FRETHERNE WITH SAUL PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Fretherne with Saul Parish Council held at Saul Memorial Hall at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, 25th March 2026.

Present: Cllrs A Brown (Chairman), C Bierer, A Lever, J Bearman, L Jeffries and Clerk K Brown

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

Members of the Public: One member of the public present

Agenda

010226 **To receive apologies for absence.** Cllr B Robbins sent his apologies, the apologies were not accepted. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

020226 **Declarations of Interest on the Agenda** – Cllr Bierer noted an interest in agenda item 090326.Cllr Brown noted an interest in agenda item 120326

030226 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25th February 2026.** The minutes were resolved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed, seconded, four approved, one abstention.

040326 **Public Question Time** – The Member of the Public raised concerns about the speed at which cars are travelling through the village and expressed thoughts that the speed limit should be reduced to 20mph. It was explained that the Parish Council have also raised their concerns with GCC Highways, but the speed monitoring cables recently sited in two places in the Parish were inconclusive, largely due to them being sited in locations easily seen. Cty Cllr Davies explained that the GCC 20mph is a good scheme and there are over 385 parishes in Gloucestershire showing interest, but there is a back log on traffic regulations orders, so we need to manage expectations.

The Member of the Public left the meeting at 19:05

050326 **To receive a report from County Councillor Stephen Davies** –

- Gloucestershire Archives have been nominated for a sustainability award.
- Secondary School placement numbers have been published – 83% got their first choice, 93% got their stated preference. Stephen thinks the placements for this area have got better but wants to know of any problems.
- The Easter Activity Fund is open – children receiving free school meals can go in and do an activity and get a free school meal.
- County Council published their Planning Strategy which shows an 11% decrease in use of electricity.
- Central Government funding – £3.8 million on a Better Start programme for young people, £5.7 million for a Crisis and Resilience Fund over 3 years, £28.4 million over 4 years for local buses (this can include school transport).
- A new special school has been signed off in Cheltenham.
- Sandfield Bridge yellow lines are high on the list for the new financial year – April.
- Sandfield Bridge has now been closed; the same team that did the repairs to Parkend Bridge are in place to carry out the work however, the safety inspector said that it needed to be closed immediately. An Ecology survey was carried out today, as of today (25th April) there are no nests. The GCC Highways Manager is working frantically to line up procurement and Canals & River Trust to get the work started imminently.

060326 **To receive a report from District Councillor Robert Brown** –

- Stroud Lido – the issue is the cost to repair the pool is far more than the District Council can afford. It will return to Strategy Resources meeting in the future to decide probably to close it. It will probably be handed over to the Unitary Authority to deal with.
- There are two housing applications for Whitminster, this is in addition to the one that has already got outline planning permission but was recently withdrawn. Dist Cllr Brown is leaving the meeting to go to an Emergency meeting in Whitminster to discuss these applications.

Dist Cllr R Brown left the meeting at 19:12

070326 **To agree a date for the Annual Parish Council meeting.** The meeting must be held between 7th and 20th May 2026. The Annual Parish Meeting and the Parish Council May meeting will also be held on this date. The Council resolved to hold the three meetings on Wednesday 13th May, time to start the first meeting to be confirmed. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

29-04-2026

080326 **Parking and highway safety concerns** – road between The Malt House and Fretherne Bridge (including verge damage and previous advice from Highways regarding restrictions). To receive councillor concerns and consider whether any further action is available to the Parish Council. Cllr Bierer explained that along the edge of the tarmac between Fretherne Bridge and Malt House Farm, the soil has been worn away to the point that there is now a drop in surfaces (ditch) which could be dangerous. Vehicles are moving over towards the wall to avoid oncoming traffic avoiding the parked cars. A robust discussion took place about speed, vehicle parking issues and avoiding on-coming traffic. It was agreed that this should be referred to Highways both as a road surface issue and a parking issue. Cty Cllr Davies is meeting with GCC Highways Manager in the morning and will raise this with him.

