FRETHERNE WITH SAUL PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Fretherne with Saul Parish Council held at Saul Memorial Hall at 7:00 pm on Wednesday 30th July 2025.

Present: Cllrs A Brown (Chairman), B Findlater, A Lever, J Bearman, B Robbins, Clerk K Brown

In attendance: Cty Cllr S Davies, Dist Cllr R Brown,

Members of the Public: 4 Members of the Public attended

Agenda

010725 **To receive apologies for absence –** Apologies were received from Cllrs Bierer and Jeffries

020725 **Declarations of Interest on the Agenda -** none

030725 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2025.** The minutes having already been circulated to the Councillors for their consideration prior to the meeting. The minutes of the meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

040725 **To receive a report from PCSO Treble** – the PCSO read out the crime statistics for the first seven months of 2025, there were 17 in the Parish, 1 x Assault with intent to cause serious harm, 1 x Harassment, 1 x Assault causing injury, 1 x malicious communication with offence issues on Social Media, 1 x Causing public fear, alarm or distress, 1 x Assault without injury. 1 x Crime of cruelty to children, 2 x Rape, 1 x Burglary, 1 x Interfering with Motor Vehicle, 4 x Theft, 1 x Criminal Damage, 1 x notifiable offence (no details). This has increased by ten crimes over the same period last year and these are serious crimes. PCSO clarified that the 2 crimes of rape were domestic incidents.
PCSO Trebble has been made redundant, Chairman Andrew Brown thanked him for his time on the Parish over the years and wished him well with future endeavours. PCSO was not aware of the anti-social behaviour with the motorbike.
Issues with speeding vehicles through the Parish was mentioned, the PCSO Trebble carried out a speed check in Autumn 2024 but there were no vehicles noted exceeding the speed limits.

050725 **Public Question Time**
10 Minutes is allocated to allow members of the public to address the Parish Council, 3 minutes will be allocated to each person. Speakers are requested to keep their comments brief. Standing Orders item 3, para (e)(f)(g)(h)(k). Member of the Public raised considerable concerns over the speed and size of vehicles passing through the Parish; he does appreciate that the temporary closure of Castle Lane bridge is causing increased traffic but the vehicles passing his property are enormous both in length, width and speed. He has noted that vehicles coming over Fretherne Bridge and continuing down Arlingham Road are travelling at such speed they are almost taking off. The noise of vehicles has also increased lately. Could the Parish Council consider looking to reduce the weight limit of the bridges to reduce the size of vehicles. He also suggested a speed watch survey, the equipment costs about £800 from Speedwatch.com, records details of the offending vehicles.

060725 **To receive a report from County Councillor Stephen Davies.** – Castle Lane Bridge was due to be repaired last month but unfortunately, they have found nesting Swallows and the bridge is unlikely to be repaired until September. Re changing the weight limit on bridge, Stephen has asked the same question, it is very difficult to change the bridges which is frustrating as the Pilot, Castle Lane and Fretherne all have quite high weight limits. Trading Standards have prosecuted somebody for selling wood burners and not delivering them, a builder for taking deposits and not doing the building. There is a survey from the County Council asking for your opinion on Local Government Reform and Devolution, it is incredibly helpful as it does not ask if you want one or two unitary authorities. A missed opportunity. An Adult Care Annual Report is now available, mental health, social work and occupational health is being taken in house, previously outsourced to the NHS. CC are spending 19.5 million pounds on a special school at Abbeydale, and 8 million pounds on 360 new places at Lydney and Brockworth schools. A £95k heritage fund has been secured which is to capture peoples memories of Gloucestershire. There has been a letter circulated from the CC about 20mph, Stephen totally supports this. You should have some understanding of what they are and not saying. Asking for your views on whether you want 20 mph, it is good that you are given the opportunity to express that view and probably in quite a detailed way, which streets and why you think it should be 20mph. May not be wanting to go to 20mph for the whole Parish but possibly for Church Lane for example. They are not allocating any money for road redesign which is hugely expensive and unpopular. Slimbridge is getting 20mph, they have done a traffic speed survey with equipment – in that instance it is the police who will write to advise people they are consistently speeding. The first step is surveys – two wires across the road, Stephen is happy to speak with the Highways Manager about this and what contribution is available.

