



FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Office 01983 752000

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 3rd DECEMBER 2024 AT 6.55 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
MEMORIAL HALL, FRESHWATER**

PRESENT: Cllrs: E Cox (Chair), T Armstrong, A Bamford, B Hinton, D James. C Jarman,
K Sloan-Murphy, N Thomas, F Turan, W Whyte.

ABSENT: Cllrs D Hicklin

Members of the public: 0

Clerk: M Gardiner

1. **APOLOGIES:**
Councillors: B Hobbs
2. **TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON THE 5th NOVEMBER 2024.**
The minutes of the meetings held on the 5th November (having been circulated) were agreed (AB/KSM).
3. **TO INVITE COUNCILLORS TO DECLARE AN INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA.**
None.
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.**
Accepted.
6. **CHAIR'S REPORT**
10th November - I had the very great privilege of laying the Freshwater Parish Council Wreath on Remembrance Sunday in Totland at the war memorial. A total of 41 wreaths

were laid and the event was very well attended by the public. County Councillors Jarman and Spink also attended the wreath laying. I then attended the Remembrance Church service at Christ Church following the Remembrance Parade.

15 November - I was on the Stroud for a short time and saw the removal of a large dying tree, it was clear from the large holes within the trunk that it was a good decision. For safety reasons the stump will be ground down.

19 November - I attended the Land Management meeting, and I have submitted a full report for Councillors at this full council meeting.

27 November - The Clerk, Cllr Whyte and I attended a meeting with Clare Griffin, Rob Ryan and Ann Freeman the Chair and Vice Chair of the West Wight Sports and Community Centre board of trustees. The meeting was requested by Clare and was a useful exchange of information. Clare has previously spoken to the Parish Council about the need for a new pool at the centre. They are developing their plans and wanted to ensure the Council was kept apprised of the situation. It is proposed to build a new pool primarily within the footprint of the current site whilst keeping the current pool and facilities open to the public. The plans may require that the new pool area be extended into the surrounding area which is owned by the Parish Council, the site known as the Jubilee Field and land owned by the IW Council to the front of the building. The plans are still in their infancy and the position of the proposed pool may change over time as their team develops the project.

We also discussed the Centre's proposed project to build a multi-use all weather pitch within the Jubilee field to extend the range of facilities and sports the Centre can accommodate. This project is again in its infancy and has been raised with Councillors previously.

The Clerk agreed to check our Land Registry documentation for the Jubilee Field for any covenants that may restrict what the land may be used for.

I informed the group of the Parish Council's project to develop a Land Management Plan for each of our assets. I agreed I would keep Clare informed of the progress in regard to Jubilee Field until it was determined who would work on the management plan for Jubilee Field on behalf of the Parish Council, the responsibility for contact may change at that time.

We reminded the West Wight Sports and Community Centre team that we are councillors and that there will be an election in May 2025 and we may not be the councillors they would be working with after that date. We also expressed that our views may not be those of other councillors.

The Christmas Working Group has not met since our last full council meeting as it was thought not to be necessary, the total costs to the Council are expected to remain below our budget limit of £4000. The Parish Council has asked Clare Griffin to be one of the judges

for the window competition and she has graciously agreed. The Clerk will report on the other judges as this was not confirmed in time for this report.

7. **CLERKS REPORT (CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS)**

Reserves Policy I am working in a Financial Reserves Policy in line with the guidelines from the auditor which recommends we should hold reserves at a minimum of 3 months revenue expenditure. This is on top of any earmarked reserves. I will be bringing the draft policy and figures to full council in the New Year.

MUGA Lights I have contacted a second company for a quote for the MUGA lights which will be more in line with the dark skies policy. This will be considered by the next Land Management and Assets Committee Meeting.

Councillor Vacancies A notice will be going up this week inviting people to apply to be co-opted onto the Parish Council. Any interested individuals will be invited to the January meeting to talk about their reasons for wishing to join the Council and what they can offer. Christmas 2024 The Christmas Trees and lights are up in the village, and the window competition is under way.

