

FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

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27th February 2025

Notice is hereby given that there will be a meeting of Freshwater Parish Council on Tuesday 4th March 2025 in the Council Chamber, Memorial Hall, Freshwater, immediately after the planning meeting.

The public and press are cordially invited to attend.

Melanie Gardiner
Assistant Clerk to Freshwater Parish Council

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. To agree the Minutes of the Freshwater Parish Council meeting held on the 4th February
3. To invite Councillors to declare an interest in matters on the Agenda.
4. To receive questions on the agenda from members of the public (up to 15 mins).
5. To accept written reports from Freshwater Ward County Councillors / Questions and update.session (up to 15 minutes from all Councillors).
6. Chair's Report (circulated to Councillors)
7. Clerk's Report – to be circulated to Councillors.
8. Correspondence.

FINANCE

9.
 - a. To agree accounts for payment – list circulated to Councillors for information.
 - b. To agree the budget forecast for 2024/25
 - c. To agree the ringfencing of reserves for the Colwell Bay Buoys.
 - d. To agree to the recommendation for the appointment of the internal auditor.
 - e. To review Community Grant applications from West Sports & Community Centre and Dimbola.
 - f. To agree the ringfencing of reserves for 2025/26.
10. To agree to the costings for the New MUGA Lights
11. To receive the Finance Committee recommendations for the Community Grants.

12. To agree to the Risk Register (paper copies given to Councillors 4th February meeting)
13. Report on the Memorial Hall – Councillor James.
14. Report from the Library Committee - Councillor Whyte.
15. To proposed that the Community Resilience Committee fold and come under Land Management.
16. To invite all Cllrs to join sub committees (circulated to Councillors).
17. To agree the Freshwater Bay Boat Park application form, management policy and terms and conditions.

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

17. To receive & consider the Tenders.
18. To consider the proposal by the chair of the personnel committee in the matter of employing a new Clerk/RFO.



FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Office 01983 752000

Draft

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL HELD
ON TUESDAY 4th FEBRUARY 2025 AT 8.10 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
MEMORIAL HALL, FRESHWATER**

PRESENT: Councillors: E Cox (Chair), T Armstrong, A Bamford, D Hicklin, B Hinton
MBE, B Hobbs, D James, C Jarman, K Sloan-Murphy, N Thomas and F Turan .

Members of the public: 3

Clerk: M Gardiner

In attendance Finance Officer – P Blackley

1. **APOLOGIES:** Councillor Whyte.
2. **TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 14th JANUARY 2025 AND THE MINUTES OF THE FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3rd DECEMBER 2024 – DEFERRED FROM JANUARY**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th January 2025 (having been circulated) were **AGREED** (FT/KSM)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd December 2024 (having been circulated) were **AGREED** (CJ/NT)

3. **TO INVITE COUNCILLORS TO DECLARE AN INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA.**
Councillor Sloan-Murphy works for Richard Quigley MP
4. **TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS ON THE AGENDA FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (UP TO 15 MINUTES).**
None

5. TO ACCEPT WRITTEN REPORTS FROM FRESHWATER WARD COUNCILLORS.

Report received and circulated from Councillor Spink.

6. CHAIR'S REPORT

This month has been shorter than usual as there has only been 3 weeks since our last meeting. I have been quite busy with Parish business. I enjoyed the Public Consultation Day, meeting with our residents, sharing what we do and giving a platform for local community groups to tell residents about the work they do.

Tuesday 29th January

I visited Freshwater Bay to put a notice on our board. I was unable to park in the Isle of Wight Council car park as the road was closed due to flooding and tonnes of pebbles which should have been on the beach. The revetment looked quite battered and the benches on the promenade were mostly covered with pebbles, one bench only being visible for the top inch or so. As Chair of the Land Management and Assets Committee, I was concerned for any damage to the area which may need repairs. As a local resident I was very glad I always remember not to drive down by the Bay in stormy weather.