24/09/25

070725 **To receive a report from District Councillor Robert Brown –** Robert was notified about the incident on Stroud High Street where there was a stand trying to get residents to support the PACE application for a solar farm between Upper Framilode and Epney. After speaking with the Head of Development Management, he wanted to stress the point that regardless of whether they were allowed to have a stand there, that the quantity of comments that have been submitted, either for or against the application, is not a material consideration. Even if there are 400comments in support of it, they won't actually affect the final decision. With the date issue of when residents could or couldn't comment by, the consultation period passed but Robert wants to try to fix this for the future. What this may take a form of is revising the Councils statement to the Community Involvement and the key message for now is that 'the council will accept comments as far as reasonably practical beyond the latest consultation date'. Target decision date remains the 15th September so if comments continue to come in between now and then they will be taken into consideration.
Decisions by the Council and Committees that bear relevance to here, one is about the canal – the full council approved the 1.5 million pounds for the completion of the Missing Link which joins the two parts of the Stroudwater canal either side of the M5. Some really creative thinking of how the canal will go under the motorway. This has been supplemented by some 10 million pounds funding from other sources including the National Lottery.
Cllr Lever raised the confusion within the Parish and surround about the changing respond by date and asked what could be done to ensure this doesn't happen in the future. Dist Cllr R Brown said there are two things that need to be addressed, the understanding anf the process that Parish Councils have, it is clear that the District Council don't understand it and the process itself is strange. The date was changed from the 15th to the 21st due to a newspaper advert going out. Confusion caused by the can't be changed message going out and then it did change, Robert is on it and TBC.

Cty Cllr S Davies said that he is back on the board of the Stroud Valley Canal Company and Cotswold Connected Canals and, as the end of the canal is in our Parish, if there is anything that the PC would like to know he is happy to help.

080725 **The Parish Council would like to pay tribute to Darryl Pocket, who has passed away recently.** Darryl was a Councillor and indeed the Chairman of this Council for a number of years it was with great sadness that we heard of his passing and the Parish Council would like to pass on condolences and thoughts to the family.

090725 **To receive an update on the proposed Solar Farm and substation between Upper Framilode and Epney. Formal planning application S.25/1011/FUL.**

- **Following the Informal Opinion Poll of Fretherne with Saul Parishioners, 99% of those completing the Poll voted against the solar farm.** Further Poll analysis revealed that 95% of those completing the Poll wanted the Parish Council (PC) to object to the Solar Development. The PC responded to the planning application on behalf of the Parish, strongly requesting that the planning application be refused. This was submitted on the 8th July '25.
- **Banners –** to discuss and approve the cost for banners being displayed at various locations around the Parish and surrounding area. The quote, £539.90, has been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. There was a discussion about the cost of the banners and whether they should continue to be displayed as the respond by date has been extended, this was approved. Proposed, seconded with all in favour. As there is now an extension to the submission of comments, should the banners be put back up. Council approved this request.
  The Chairman thanked everyone who has had an input by their objections, comments on the SDC website but particularly three people – Astrid, her husband Tim for the enormous amount of work they put in and Kay which deserves recognition.

Further communications have been sent to Alpaca Communications requesting information –

- The Clerk has again emailed Alpacca Communications requesting that Pathfinder Clean Energy (PACE) enter into discussions about a Community Benefit Funding payment should the planning application be approved, advising that further lack of response will be perceived that the developers are not willing to engage in the process. PACE, via Alpacca, have now been in correspondence with the Clerk to open discussions, the details of which have been circulated to the Councillors and will be discussed later in the meeting. There was a brief discussion whereby the offer was calculated and found to be disappointingly low. There are things to consider such as Community Projects which should be considered for funding, these will be discussed at a future meeting as will the offer. It was suggested that the Parish Council contact neighbouring parishes who have also gone through the solar planning application route and how they negotiated any Community Benefit funding offers. To be on the September meeting agenda. It was also noted that Community Funding now was not on the scale of those in previous years due to a reduction in government funding so it is no surprise to some that the offer is substantially lower in comparison to neighbouring solar projects.

