillor), Andrew Moll (AM, Parish Clerk)

**Also present:** John Fleetwood (JF, Tree Warden), Andrea Rowlands (AR, Tree Warden),  
and 11 members of the public

**1. Apologies**

Michael Blake (MB), Lana Hemsall (LH, County Councillor)

**2. Public Forum**

*Note that item 9a (Planning application 20220838) was dealt with first, as 10 members of the public attended for this item, allowing them to leave on completion of that item.*

**a) County Councillor Report**

LH had asked for any items or issues requiring her attention to be passed on from the meeting. PB suggested that it would be helpful if LH could provide a brief report from County Council if unable to attend. The preference would be for LH to attend the meeting, appreciating, of course, her range of other public service duties. **ACTION AM**

**b) District Councillor Report**

GN reported that the joint purchase of a new building for Broadland and South Norfolk had been agreed. He assured the meeting that there would be no council tax impact of the move and that it would have a positive impact. The Annual General Meeting took place on 26<sup>th</sup> May. GN advised of significant appointments and the next Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 28<sup>th</sup> June. GN advised that a new Street Cleaning service had been put in place. This moves from a fixed schedule to a maintenance-based approach. Freethorpe has been rated medium intensity. If residents report being unhappy with the state of a street, the contractor has 1 day to respond.

**c) Tree Wardens Report**

JF reported that the two plaques requested had been installed. He was grateful for GN's assistance in arrangements that led to tree wardens joining Broadland District Council's stand at the Royal Norfolk Show. An event to raise the profile of the Sentinel project at Burlingham Wood takes place at the weekend. JF also praised the responsiveness of Broadland District Council to a recent TPO situation.

**d) Public Items**

It was raised that the Old Chapel Road streetname sign was broken. **ACTION AM**

**e) Review and confirmation of standing orders, not included in links for the May review of policies**

AM advised that while the standing orders had been provided in the file location for review at the previous meeting, the link had not been specified on the agenda. It was included this time for completeness. It was confirmed that these were unanimously **agreed**.

Standing Orders

**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 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

The minutes were **agreed** as an accurate record and were duly signed by NS as Chair.

## 5. Matters arising from the previous meeting

- a) (2ci) The future of cheques (AM) – item 7c refers.
- b) (2cii) CiLCA training policy assessment (AM) – free overview course booked 28/07/22 to confirm time and benefits (course cost is £860) – proposed that AM circulate by email after that for permission to book Sept training, if demonstrably advantageous for Freethorpe PC, from reserves. GN proposed that the Parish Council should fund as it was likely to be beneficial. The proposal was unanimously **agreed**.
- c) (5a) Explore EV charge point (AM/LH) – item 10j refers
- d) (5b) Developers honouring conditions – follow up (GN/JF) – JF received planning officer advice that conditions are not checked up post-development, which makes them almost useless. GN suggested that JF should email Ian Moncur and Shaun Vincent. **ACTION JF**
- e) (5f) Can S106 money help with the MUGA? (AM) – item 7a refers.
- f) (5j) Highways advice on Reedham Road safety (AM/LH) – carry forward **ACTION AM**
- g) (8a) Mill Road-Church Road junction. Update resident. (AM) – item 8d refers.
- h) (8c) Request dog fouling stickers (AM) – done. Item 8b refers.
- i) (9a) Respond to applications 20220619 and 20220815 (AM/JF) – done.
- j) (10d) Consider alternative allotment sites (AM/AR) – item 10d refers.
- k) (11) Log missing fingerpost sign at School Road (AM) – done.
- l) (12b) Raise tree warden concern about the Church Farm House overhanging branch. (AM) – done.
- m) Other matters arising - none

## 6. Clerk's Report

All items picked up on the agenda.

## 7. Finance

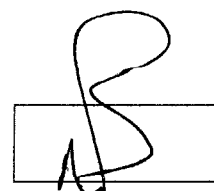
### a) Monthly Financial Update

AM advised that Section 106 funding available relating to Palmers Lane has been clarified. £3,161.87 has been claimed towards the cost of the new play equipment. This leaves £15,642.33 which is earmarked for sports facilities or equipment, and may be claimed for maintenance, repair or replacement. Broadland have advised that it cannot be claimed for tree surgery at the playing field but could be used for the costs of moving pitches if that is an option. The financial position, in summary, was as follows:

Income	£8,573.61
Operational Expenditure	£2,487.64
Earmarked Reserves Expenditure	£691.87
Bank balance, including deposit account	£19,410.26

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

Ref	Payee	Description	Amount (£)
1	Andrew Moll	Salary for May 2022	169.33
2	Andrew Moll	Administration Expenses – postage	2.72
3	HMRC	PAYE	42.20
4	John Fleetwood	Reimbursement for two tree plaques	76.58
5	Seated Furniture Ltd.	Palmers Lane bench, delivered 31/05/2022 INV-046535 Date 25/05/2022 VAT 76.66	459.94



c) Should the Parish Council continue to use cheques?