Spinfish Emma Carter and Emma Cox met with a second contractor to look at the work that needs doing at Spinfish and we are awaiting their recommendations and a quote.

Play Equipment Emma Carter is meeting with a supplier today on the Stroud to discuss options, which will be reported back to the next Land Management and Assets Meeting. This will include costings for a Trim Trail.

Disabled Lift The engineers are fixing the lift today to make it safely usable.

8. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Email received from Isle of Wight council regarding ground maintenance and play parks in our community and any additional contributions the Parish Council might make.

Proposed: To write to the Leader of the Isle of Wight Council (cc'd to Ward Councillors to express our concern at what is effectively a begging letter at short notice for land that doesn't exist in the parish. (WW/CJ).

9. **TO AGREE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – LIST CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS FOR INFORMATION.**

Proposed: To accept and note the accounts for payment (CJ/NT)

10. **TO AGREE THE BANK RECONCILIATION**

Proposed: To accept the bank reconciliation. (CJ/BH)

11. **TO ACCEPT THE BUDGET FORECAST FOR 2024/25**
Library Cleaning Invoices: Not yet received – to be followed up by finance officer. (cc Cllr Ian Stephens and Cllr Phil Jordan).

Proposed: To accept the budget forecast for 2024/25 (NT/WW)

12. **TO AGREE THE BUDGET FOR 2025/26 PRECEPT OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**
The budget for 2025/26 with the amendment to move £3000 from Community Grants to Library budget (WW/BH) and to rename the Emergency Fund to the Contingency Fund was agreed (EC/TA).

13. **REPORT AND UPDATE ON THE SCHOOL PROJECT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION (CLLR THOMAS)**
Cllr Thomas has met with Lizzie Granger (Freshwater and Yarmouth Primary School) to discuss involving the children in our next public consultation. Children will be invited to contribute a piece of work that illustrates what the village means to them.

Children will receive a certificate to acknowledge their participation.

The structure of how this will be carried out is still under discussion.

It was agreed that Cllr Thomas be given delegated authority in conjunction with the Clerk to spend a budget of £200 to administer the project in whatever way she sees fit. (Creation of certificates, possible plaque, possible prize fund (DJ/BH)).

14. **ISLE OF WIGHT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS REPORT (IWALC) – CLLRS BAMFORD/WHYTE**
The biggest issues are currently the amount Ryde and Newport have to pay for their costs.
Cabinet Meetings: Good news – Housing Associations are once again in talks with the local authority regarding housing on the Isle of Wight.
Growth and Prosperity Strategy – light on specifics and Cllr Whyte asked what the Council is going to be encouraging investing in and also made the point that the West Wight Business Park is still half finished amongst other issues.

Cllr Jarman noted that there is currently a major rewrite of the Isle of Wight Council constitution in preparation for the changes coming in May and that one of the sections refers to external liaison representation. He is surprised that IWALC has not been invited to contribute to that section and suggests that IWALC contact Claire Shand (Co-ordinating officer) to initiate that conversation.

15. **TIME CHANGE PROPOSAL FOR MEETING START TIMES – CLLR ARMSTRONG**

It was agreed to change the start time of evening meetings from 6.45pm to 6.30pm.
(TA/KSM)

16. **TO AGREE THE QUOTES FOR REPLACING THE BINS ON THE STROUD AND AT FRESHWATER BAY**

It was agreed to replace our four bins with two double bins and two single bins. And to go back to the office staff to obtain three quotes including one including recycled materials and one using wooden cladding (EC/BH).

17. **TO ACCEPT THE REPORT FROM THE LAND MANAGEMENT AND ASSETS COMMITTEE – CLLR COX**

Land Management Report Tuesday 19th November 2024

By Emma Cox Chair

Councillors Bamford, Hobbs, James and Turan attended the meeting which was Clerked by Heather Rowell.

Councillor James was elected to be Vice Chair of the Committee.