Other matters relating to the proposed planning application and Informal Opinion Poll

- A copy of the Open Register was purchased from Stroud District Council, £21.50, to be used for the Informal Opinion Poll. Despite the Parish Council understanding the difference between the Open Register and the Electoral Roll, the information on the purchased Register was found to be incomplete with many residents not listed. This has been referred to the Electoral Officer who repeatedly explains what the Open Register is but is not accepting that information, which parishioners insisted they had not asked for their details to be withheld, was not available.
- A Parishioner, supporting the PC in the planning objection, has made the PC aware of two reports available from Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust which detail wildlife habitats and bats within this area. To

discuss and approve the PC's purchase of one of these reports (if not for this application, for future reference) -

- **Option 1**: £150
  - Map for statutory and non-statutory wildlife sites,
  - priority habitats map,
  - map for each of bats (25 years
  - Notable and protected species for last 10 year
- **Option 2**: £35
  - Excel lists of the above inc grid ref but no maps included

The value of either set of information not necessarily for the solar farm application but for general use and future applications was discussed; it was agreed that the first report would be most cost effective.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour.
Action: Clerk to contact Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to purchase Option 1.

100725 **To discuss traffic concerns through the village** – the speed and size of vehicles through the village has increased dramatically over recent months, consider what options are available to address this.

- road surface signage
- waste bin signage
- speed awareness signage
- working with the '20 is plenty' scheme to reduce the speed limit through the village
- information on the website and social media
- policing – random speed checks, roadside signage, awareness campaign
- Clerk has received concerns about the speed, volume and size of vehicles using the local network, raising safety concerns especially in the light of recent incidents locally.

A discussion around the issues of increased vehicle speeds through the Parish took place, it was agreed that further discussion was needed to share information on items listed above, costs involved and if Highways could carry out a Speed Survey, Cty Cllr will discuss this with the GCC Highways Manager next week.

110725 **To receive a report on the disused Section of the Stroudwater Canal at Upper Framilode and propose what work can be carried out and when.** Cllr Brown

- Water levels were restored on both sides of the dam, following pumping over a two-week period. The total cost of hire was £1357.56, the fuel for the generator is invoiced at £271.44. Total cost for the fortnight is £1629.00. The Chairman thanked everyone who was involved in laying out the pipework, strimming the paddock and collection it all back in at the end of the hire period. Especially to the landowner for allowing access.
- CABI have contacted the Clerk advising that they are preparing to dispatch weevils to combat this years bloom in Azolla. Clerk has advised of the current situation with water levels and has requested that the PC stay on the 'to supply' list but not needed right now. Should the Azolla return however, it would be wise to react immediately. **To discuss setting a budget for the cost of the Weevils.** After discussion, it was agreed that should a further supply of Weevils be required, there is a budget of £3000 available. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.
- Council now needs to begin discussions on a long-term solution to the water level issues which are experienced most years. Whilst reinstating the drains along the towpath has done some remedial work, in prolonged dry weather this is not sufficient to maintain the water levels, in extended heat as has been experienced recently.
- To discuss a working party and schedule commencing early September
  - Advertising for help
  - Order in which the work should be carried out
  - Skip hire to dispose of any materials removed from the canal, location and budget for hire

It was agreed that further information and discussion is needed around methods and involvement to recommence working on the canal and what work to prioritise.
Action: Cllr A Brown to speak with various persons previously involved in the Volunteer Group.