A paper was received, detailing two options. It was agreed that online banking for payments should only be considered with online options for multiple approvals. This is not offered by our current bank, therefore a change to a bank account that allowed this would be necessary. The costs of producing and posting cheques is less than £40 a year. Online banking would not necessarily result in faster payments as approval would still revolve around monthly meetings. Therefore it was **agreed** to continue to pay by cheque, but to be ready to change if, for any reason, cheque payment becomes more problematic.

d) CIL Statement 2021/22

The Community Infrastructure Levy statement for 2021/22 was received prior to submission to Broadland District Council. This described how money already received has been earmarked and spent in 2021/22. £A brought forward balance of £10,070.45 was increased by a further £3,062.30 relating to Suttons Crescent development. A total of £10,546.09 was accounted to CIL relating to the second SAM machine (50%), new Wickhampton entry signs, new Wickhampton village sign, and the new play equipment at Freethorpe (less the S106 contribution, item 7a refers). The CIL statement was **agreed**.

## 8. Correspondence

- a) Citizens Advice Bureau – presentation data from the annual parish meeting was provided to councillors for information.
- b) Dog fouling – Broadland had kindly provided some advice and official stickers. It was agreed that (i) the Blacksmith's Shop Corner and the Southwood end of the Common be identified as two problem areas and stickers displayed and (ii) that parishioners be invited to advise any other problem areas where stickers should be displayed. If problems persist, the areas can be reported to Environmental Health who will monitor and issue fines. **ACTION AM**
- c) Broadland Town & Parish Council Forum on 13<sup>th</sup> July 9-11 was noted.
- d) The visibility at the Mill Road-Church Road junction was discussed. The Highways guidance on mirrors was noted. It was felt that the verge cutting had alleviated the problem.
- e) The outcomes of the Police Forum of 16<sup>th</sup> June were noted.
- f) The Temporary Traffic Order to close Halvergate Road on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 for work on the trees around overhead cables was noted. It was agreed that a letter be sent to the resident at 4 Halvergate Road to advise them of the work and suggest that it would be a good time for roadside hedge cutting. **ACTION AM**

## 9. Planning

a) New Applications

20220838 Palmers Lane new site - it was unanimously agreed to **object** to the application on the following grounds:

1. There is **considerable strength of feeling** against this application among parish councillors and residents, represented by the attendance at the meeting of 10 members of the public directly impacted by the proposal, anxious and annoyed that it has been put forward.
2. The Parish Council understands that the application is **contrary to Broadland planning policy** as articulated in CPRE's response of 1st June 2022. The Parish Council fully concurs with CPRE's response. The proposed development is clearly outside the settlement boundaries.
3. The Parish Council believes that **sufficient extra development is already planned** for the parish within the settlement boundaries, with 10 new houses recently built at Observer Close, outline planning permission for 19 houses and detailed planning in progress at the old garage site (75 The Green), and the GNL

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earmarked site off Bowlers Close for 40 houses. All of these are expected to include affordable housing. Further housing is not needed and the local infrastructure does not have the capacity to cope with more.

4. The Parish Council believes that the proposed site is an **inappropriate place to build**. The Highways infrastructure is particularly problematic, with a busy blind junction at one end of the road, and a single-track lane into the countryside as the only other entry/exit point. Visibility is poor from the proposed access point to Palmers Lane with numerous obstructions including telegraph poles, trees and hedging. It is difficult to imagine how this set-up could safely accommodate more car traffic. The single-track lane is also much used by walkers and cyclists, with no footpath, adding to a safety concern with increased traffic. Loss of green space is an issue. The proposal is a back land development which is inconsistent with the approach taken in Freethorpe. The development overlooks and would impact existing homes on two sides, including the grade 2 listed Walpole Almshouses.

5. The Parish Council believes that the application only tells **half the story**, as a further site (marked in blue on the location plan) would be likely to be brought into play in the future if this application were to be approved. This would heighten the concerns expressed above.

20220852 Wickhampton Farm Barn solar panels – there were no objections.

20220923 75 The Green removal of affordable homes from development – it was unanimously agreed to **object** to the application on the following grounds:

1. The Parish Council **objects to the removal of affordable housing** from this scheme. The Parish Council has supported development in the parish because it has regarded the affordable housing element as crucial for the life of the parish.
2. The Parish Council believes that **misleading data** was used to justify the viability calculations, such as the inclusion of house prices in Great Yarmouth, which are significantly lower than those in Freethorpe, and the exclusion of local data, such as the new houses in Observer Close. The feasibility study has over-complicated the situation, given that the land was bought at auction with outline planning permission in place. Some of the land type classifications appear to be irrelevant to the situation.
3. The Parish Council believes that if the affordable houses were to be removed from this development it would set a damaging **precedent** that every developer would follow to maximise profits.
4. The Parish Council considers that the affordable homes in this development should be **maintained at 5 out of the 19 houses**.
5. The Parish Council wishes to highlight that the **associated planning application 20220619 has not been approved** and that the Parish Council also had to object to that application on grounds of insufficient detail and concerns regarding Highways, environmental issues, the impact of changes to window sizes and placement, and apparent inaccuracies in the plan regarding site boundaries. The calculations regarding affordable housing seem premature given the further work that is clearly necessary on the detail of the design.