Cty Cllr S Davies left the meeting at 19:30

090326 **Planning Application** - None

Planning Decisions

Application Number: S.26/0148/FUL The Coach House, Framilode, Gloucester, Gloucestershire.
Description: Change of use of disused nursery (Class E) to a self-build dwelling (Class C3) and erection of a first floor extension
Decision: Awaiting decision

Application Number: S.26/0051/OUT Dunstalls Farm, Arlingham Road, Saul, Gloucester
Description: Erection of 6 no. commercial units (Class E) and associated works (all matters reserved).
Decision: awaiting decision

Application Number: S.25/2077/HHOLD Silverdale, Framilode, Gloucester, Gloucestershire.
Description: Erection of a side and rear extension, front canopy, porch and rear dormer extension. Erection of a carport/shed and alterations to existing garage.
Decision: Permitted

100326 **For Consideration: Two new planning applications have been submitted for housing developments located off School Lane, Whitminster:**

- Application S.26/0281/OUT – Outline application for 150 dwellings east of School Lane. Deadline for comments: 30 March 2026
- Application S.26/0248/OUT – Outline application for 45 dwellings west of School Lane. Deadline for comments: 1 April 2026

As a neighbouring parish, Fretherne with Saul has the right to comment on these proposals and provide input regarding potential impacts on our community and the surrounding area. **Key Considerations** for Discussion:

- **Traffic impact:** Potential increase in local traffic on School Lane, the A38 at Whitminster, and additional load on the M5 at Junctions 12 and 13.
- **Flood risk and drainage:** Increased rainwater run-off into the River Frome, which could exacerbate flooding risks downstream, including Upper Framilode.
- **Sewage and water treatment:** Additional foul water load on the existing Fretherne water treatment facility, which is already under pressure.
- **Local Services and Community Facilities** – additional pressure on already limited local facilities, including infant and junior schools, doctors' surgeries, and small community shops
- **Other environmental or community impacts** that may affect residents in our parish.

Do the Parish Council resolve to submit a formal response or representation to the local to draft comments, ensuring they reflect the parish's concerns regarding traffic, drainage, and infrastructure impacts?
The Parish Council discussed the possible impact that this application, should it be approved, have on this Parish; they agreed that their concerns should be submitted to Stroud District Council.
Action: Clerk to draft a response to the applications for Councillors to review before submission.

To resolve that, in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (i.e. information relating to an individual).

A member of the public left the meeting.

110326 **To receive a report from the interviewing councillors on the applicant for the current vacancy**, to consider the application, and to resolve whether to co-opt the applicant to fill the vacancy at this meeting, or to take such other action as appropriate, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Section 87.
The interviewing Councillors, Brown, Bierer and Lever, reported that the interview had gone well and that the interviewee with the approval of the Councillors should be co-opted this meeting.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

To resolve to re-open the meeting to the public and press.

Member of the public rejoined the meeting.

Signed / Date 29-04-2026

Christopher Butler was co-opted to the Parish Council.

120326 **Clerks report – to update on action raised at the October meeting and other matters arising.**

- Work on two new notice boards has been completed – Upper Framilode Pound replacing the old one and the other is at the side of the canal tow path adjacent to The Ship. Cllr Lever thanked the Clerk for putting together the information sheets to go on the notice board on the canal tow path, very informative.
- Banking signatories have been reviewed and are being renewed.
- Three allotments have been returned to the Parish Council, the exiting allotment holders have all paid Bonds. Parish Council to approve the refund of £75 per allotment.
- The Dispensation request was submitted to Stroud District Council Monitoring Officer who has reviewed and approved the Dispensation for a period of four years. N.b. the Monitoring Officer advised that should circumstances re property change, the Dispensation be reviewed.
- All quote submissions were responded to. Work on Upper Framilode Pound fencing will commence in April. The Amazon delivery vehicle damage to Upper Framilode Pound will take place asap.
- The PC website was created in 2016 and little updating to the home page has been done since. In a move to make it more welcoming and informative for both residents and visitors, while also highlighting the unique character of the parish – including its geography, wildlife, history and heritage, I am expanding some of the background information about the parish and updating the general introduction so that it better reflects what we now know and continue to learn about our local area. The formal and statutory sections of the website – such as agendas, minutes, councillor information, policies and other required documents – will remain unchanged in structure and will continue to be maintained as required.