The Terms of Reference were debated by councillors and with some amendments it was agreed they would be presented to the next Full Council meeting in December. Following advice from the Clerk it was proposed that the Committee will meet monthly until the election in May 2025. Councillors agreed that the Terms of Reference is a living document and changes when found to be desirable will be brought to Full Council as they are identified for the Full Council's Consideration.

Funding requests for the Parish Councillor budget for 2025/2026 were discussed these included:

The buoys at Colwell Bay - it was noted that the buoy project requires an in depth review and this will be managed by the Land Management Committee, however should non committee members wish to be involved we would be pleased to receive their assistance.

The play equipment on the Stroud Recreation Ground - it was noted that a significant amount of the equipment needs, repairs or replacement. It was noted that the replacement of the gym equipment requires further investigation following the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) report. Councillors were keen to upgrade the equipment as soon as practically possible and a recommendation from the Committee will be made to the Full Council once all the necessary information has been collated and assessed by the Committee.

Skate Park and MUGA - it was noted that maintaining the old skatepark will require an increase in the budget request as costs continue to rise.

Skate Park and Pump Track Project - The Parish Council has been working towards the build of the new facility for the community for four years. The costs are continuing to rise and Councillors accepted the reality of the need to increase the budget. The grant application the officers worked incredibly hard to prepare was derailed by the General Election and change in government. This is not unusual when there is a change in Prime Minister. It was felt that more training is required by the staff to enable them to make funding bids on behalf of the Council. The officers continue to seek funding from alternative sources, and it may be practical to consider hiring outside assistance if the Council considers the outcome would be more favourable. Officers are continuing to meet the conditions of the planning permission, and the Clerk will update Full Council on any progress.

The Committee recommends that the Clerk Heather Rowell and another member of staff have additional training for this purpose which will be funded out of the staff training budget.

Proposed: That the Clerk and another member of staff receive further training around funding bids (EC/AB)

Land Management Plan Proposal

The Clerk and I recommended to the Committee that the Council produce a Land Management Plan; The Plan would consist of an in-depth collation of information for each of the Council's Land and Built assets. This work will be a considerable amount of work and will require the assistance of not only the Committee and Officers, but any Councillor who is able to assist. It is hoped that plan once completed will assist with the annual costs incurred by the Council for maintenance, improvements and future budgeting. The plan will also assist in any future strategic planning and when the time comes the updating of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Plan is simply a plan and does not commit the Council to future works for more than one budget year. It is hoped it will be reviewed annually, and it will be those Councillors who will determine the funding of any identified non urgent works for the annual budget setting process.

Councillors agreed to move forward with this proposal and bring it to Full Council for approval, any budget considerations not already within the Land Management budget will be made as usual to the Finance Committee for their consideration.

Although not part of the actual meeting Councillors in attendance have already started to volunteer their time and take responsibility for some of our assets.

Proposed: That full council agree to the production of a land management plan for the council's land and built assets. (EC/NT)

The Skate Park and Pump Track project update will be reported by the Clerk to Full Council.

The grounds maintenance contract which has been in place for three years is coming to an end. The Council has the option to extend the contract for two years. The Clerk will update the Full Council on this issue. It is however the recommendation of the Clerk and the Land Management Committee that we extend the contract for one year provided the new quotation is found to be acceptable.

Proposed: To accept the Clerks recommendation. (DJ/NT)

It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that the allotment fees should raise by the following amounts annually:

Quarter plot	£12.50 to £14.50
Half plot	£25.00 to £28.00
Full plot	£50.00 to £56.00

Proposed: To accept the recommendation of the Clerk and Land Management Committee (EC/NT)

The field which is currently let for the keeping of horses:

£350.00 to £375.00

The current renters of the field maintain the field, the fences and hedging. They protect the orchids which grow within the field when necessary.