15 January

I attended my last weekly meeting with Heather Rowell. Emma Carter and Paul Blackley were in attendance. Normally we have a catch up on items currently being worked on within the Parish. The meeting concentrated on ensuring that Emma and Paul were fully briefed on the full council meeting on the 14 January.

16 January IWALC Cabinet Meeting

I attended the above meeting along with Councillor Sloan Murphy. Unfortunately, there were some IT issues and many councillors had problems accessing the meeting. Wendy Perera was in attendance and gave councillors information relating to devolution. The meeting was well attended.

The IWALC Cabinet meetings are open for any councillor whose Council is a member of IWALC. Councillors are sent a link via their Clerk to attend online. The meetings give councillors an opportunity to ask questions to the Cabinet members directly. Each councillor may ask any question they wish to. The questions are not limited to specific topics, although whilst Councillor Bamford was Chair, guest speakers had begun to be invited for topic sessions. Participants are not usually charged with asking questions on the behalf of their Council nor are they required to report back with information gained unless they wish to do so. I would encourage any councillor who has the time and availability to attend at least a few of these meetings as they are a valuable source of

information. They are also a good introduction to other councillors from across the Island.

We are waiting for an update from the IW Council to all Parishes as to how the relationship with County Hall will be in the future under the new Committee system. I hope these meetings will continue.

21 January

The Planning and Land Management and Asset Committee meetings were cancelled.

I attended a now weekly meeting with Paul Blackley, I expect these meetings to continue for some time. These meetings allow me to better understand the finance of the Parish Council and assist with some of the paperwork.

22 January

My Monday meetings with Heather have come to an end and I now attend Wednesday meetings with the Clerks. We discuss all issues concerning the Parish, and I hope these meetings will ensure the smooth running of the Parish until a new Clerk is appointed.

23 January

I attended a Freshwater Bay Residents Association meeting at the invitation of the Chair Neil Aplin. Councillor Jarman was also in attendance. Councillor Jarman attended in a private capacity to give a presentation on his Community Interest Community. There was an update from the local speedwatch group. We were also informed that a section of hedge near Freshwater Bay approximately 10 metres in length will be laid using traditional techniques. We were warned in the first year the section will look quite bare, as the technique normally takes several years to fill back out. Hedge laying is a huge benefit to wildlife.

25 January Freshwater Parish Council Annual Public Consultation

I would like to thank Councillors Armstrong, Bamford, Hobbs, James, Jarman, Sloan Murphy, Thomas and Turan for their attendance on the day. I would like to particularly like to thank Councillor Sloan Murphy who attended despite feeling quite poorly and soldiered on regardless.

A number of local community groups attended, Natural Enterprises, the West Wight Sports and Community Centre, Totland Scouts, Men in Sheds, Ability Dogs 4 Young People, Alzheimer Cafe Totland and Community Connector I would like to thank these groups for their support on the day.

The Consultation gives us a chance to meet and speak with residents and I was disappointed that the number of members of the public who came was lower than in 2024. I would also like to report that no one came into the hall after 4 pm. I decided at 5.30 pm to end the consultation early, the community groups apart from Natural Enterprises had all left by 5 pm. Councillors may wish to reconsider the details for the consultation in 2026.

27 January

I attended a Personnel Committee meeting chaired by Councillor James with Councillors Bamford and Jarman also present. The meeting is considered confidential due to the nature of the discussions. Councillor James will report directly to the Full Council.

29 January Site visit for planning application 24/01896/out

I attended the planning committee site visit organised by Emma Carter. Councillors also in attendance Armstrong and Turan. I would like to thank Martha James, the agent for the application for organising the visit for councillors.

7. **CLERK'S REPORT (CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS).**

Tree Survey

The Deputy Clerk Emma Carter has now received the completed Tree Survey report. The next task is to go through and see what the recommend works are – referred to Land Management and Assets Committee as this falls within their responsibilities.

MUGA Shelter

The Parish facilities Officer has removed the shelter at the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). Remedial works will need to be carried out to 'make good' the area of land.
COMPLETED

Moa Place Telephone Box

The Deputy Clerk Emma Carter has received a quotation to have the Telephone Box at Moa Place refurbished. This will be carried out when the weather is suitable.