Councillors approved the refund of allotment bonds. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

130326 **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 wages for March & PAYE	£716.84
Tesco	Retirement gift	£45.25
Clerk - Tesco	Refreshments for the Severn Voice meeting	£15.15
Kay Brown	Clerk work for Severn Voice	£50.00
Two Fellers Tree Surgeons	Work on Saul Pound	£3500.00

Proposed, seconded with one abstention

To ratify payments made, and income received, between meetings
To note:
Water Plus (credit) Allotments -£76.20
Proposed, seconded with one abstention

To review and approve March 2026 bank reconciliation and accounting spreadsheet. These have already been circulated to the Councillors
Proposed, seconded with one abstention

140326 **To review the Parish Council Standing Orders (STO) and Direct Debits (DD),** these having been sent to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

- STO's - Proposed, seconded with all in favour
- DD's - Proposed, seconded with all in favour

150326 **Review and Adoption of Amendments to Standing Orders and Code of Conduct** - To consider and approve proposed amendments relating to councillor training within the Council's Standing Orders and Code of Conduct, following recent guidance.
Councillors are also asked to consider a correction to Standing Orders, item 13(f). The current wording states: "A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Monitoring Officer and that decision is final." It is proposed that this be amended to: "A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final." Councillors are asked to review the proposed amendments circulated with the agenda and resolve whether to adopt the revised wording.
Councillors discussed these recommendations and approved the changes.
Proposed, seconded with one abstention.

160326 **To review and approve the Risk Assessment.** This has been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting for their consideration. This was discussed and a couple of amendments were noted.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour.
Action: Clerk to action out updates

170326 **To review the Roles and Responsibilities Policy,** to assign the various Roles and confirm the responsibilities of the checks involved. The list has been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. Councillors worked through the list of R&R agreement changes to the responsibilities.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

Signed / Date 29-04-2026

180326 **To finalise matters arising from the Proposed Business Plan for the three-year period 2026 – 2029** in view of the work achieved this year within the Parish and discussions already held. There are still items on the Business Plan which need to be resolved.

- To discuss the quote for the container base – circulated to the Councillors – it was agreed to delay the purchase of container and installation of hard standing until the next financial year. Proposed, seconded with all in favour
- The purchase of a bench to replace the broken bench on Upper Framilode Pound – a bench is being kindly donated by Highfield Garden World.
- To discuss the quote for installing a base for the bench at Upper Framilode Pound – circulated to the Councillors -- The submitted quote for ???? by J&N Landscapes was discussed and accepted. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.
- The quote to repair the memorial bench at Saul Memorial Hall playing field.- circulated to the Councillors. The quote to repair the bench using hard wood was accepted, £200 by J&N Landscapes. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

Action: Clerk to notify of acceptance of quotes and confirm dates for completing the work.

190326 **To discuss the Clerks review.** Cllrs Lever and Jeffries
Action: Cllr Jeffries and Lever to agree a date for the Clerks review

200326 **To review the draft copy of the Parish Newsletter,** it is proposed to print and deliver in the first week of April. to resolve the printing costs, a draft copy having been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Jeffries and Clerk. The cost to print the larger format was approved and the print cost of the insert about the history of homes in the Parish.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

It was resolved, on the proposal of the Chairman, to suspend Standing Order 3[x] and continue the meeting beyond two hours.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour

210326 **To receive an update on the proposals and considerations for the disused Section of the Stroudwater Canal at Upper Framilode:**

- The report by JPR Environmental has been received and circulated to the Councillors for consideration.
- To consider an informal meeting with all consultees to discuss the potential way forward within ecological and biodiversity guidelines, funding, voluntary contribution, public consultation.
- To consider the date for an Extra Ordinary meeting of the Council to solely discuss all aspects of the canal.

The JPR Environmental report was discussed and it was agreed to contact other Truxor companies for quotations for the work/costings. Also agreed that the Chairman would call an Extra Ordinary meeting to discuss the CIC proposal..
Action: Cllr Bierer to make contact with company who previously carried out work on the canal. Cllr Brown, as Chairman, to call an Extra Ordinary meeting on a date to be confirmed.

220326 **Councillor Responsibilities**

- To note that councillors, while volunteers, are elected or co-opted members with responsibilities to the parish and its residents
- To discuss any matters arising from the recently circulated Apologies Protocol

The recently circulated Apologies Protocol was discussed and confirmed as fully understood.

230326 **Date of next meeting 29th April 2026.**

Meeting closed at 21:38.

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 29-04-2026