It was agreed to recommend that the income from the allotments be ring fenced for the sole use of the allotments up to an amount of £5000, this will allow for investment in the allotments, ongoing maintenance, postage, payment of the utilities, etc. It is currently unclear what the real costs of the allotments are to the Council for Councillors to consider when setting the annual budgets. It was felt that this approach would be more transparent. It is expected that this would be reviewed annually by the Land Management Committee and Full Council during the annual budget setting process.

Proposed: To accept the recommendation of the Clerk and Land Management Committee (EC/WW)

We have received a request from some of the residents at Norton Green to plant trees on the Parish Land. Norton Green is a conservation area. The request was made prior to the change in Chair of the committee, and it was agreed that Cllrs Cox and Turan would make themselves available with an Officer to attend an onsite meeting with the residents to fully understand their suggestion and report back to both the Land Management and Full Council Committees.

The Cleaning contract for the toilets in Moa Place and Gate Lane is coming to an end. It has been proposed and accepted by the Committee to go out to tender for this contract. The Clerk has recommended, and the Committee accepted the recommendation that we cancel the contract currently held with the Isle of Wight Council for the cleaning of the library and that the Parish Council manage that contract as well. It is believed that the Council will be able to find a more competitive priced outcome. The tender will offer the option to apply for the toilets, or the toilets and the library. Councillors James and Bamford proposed that we list the opening and closing times for the toilets within the tender and that was also agreed by the Committee.

The Committee recommends to the Full Council that they accept the above recommendations and instruct the Clerk to tender as described. (EC/WW)

Councillor James has found an additional supplier of bulbs for consideration by the Full Council in making its decision on new/replacement lighting for the multi-use games area (MUGA). The company is based in Lymington and the design of the lighting takes into consideration dark skies concerns which Councillors have expressed in the past. The Clerk has contacted the company and will update the Full Council. (Deferred)

It was agreed to defer the possible new policy for Memorial Tree and Bench Policy until a previous piece of work completed by Councillor Bamford can be located and considered alongside or instead of the proposed policy submitted to the Committee.

It was agreed that the Committee will meet monthly until the election in May 2025, Councillor James has given his apologies as he will not be able to attend the meeting on 17th December.

I would like to thank all attending Councillors and the Clerk for their goodwill at the meeting and their support in moving forward so positively. It was a long meeting but I believe it was very productive.

18. **TO AGREE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE LAND MANAGEMENT AND ASSETS COMMITTEE – CLLR COX**

See appendix i.

The Terms of Reference were agreed and the following noted meetings shall be held every month until the election. That the Old Ambulance Station will be known as The Old Fire Station and that The Freshwater Bay Boat Park Revetment Shelter will be listed separately as Boat Park Promenade Shelter and Revetment. (EC/DJ).

19. **AVENUE ROAD PARKING PROPOSAL – CLLR WHYTE**

At the start of the year the Parish Council responded to the Traffic Regulation Order on the parking changes to double yellow lines and submitted a request to reconsider the time constraints on Avenue Road. This has been ignored and the IWC continued without any

changes to parking. Further discussions have stalled. Prices quoted between Totland and Freshwater Parish Council differ drastically to our detriment.

It was agreed that we return to the IWC to state the price quoted is unacceptable and that we suggest negotiating a deal similar to that offered to Totland PC (accounting for inflation) and to proceed with a more realistic arrangement. And to point out that the IWC currently enjoys an unequal relationship in regard to certain parish council assets (i.e. the lease to Moa Place Car Park) to which we receive no benefit. (WW/CJ).

20. **TO AGREE PROPOSED FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FROM COUNCILLORS**
Digital Switchover – is Freshwater Parish Council ready.

Memorial Hall – The future.

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.

21. **TO REVIEW FRESHWATER PARISH COUNCIL ATTENDANCE AT ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

It was agreed that the Parish Council have a prepared response written by full council to any application likely to go the LPA planning committee that can be prepared in advance and ready in the event of short notice. And that whenever the Clerk receives an invitation to speak that it is accepted with an appropriate person nominated to represent the Parish Council at meetings. (EC/DJ).

The meeting ended at 9.25pm