Tenders

The Land Management grass cutting and cleaning tenders have been advertised. Both have been advertised on the relevant government and Isle of Wight County Press websites plus also in the IWCP paper. There has been interest expressed against both tenders, but no quotations have so far been received.

Spinfish

The contractor has been contacted and notified that their bid has been successful. The deputy clerk Emma Carter is currently waiting on a date for the work to commence. It has been confirmed that the water levels will need to drop before work can start. So ideally around late spring weather dependent but confirmation will be received before any work is started.

Clive Fleury

The Deputy Clerk Emma Carter has written to Churchers Solicitors in respect of the Estate of the Late Clive Fleury (deceased). A cheque will be sent to Freshwater Parish Council with regards to the legacy of £1,000. This will be added to the Community Grants Fund as per Clive's wish.

Play Equipment

The Deputy Clerk Emma Carter has now received two quotations for a replacement trim trail, Seesaw and nest swing. A third supplier still needs to be sourced, and a site meeting arranged.

New Skate Park/ Pump Track

A percolation test has been carried out and completed on the Stroud Recreation Ground by Dial a Rod Engineering Services Limited, and then, sent to Gravity Engineering Limited for their response to the results of the test.

Website.

Councillor James contacted the office with regards to a website he found. Deputy Clerk Emma Carter confirmed that it was nothing to do with the Parish Council and that it is part of the Community Action Initiative. Confirmation was also given that every parish council on the Isle of Wight has a page and that there is nothing on it that can't be found either on the Parish website or the Isle of Wight Council website.

8. CORRESPONDENCE.

An email was received from a resident to confirm that another one of the gabions along Spinfish is collapsing. These were flagged up last year as being in need of replacement in the near future – **It was agreed to refer this matter to the Land Management and Asset Committee.**

An email from Ability 4 dogs has been received thanking the Parish Council for allowing them to attend the Consultation Day.

An email has been received from the architects of the Albion Hotel asking if the Parish Councillors wished to have a tour of the site again. This would enable them to show work that has been completed and talk about the plans they still have. The meeting is

currently slated for Friday 14th February 2025 at 12.30pm on site. **It was agreed to ask the Albion Hotel if an evening visit could be arranged to enable Councillors who are not available in the day to attend.**

The Chair has received an email from Graham Biss requesting an update on their grant application. The Chair will request for this to be on the next Finance Agenda.

Correspondence received from PO Services regarding the Hearing sessions of the examination of the Isle of Wight Local Plan. The original email invitation sent on 20th December 2024 cannot be. As the first session is to be held on 5th February 2025 which is now too late for Councillors to make representations it was felt that it was important that Councillors do not miss such an opportunity again. **The Chair has requested that Officers email the author of the PO Services email requesting a copy of the original email.**

9. **a. TO AGREE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT - LIST CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS FOR INFORMATION.**
Payments (having been circulated) were AGREED. (NT/DH)
- b. TO AGREE THE BANK RECONCILIATION – The bank reconciliation (having been circulated) was AGREED. (CJ/NT)**
- c. TO AGREE THE BUDGET FORECAST FOR 2024-2025 – DEFERRED FROM JANUARY MEETING - AGREED (CJ/NT)**
- d. TO AGREE THE PRECEPT FOR 2025/2026 –** It was resolved to accept the 9% precept increase to allow for the anticipated rise in contract costs in the 2025/26 financial year – **AGREED (NT/CJ)**
10. **TO CONSIDER THE UPDATED RISK REGISTER (PAPER COPIES TO BE GIVEN TO COUNCILLORS) TO BE RATIFIED 4TH MARCH MEETING.**
Copies of the updated Risk Register were supplied to Councillors for consideration. Councillors are requested to make any comments to Officers by the 24th February 2025. This will allow officers to consider comments and make any adjustments required before the report is brought back to full council on the 4th March 2025 for ratification.
11. **REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION DAY ON THE 26th JANUARY 2025.**
The Chair thanks all Councillors for attending the consultation and apologised that banners advertising the consultation were not produced.