- b) Decisions  
20220833 The Orchards, Wickhampton, approval of tree surgery on sycamore tree was noted.
- c) Enforcements – one open enforcement was discussed. Item 10i refers.

## 10. Update on Ongoing Matters and Projects

### a) Speed Management

This month's speeding figures were from School Road, with 85th percentile speed unchanged at 28.4mph, and a top speed of 45mph from 4,426 vehicles; and the Common at the Southwood entry with 85th percentile speed of 31.9mph, and a top speed of 55mph from 17,962 vehicles in the month. Parish Council reviewed the overall data built up across the various SAM machine locations in the village. The 85th percentile speeds are consistently above the speed limit, and the top speeds recorded at several locations are alarming. Parish Council noted work done to discourage speeding, including the second SAM machine, the children's posters, and increased Police presence. GN advised that Reedham Parish Council had complimented the children's posters. Last week, the Police issued three speeding tickets during a speed check using police motorbikes near the Village Hall. The data shows that Reedham Road is the worst place for speeding, with speeds almost 10mph higher than elsewhere. 85th percentile speeds are over 40mph in a 30mph limit. Parish Council also considered this the most dangerous place for speeding given that children cross the road there for school and the play area. Therefore it was agreed that this area will continue to be our primary focus for speed reduction with the Police and Highways. PLEASE DRIVE SAFELY.

### b) New benches at Wickhampton and Freethorpe

AM advised that the Wickhampton Platinum Jubilee seat and picnic bench are now both in place. The seat for Palmers Lane has been delivered and is awaiting installation.

### c) Play Area Inspections

Parish Council noted the satisfactory annual play area inspections at Wickhampton Play Area and Freethorpe Play Area. The Parish Council decided to get some costs for surfacing options around the swings and other equipment at Freethorpe based on the inspector's recommendations. No new or urgent issues have been identified in inspections, although the broken wooden seat at Wickhampton will need to be made safe and the basketball backboard replaced.

### d) Allotments

Parish Council asked for further assessment of possible allotment sites to be carried out and discussed with the landowner. If there is a feasible site, then residents will be consulted further as to their interest.

**ACTION AM/AR**

### e) Freethorpe Village Sign

Awaiting work to clean and re-paint. Parish Council noted the new planters around the village sign and expressed their gratitude to those who had constructed them and planted them.

### f) Parish Nature Plan

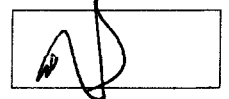
This action was initiated by Parish Council when the Broads Authority visited Freethorpe Parish Council. Parish Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Parish Nature Plan, which is part of its response to the biodiversity crisis and climate change. The first stage is to gather some base data about nature in our parish during 2022. A survey will be sent to all homes. JF advised that insurance and safety must be considered for any groups of people carrying out surveys of verges and other sites.

**ACTION AM**

### g) Tree Surgery at Freethorpe Playing Field

As a follow-up to JF and AR's report, JF has kindly agreed to meet football club representatives next Monday to discuss the issues and possible approaches. JF reiterated that the trees must be maintained by qualified personnel. There is undergrowth

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harbouring hornet clearwing moths that needs to be cleared. NS reiterated that Parish Council priority must be the work on the oaks on School Road. PB asked if the use of the pitches could be reviewed at least temporarily to fit around work. The fundamental problem remains lack of funding to meet anticipated costs. Broadland have discounted using Section 106 sports facilities funds, item 7a above refers. JF advised that Broadland grants are only likely in the event of danger. Funding from the football side, such as the FA, is the likeliest source.

h) Community Emergency Plan

Parish Council approved the new Community Emergency Plan, which will be held by Broadland District Council's Resilience Team for use in emergency situations. Parish Councillors will also retain copies.

i) Rampant Horse

Parish Council noted the continuing concerns expressed by a number of residents about the closure of the Rampant Horse, and is keeping in contact with Broadland District Council for advice and information. Parish Councillors have observed car sales re-started in the yard. Parish Council is asking that someone comes forward to co-ordinate a group of interested residents to gather evidence of the viability of the village pub in Freethorpe. This would enable the completion of the ACV nomination, accepting that this is only specifically helpful in the event of the pub going up for sale.

**11. Other Matters**

a) Platinum Jubilee – Parish Council noted the successful Platinum Jubilee events and the work to make them happen.

b) Extra 'no dogs allowed' signs for the Freethorpe Playing Field – were agreed as it was reported that people are taking dogs on despite the current signage.

**ACTION AM**

c) Potholes - have re-appeared on Halvergate Road, and an outstanding pothole for fixing is on Old Chapel Road opposite Fishers.

**ACTION AM**

**12. Reports from Parish Councillors and items for next agenda**


None.

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 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 8:30 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 18/7/22
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