120725 **<u>Planning Application</u>**

Application Number: S.25/1200/HHOLD
Location: Leglise, Church Lane, Saul, Gloucester.
Application Type: Householder Application
Description: Replace and extend sunroom remove. Erect brick-built garden storage room.
Respond by date: 04.08.2025
The Parish Council have no comment

Application Number: S.25/1176/HHOLD
Location: 8 Sandfield Crescent, Church Lane, Saul, Gloucester.
Application Type: Householder Application
Description: Erection of single storey extension
Respond by date: 05.08.2025
The Parish Council have no comment

Signed / Date 24/09/25

Planning Decisions

Location: S.25/1011/FUL Land At Epney, Framilode, Gloucester, Gloucestershire.
Description: Installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) farm with access tracks, fencing, landscape planting and other associated infrastructure
Decision: awaiting decision

Application Number: S.25/0933/FUL Dunstalls Farm, Arlingham Road, Saul, Gloucester.
Description: Erection of stable block.
Decision: application withdrawn

Application Number: S.25/1000/P3Q Land West Of Bibury House, Framilode Passage, Saul, Gloucestershire.
Description: Change of use and conversion of an agricultural barn into a single residential dwelling (C3)
Decision: awaiting decision

Application Number: APP/C1625/Y/24/3355362 The Cottage Saul Lodge Arlingham Road Saul
Appeal By : [redacted]
Development: Replacement of eleven casement windows
Decision: Appeal dismissed

130725 **The Chairman will move the adoption of the following resolution; that under the Local Government Act 1972 and Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) 1960, Council delegates the planning responses, between the dates 31st July to 24th September 2025, to the Clerk in consultation with the Parish Councillors via email.** Some planning applications have limited respond by dates or are circulated during a period when there are no planned parish council meetings. In this instance, the planning application will be circulated to the Councillors by email, reviewed and responses sent to the clerk. The Clerk will then respond to the planning application on the SDC website. The response will be formalised at the next meeting. However, contentious planning applications will need to be discussed at a formal meeting where members of the public are able to raise points.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour

140725 **Playground inspection – this has been circulated to all Councillors for their review and to the Memorial Hall Committee for their review of the Memorial Hall equipment.**

- Work carried out – the Memorial Hall are in the process of repairing all their play equipment. The ship mentioned at the last meeting has already been repaired.
- Information about swing fixings – the Clerk has contacted Play Inspection Company asking about the recommended fixings for the swing. The detail has been circulated to the Councillors for consideration before the meeting. After discussion, the Parish Council agreed that it should look into purchasing the fixing recommended by Play Inspection Company
- Repeat inspection offer – Play Inspection Company have made the repeat offer of a reduced charge if next years inspection is booked now. This has been approved. Proposed seconded with all in favour

Action: Clerk to request clarification on the difference between fixing, the cost of the fixing recommended and to confirm the acceptance of the Repeat Inspection offer

150725 **Clerks report – to update on action raised at the June meeting and other matters arising**

- **Tow path fencing –** wood from the old fencing has been cleared and work in the new fencing is hoped to commence in the next couple of weeks. As the next meeting is not until 24th September, to approve payment of the invoice and ratify the payment at the next meeting. Proposed, seconded with all in favour
- **Yellow lines along Church Lane –** as per the last meeting, Cty Cllr Stephen Davies has raised this with GCC Highways, it has now been escalated on their list of line painting.
- The overhanging branches along Church Lane have been cut back..
- Clerks Lenovo ThinkBook is being returned and waiting for quote for repair to collapsed hinge.
- Children playing on the allotments - letter has been sent.
- **Allotment tenants parking in the parking area at the end of Park View –** the Clerk has received an email about allotments tenants parking in these parking spaces which is causing inconvenience for the residents of Park View. The Clerk has contacted Stroud District Council (SDC) to establish whether these parking spaces are privately owned or whether it is just the roadway access that is unadopted. SDC have confirmed that they own the parking area, the parking is not restricted to residents.
- **Projector** – the Clerk is considering the best option for a projector. This has now been ordered
- **Repair of bench on Upper Framilode Pound and the fencing along the perimeter** – a member of the public has volunteered to carry out the repairs to both without cost for labour. Materials will need to be quoted for. Proposed, seconded with all in favour
- **Jubliee bench on the playing field –** the member of the public who previously volunteered to repair the bench is now not well enough to carry out the repairs. To approve the clerk to ask if the Member of the Public above would do the repairs. It was agreed to wait until the work at Upper Framilode Pound had been completed before asking about the Jubilee Bench.
- **To consider purchasing storage space for items belonging to the PC –** space would be needed to accommodate the storage, perhaps the Memorial Hall could accommodate a small shed at the back of

the building. Items to store – Christmas lights and baubles, banners, litter pickers, dog poop bags. It was agreed that storage is needed but need to look into space and cost against longevity.