There were approximately 30-40 attendees which is lower than previous years. There were two written comments, both relating to Island Roads which will be forwarded on to them for their attention.

Councillors may wish to consider a change of venue/time or a return to the previous two sessions for future consultations.

It was agreed that the Chair would produce a guidance sheet/policy and events box for future Parish Council events.

12. CURRENT SKATE PARK UPDATE – Councillor Cox.

Proposed to defer to the land management and assets committee until further updates are available – **It was agreed to defer the future use of the Skate Park to Land Management and Assets Committee.**

13. THE CHAIR PROPOSES THE FOLLOWING: - TO NOMINATE COUNCILLOR JAMES TO BEGIN AN OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT & FUTURE AGREEMENT BETWEEN FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL, TOTLAND PARISH COUNCIL AND THE MEMORIAL HALL COMMITTEE FOR REPORTING PURPOSES ONLY - AGREED (EC/KSM)

The Chair of the Parish Council read out a letter she received from Totland Parish Council dated 21st January 2025 and Councillor Bamford requested the following be minuted.

Councillor Bamford objects to the notion that another Parish Council can talk on behalf of the Memorial Hall Arts and Leisure Company (MALCO).

14. TO AGREE THE QUOTES FOR REPLACING THE BINS ON THE STROUD/BLACK HUT GREEN AND AT FRESHWATER BAY. – REFERRED TO THE LAND MANAGEMENT AND ASSETS COMMITTEE

It was resolved that Councillor James investigate the cost of purchasing second hand bins from Ebay or similar sites. **AGREED (DJ/TA)**

15. CO-OPTION A NEW COUNCILLORS

Full council voted to co-opt two new candidates to Council having each given a brief presentation and votes duly counted.

The candidates were instructed to contact the Clerk during office hours to sign their declarations of acceptance.

16. TO INVITE ALL COUNCILLORS TO JOIN SUB COMMITTEES (CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS) APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AS FOLLOWS:

It was resolved that Councillor Sloan-Murphy is now a member of the finance committee.
- **AGREED**

It was resolved that Mrs Knowles in principle will join the Land Management and Asset Committee and the Personnel Committee on completion of all necessary paperwork and accepted by the Clerk of the Parish Council - **AGREED (EC/DJ)**.

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

17. TO RECEIVE & CONSIDER THE LIBRARY LIFE LINE QUOTE

Quotations for the Fire Alarm maintenance (contract) and zone alarm plan were received.
– **AGREED (BH/BH)**

18. THE RECEIVE & CONSIDER THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION.

Councillor James gave an update on the recruitment process for the new Clerk/RFO. There was a good level of applications, and five applicants were shortlisted for interview. Two interviews have taken place at the current time with a further due to be held on Friday 7th February and the remaining interviews to take place the following week. Councillor James hopes to have a recommendation by the date of the next planning meeting on 18th February 2025.

The meeting closed at 9.37pm.



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**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE FRESHWATER
PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON FRIDAY 21ST FEBRUARY 2025 AT 10.00AM IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MEMORIAL HALL, FRESHWATER**

PRESENT: Councillors James (Chair), Armstrong, Bamford, Cox, Hobbs, Jarman,

Members of the public: 0

Clerk: M Gardiner

1. **APOLOGIES:** Councillors Sloan-Murphy, Thomas, Whyte
2. **TO INVITE COUNCILLORS TO DECLARE AN INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA:** None
3. **TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS ON THE AGENDA FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (UP TO 15 MINUTES):** No public present.

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

4. **TO RECEIVE THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – RECEIVED**
5. **TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL BY THE CHAIR OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE IN THE MATTER OF EMPLOYING A NEW CLERK/RFO**
It was resolved to accept the recommendation of the personnel committee in the matter of the appointment of the Responsible Finance Officer and for this item to be added to the agenda for the next full council meeting for ratification. **AGREED (DJ/TA)**

It was resolved to accept the recommendation of the personnel committee in the matter of the appointment of the Clerk and for this item to be added to the agenda for the next full council meeting for ratification. **AGREED (DJ/CJ)**

The meeting closed at 10.40 am

DRAFT

The last month has been challenging for both Officers and Councillors as we continued with the process of replacing the Clerk/RFO to the Parish Councillor. The Personnel Committee will report on this process to the Full Council.

