

Freshwater Parish Council

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LAND MANAGEMENT AND ASSETS COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 19TH AUGUST 2025 AT 6.30PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MEMORIAL HALL, FRESHWATER

PRESENT: Councillors Turan, Armstrong, Bamford, Cameron, Cox, Hobbs, Pakel, Whistance, Whyte

EX OFFICIO: Councillor Jarman

CLERK: K Gibson

MINUTE SECRETARY: M Gardiner

ALSO PRESENT: P Blackley – Finance Officer

1. APOLOGIES: NONE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

To receive any declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary (personal) interests relating to items on the agenda. **NONE**

3. MINUTES

To agree the minutes of the Freshwater Parish Council meeting held on 18th March 2025 (having been circulated to Councillors). **EC/BH (AGREED)**

4. SKATE PARK/PUMP TRACK PROJECT To review current status and put together a working party to move this forward.

Freshwater Skatepark & Pump Track: Final Project Report

Freshwater Skatepark & Pump Track – Report (August 2025)

The story of the Freshwater Skatepark & Pump Track is one of history, resilience, and above all, community determination.

From Roots to Renewal

Freshwater's connection to skateboarding runs deep. In 1978, Golden Hill Fort became home to one of the UK's first concrete skateparks, securing the village's place in British skate history. Golden Hill Skatepark was listed in the 1978 Skateboard Annual in an article about the best skateparks in the UK to visit on a Skatepark Safari. For years, young people flocked there, building not just skills but a strong sense of identity and belonging.

When the wooden skatepark was installed just off Jubilee Field in 2002, it carried forward that legacy. For over twenty years it served as a social hub, offering generations of young people a place to skate, ride, and connect. But by 2023, age and weather had caught up with it. A RoSPA inspection deemed the ramps unsafe, and despite patchwork repairs, the message was clear: the time had come to build something new, safe, and future-proof.

A Vision Takes Shape

Discussions about a replacement began in late 2019. By early 2020, we had started researching options, and later that year Gravity Skateparks responded with example

designs of what the new park could be like. The first designs for a combined skatepark and pump track then took shape. This sparked real excitement: the idea of creating the Isle of Wight's very first pump track, alongside a modern skatepark, quickly became a shared community ambition.

In January 2021, a proposal was presented to the Parish Council's Skatepark Committee. Within days, a working group was formed, a site visit was held at Stroud Field, and the Full Council approved an initial £120,000 towards the project.

Community at the Heart

What followed was an outpouring of community creativity and energy. Social media launched with over 100 Instagram followers in the first 24 hours—and children began submitting dream park designs, artwork, and videos. Local skater Michael Forrest created a series of logo concepts, with the winning design chosen by public vote. That logo is now worn proudly on merchandise sold through Teemill, raising both funds and visibility for the project.

The project's public consultations, held in January every year between 2021 and 2024, ensured local voices shaped every detail. People spoke not only about ramps and rails, but also about mental health, exercise, and how vital safe spaces are for young people. The Clerk and Chair made themselves available for questions, banners went up around the village, and heritage displays reminded everyone of Freshwater's proud skate history. Partnerships grew, too. Hampshire Police, Sport England, and Skateboard GB offered input, while Cllr Tom Murphy and volunteers worked through practical planning constraints and site mapping. Landscape designer Chris Barnes contributed eco-friendly plans to deliver a biodiversity net gain of over 10%.

Momentum and Milestones

From 2021 onward, the project never stood still. GoFundMe donations, school-sponsored challenges, and themed fundraisers by groups like the Wight Wahines surf club and Bay Wailers kept money flowing in. Events like *Skate Jams* brought over 100 people to Stroud Recreation Ground, while surf movie nights, auctions, and the upcoming *Art on Decks* continue to blend fundraising with celebration.