Action: Clerk to contact member of the public to get a quote to repair the bench and fencing at Upper Framilode Pound. Also to look into storage possibilities for discussion at the September meeting.

160725 **Finance: To approve the following payments in accordance with the budget.**
Supporting documents have already been sent to councillors.

Payee	For	Amount
Clerk	Administration inc Pay July,	£397.20
Clerk	Purchase of Open Register for Informal Poll	£21.50
Cllr A Lever	Purchase of paper for printing information for the drop in session and informal opinion poll	£34.99
Joe Energy	Fuel for the generator	£271.44
Severn Grass Services	Village Maintenance inv	£316.00
Clerk – K Brown	hire of Smiths skip for allotments	£262.80 inc VAT
S Merrett	Spraying the allotments – Mares tail	£150.00
Gallaghers	Insurance for the pumping equipment	£134.00
Greenbarnes	New notice board to replace the one at Upper Framilode	£993.05
Colour Connection	Printing Costs – leaflets and ballot papers for Informal Poll and drop in session	£218.88

Proposed, Seconded with all in favour

To ratify payments made, and income received, between meetings

Pump Supplies	First week of hire	£678.78
Water Plus	July	£19.42
Pump Supplies	Second week of hire	£678.78

Proposed, seconded with all in favour

To review and approve July 2025 bank reconciliation and accounting spreadsheet. These have already been circulated to the Councillors.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour

170725 **To discuss and reach resolution on the Quotes which have been submitted for work to be carried out on the trees on Saul Pound.** Site visits have been carried out with discussions off what work is needed to all the trees but primarily to the trees which are overhanging the Pounds boundaries both into private gardens but also into the Highway (High Street). The work to be carried out on the Willow, at the back of the Pound, is long overdue. Pollarding is recommended every three years; this tree has not been touched for many years; other tree branches are inter lacing with neighbouring trees and subsequently only canopy growth is now happening on trees such as the Oak. Each Contractor was asked to provide a quote with individual tree management breakdown so that the Parish Council could understand the work advised and by a cost per tree. The work could therefore be managed on a rolling basis with the suggested start time of September/October for the Willow which is the most urgent. Four itemised quotes have been circulated to the Councillors for their consideration. The quotes had been redacted so that discussion was impartial; they were discussed at length and eventually Quote 4 was approved at a cost of £6950.00. Proposed, seconded with one abstention.

180725 **Emergency Advice document – to discuss the draft document, suggest necessary amendments or move to adopt the document.** A draft copy has been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting for their consideration. The Emergency Plan was approved with one minor amendment – Canal and Rivers Trust emergency number be added to the list of contacts. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

190725 **To discuss a training/refresher schedule** to keep all Councillors current and informed about the processes of Parish Council and the importance of representing the Parish in a democratic and constructive manner. The Clerk has circulated a list of the upcoming training available from Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC) after the summer break. The importance of training was explained by the Chairman and how it was useful to do the courses more than once as refreshers as topics and legislation do change. Cllrs Brown and Lever wish to complete the Chairmans course again as refreshers, other councillors were encouraged to get in touch with the Clerk to be booked on to any other training course they wish to compete.

Action: Clerk to circulate courses as and when they are added to the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Council website.

Members of the public left the meeting at 21:00 hrs
The Chairman passed a motion to extend the meeting.

200725 **Confidential Matters: The Chairman will move the adoption of the following resolution,** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business, as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

- To consider confidential matters in accordance with the above resolution.

Signed / Date 24/09/25

Councillors were updated on matters of concern in the Parish and receive an update on the Clerks Local Government pay award.

210725 Date of next meeting 24th September 2025.

The meeting closed at 21.25 hrs

Signed:

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in exercising any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.

Signed / Date