I continue to meet with Officers on Wednesday mornings for general discussions and Tuesday mornings with the Finance Officer subject to his availability.

I have received a number of emails, telephone conversations and spoken to residents concerned about the conditions at Freshwater Bay following the last storm. I have begun to investigate those concerns, in particular the Isle of Wight Council's decision not to clear the promenade, leaving it closed to the public and vehicles.

- 4 February I attended interviews as Chair of the Council in the process of seeking a new Clerk/RFO, Chair of the Personnel Committee Councillor James was in attendance along with Committee members Councillors Bamford and Jarman.
- 7 February I attended an interview as Chair of the Council as detailed above.
- 10 February I was invited and attended a Freshwater Bay Residents Bay Committee meeting; I continue to address issues raised by the group
- 11 February I met with the Vice Chair Warren Whyte for a detailed catch up meeting, this was considered necessary due to the number of ongoing issues being managed by Officers without the support of a Clerk in position and a loss of work hours available.
- 13 February At the request of the Assistant Clerk I met with her and we had a 2 hour session to assist her learning and understanding of planning at the Parish Council level. I am available to any Councillor who would like to have a similar session. This is a basic level introduction and Councillors Armstrong and Turan have already participated in a session.
- 13 February I attended the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils monthly meeting with the Isle of Wight Council Cabinet. Alaster Sims who is the Isle of Wight Council's Service Manager for Climate, Coast and Environment Communities was available to answer questions. We also received clarification on how the elections are likely to proceed for local Community, Parish and Town Councils and County Councillors moving forward. Local elections for Parishes will take place in May 2025, elections for County Councillors are predicted to take place in 2026. Both sets of elections will then take place in 2029 re-aligning the elections for Parishes and County. We were informed by Councillor Phil Jordan that the Isle of Wight Council is looking at ways to help fund the elections which would be an unexpected

additional cost for Parish Councils in May 2025. We await clarity of details from the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils for the details.

I requested for the meeting in March the Cabinet give an update on the new Committee system replacing the current Cabinet system in May 2025.

- 14 February At the invitation of the Albion Hotel architects I attended a visit to the hotel. Also in attendance were Councillors Bamford, Hinton, Hobbs and Turan. Assistant Clerk Melanie Gardiner was also in attendance. The hotel had almost completed the works as detailed in their last planning application. They had also made some minor internal alterations to better serve their clientele. They also discussed their plans for the future of the hotel and the area outside the bar area facing the promenade.
- 17 February I attended interviews for the Clerk/RFO position at the Parish Council. Also, in attendance Chair of the Personnel Committee Councillor and Committee member Councillor Bamford.
- James
- 18 February I attend the Finance Meeting as Chair of the Parish Council. The meeting was Chaired by Council Jarman who is submitting a written report to the Full Council.
- 18 February I attended the Land Management and Assets Committee meeting and as Chair of the Committee I have produced a report for the Full Council meeting.
- 20 February I attended a Teams Meeting with the Finance Officer and Chair of the Finance Councillor Thomas, we discussed a number of issues including an additional meeting of the Finance Committee in March.
- 21 February At the request of the Chair of the Personnel Committee Councillor James I called an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council for this date at 10 am. I would like to thank the following Councillors for attending the meeting at short notice Councillors, Armstrong, Bamford, Hobbs, James and Jarman. I would also like to thank all Councillors who responded to the request, but who were unable to attend due to the short notice. The meeting was Clerked by Melanie Gardiner who changed her working availability twice in one week to allow the interviews to proceed and to Clerk the extraordinary meeting. I would like to express my thanks to Melaine Gardiner for this flexibility. The meeting was called to accept the recommendations and proposals from the Personnel Committee following the completion of interviews for the replacement Clerk/RFO to the Parish Council.