Business backing has also been invaluable. Hose Rhodes Dickson donated £2,000, Trant Engineering pledged over £1,000, and West Wight Skips provided both funding and materials. Wightfibre is exploring free Wi-Fi at the site which would also benefit the wider community, while local suppliers like Wight Building Materials, Jewsons and Sydenhams have offered discounts. Even accommodation has been pledged for Gravity's construction crew when the time comes, and site equipment has also been offered by Crown Park (dependent on dates).

Meanwhile, Freshwater's homegrown talent has been showcased. Joe Crockett rose from Freshwater Skatepark to international scooter competitions, ranking 4th in the World Championships in Argentina. Joe was awarded the International Junior Outstanding Achievement Award at the Isle of Wight Sports Foundation 2022 Sports Achievement Awards. Young skater Martha Eggleton, who first stepped on a board at five, reached the Skateboard GB National Championships at age twelve, inspiring the next generation—especially local girls.

Planning, Costs, and the Road Ahead

A planning application went in during September 2023 and, after ecological and noise assessments, permission was granted in June 2024 with twelve conditions, including biodiversity and site management.

The original budget of £240,000, set in 2021, has since risen to £275,000 due to inflation and rising material costs. To date, £224,235.55 has been raised—a remarkable achievement for a community of Freshwater's size. Yet as of August 2025, a shortfall of just over £50,000 remains. This gap is now critical: if not closed soon, rising costs may push the project further out of reach.

More Than a Skatepark

This project is about far more than concrete and steel. It is about safeguarding a legacy, investing in young people, and building a space that welcomes everyone—whether on a

skateboard, scooter, BMX, rollerblades, or wheelchair. It is about mental health, fitness, and community cohesion. And it is about pride—demonstrating what Freshwater can achieve when people unite around a shared vision.

Every logo, fundraiser, consultation, and design sketch tell the same story: this is a people-powered project. The Freshwater Skatepark & Pump Track stands as a symbol of what can be achieved when a village invests in its future.

Now, the finish line is within reach. With just over £50,000 still needed, the final push will decide whether this long-fought vision becomes reality.

From Vision to Reality: Closing the Funding Gap

We're looking for 24 visionary creatives to take part in a unique community project: transforming blank skateboard decks into stunning, one-of-a-kind pieces of art. Each deck will be hand-painted and completely individual, showcasing the diverse talents and styles of our local artists. Once completed, the collection will be exhibited as wall-hanging artworks before being auctioned to raise funds for Freshwater Skatepark & pump track, giving every piece the chance to find a new home while supporting a great cause. We're also seeking an inspiring venue to host the showcase and auctions, somewhere that can celebrate creativity and community while giving these incredible works the spotlight they deserve.

5. APPROVE THE FORMATION OF A COMPOSTING AREA AT GRANNY'S MEAD

See appendix 1. (ERMC email)

It was resolved not to approve the formation of a composting area. **AB/BH AGREED**

6. TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY To review and discuss the tree management policy. Proposed policy document from Councillor Emma Cox attached.

See Appendix 2 (Paper E)

See Appendix 3 (Paper F)

It was agreed to work with Paper F and it recommended to allow time for further amendments to Councillor Camerons document (Paper F) and to be referred to full council for a final decision.

7. NEW PARISH BINS UPDATE.

All new bins have been fitted, some with new concrete bases. There are double bins at Freshwater Bay and Stroud Playing fields along with single bins in Stroud and Black Hut Green.

A verbal update was provided.

8. DISCUSS THE CONDITION AND LACK OF MAINTENANCE ON THE DITCHES.

Councillor Turan is concerned that the lack of maintenance could lead to flooding issues.

A general discussion was had.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

To discuss the funding for land management 26/27

To agree roles for the land management plans update

Allotments

5g implementation plan – update

Gym Equipment on Stroud

Jubilee Field Key update

10. TO ARRANGE A DATE FOR THE NEXT MEETING. Planned for 16th September 2025.

The meeting ends at 8.07pm

Should anyone require a copy of the minutes in a large print format please contact the Parish Council.

