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, 29th April 2026.

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

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

Members of the Public: Two members of the public present

Agenda

010426 **To receive apologies for absence.**

- Cllr J Bearman sent his apologies, these were accepted. Proposed, seconded with all in favour
- Cllr B Robbins sent his apologies saying no reason offered. Apology not accepted. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

020426 **Declarations of Interest on the Agenda** – Cllr Brown noted an interest in agenda item 110426 Ratifying of allotment bonds.

030426 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2026.** The minutes were resolved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed, seconded, with all in favour.

040426 **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). A Member of the Public offered his help with reviewing the Appeal of the Solar Farm Planning decision.

050426 **To receive a report from County Councillor Stephen Davies.**

- The County Council is consulting on a Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- Trading Standards have inspected 60 shops and found that 20 of them fell short on pricing accuracy.
- A new Assistant Chief Fire Officer Nick Berry who used to work for Northampton.
- Primary Schools, 92% of applicants got their first choice, 98% got a choice that they made. If anyone has any issues with the primary selection, please let Stephen know.
- Cabinet have confirmed that they have allocated £1 million for redoing Wall Bridge which is a swing bridge. No timescale on when this will happen.
- Council have also announced their local transport plan – promoting cycling, buses and rail.
- Sandfield Bridge – further to the communication sent to Stephen. He has spoken with the Highways Manager who believes he has spoken with C&RT all the way through this. Going to look into this and report back.

060426 **To receive a report from District Councillor Robert Brown**

- The Council have announced that they are looking into whether it is possible to repair the Lido in the short term within the £200k. Waiting to hear from inspectors as to whether it can be repaired within this budget.
- A year has passed and the arrangement made with the late Dist Cllr Richard Maisey is that they did a year and year about, as from 1st May the Dist Cllr attending FwS meetings will be Moya Shannon. Robert has met with Moya and briefed her on all matters on-going in the Parish that he is aware of.
- With regards to the Solar Farm, Robert will continue to. be involved in the solar farm response as required. The procedure is that there will be a hearing where a Planning Inspector will read the evidence and make a judgement on the application. All that can be done now is make comments re the application and appeal. If there is a particularly compelling argument let Robert know. Note the four things for refusal and the rebuffles that PACE is stating. Robert can submit a comment but there is no opportunity to speak at this hearing.
- Robert thanked the Parish Council for the past year.

Cllr A Brown thanked Robert on behalf of the Council and the Community for everything he has done, he went on to say that Robert had been outstanding particularly in the solar farm application. The Parish Council wishes him well.

070426 **To discuss the situation with Sandfield Bridge**, an understanding of the GCC Highways situation, Canal and River Trust statement and whether there are birds nesting under the bridge. Cllr A Brown asked, as the situation with the bridge had been covered in Stephens speech, if anyone had anything to add? Cty Cllr Davies will

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continue to look into the situation between C&RT and Highways and the responsibilities. Cllr Bierer reminded the Clerk about the closure of the High Street for two days in May. This was one of two emails sent by the Clerk to the Highways Manager asking if the work by National Grid could be delayed until after Sandfield Bridge closure was resolved. Cty Cllr S Davies asked if he could be copied into the email with the closure delays. Essential work may be able to be pushed back, emergency work can not.
Action: Clerk to forward the road closure details to Cty Cllr S Davies.

080426 **To note that an appeal has been submitted by PACE following refusal of planning application S.25/1011/FUL (Wheatenhurst Solar Farm) by Stroud District Council Development Control Committee on 2 December 2025.** Stroud District Council has now issued formal notification of the appeal. The appeal reference is S.26/010/APPREF and can be viewed via the Council's planning portal (appeals section).
The Parish Council understands that:

- The appeal has been received by the Planning Inspectorate
- The deadline for representations has been confirmed as no later than 20th May 2026
- An Inspector has not yet been appointed, and a hearing date has not yet been set

The Parish Council will continue to liaise with the case officer and monitor progress of the appeal.

To consider initial preparations for responding to the appeal, discussion to include:

- Understanding the appeal process and anticipated timescales
- Whether and how the Parish Council should submit a formal representation
- Arrangements for coordinating any Parish Council response
- Consideration of appropriate communication methods with residents

A very robust and lengthy discussion around the Appeal process and aspects of the Appellants Appeal documents was held including the process of the appeal hearing, how the Parish Council should make all parties aware that the Planning Refusal had been appealed. How the Parish Council should respond, and which documentation should be considered. It was noted that any submissions had to be made no later than 20th May, a very short period of time. It was noted that notification had been sent to anyone who submitted a comment to the original application, S.25/1011/FUL, however, there was a report that not everyone had received this notification.
Action: Clerk to contact SDC to inform them that not everyone had received notification.

Cty Cllr S Davies, Dist Cllr R Brown and two members of the public left the meeting at 19:55

090426 **Planning Applications**

Planning Decisions

Application Number: S.26/0507/TCA Land At, Framilode, Gloucester, Gloucestershire.
Application Type: Trees in a Conservation Area
Description: Reduce lateral branches on the 8 Plum trees by 1m, leaving tops as they are. Strip and remove the Ivy.
Decision: No Objection

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: Refused

100426 **Clerks report – to update on actions raised at the March meeting and other matters arising.**

- Standing Orders, item 13(f) has been updated as per agenda item March '26 150326.
- Cllr C Butler has completed both parts of the Better Councillor training course.
- The Parish Newsletter has been delivered to all households in the Parish.
- The damage to Upper Framilode Pound after the Amazon van left the road has been repaired.
- Banking signatories renewal has been approved, waiting for the paperwork to come from the bank..
- Following circulation of the Allotment Tenancy Agreement 2026 – 27, there have been 2 more allotments returned to the Parish Council. Council to authorise the refund of the bond to one of those, the other tenancy predates Bonds.
- Cty Cllr S Davies advised that GCC Highways Manager had inspected the edge of the road between Fretherne Bridge and Malt House Farm and believes it to be unsafe and has raised it to be repaired.
- Work at Upper Framilode Pound: the fencing has been renewed and extended; this has been well received by residents. In addition, the concrete plinth for the new bench and bench itself have been installed. A big thank you to J&N Landscape for completing the work so quickly. Thank you also to Highfield Garden World for their very generous donation of the bench, it is very much appreciated, and it is hoped that it will be respected and much used.

Signed / Date

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- The wood for the Queens Golden Jubilee Bench at the Memorial Hall Playing Field is on order and the work will be carried out as soon as possible. The plaque will be replaced on completion.
- Information sheets as to Upper Framilode and the Stroudwater Navigation Heritage and proposed actions by the Parish Council have been posted on the canal towpath notice board.
- It has been reported that Mares Tail is back on allotment 1a, the allotment that was treated twice last year. Details of weed suppressant covering have been circulated to the Councillors. Do they approve the purchase of the weed suppressant?

The allotment bond was resolved to be refunded – Proposed, seconded with all in favour.
The purchase of the weed suppressant was approved – Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

110426 **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 April	£409.64
Lawnovate	Repair to Up Fram Pound inv	£120.00
GAPTC	Membership payment inv 1487	£234.99
SLCC	Membership renewal	£158.00
J&N Landscapes	Concrete plinth for bench at Upper Framilode	£720.00

Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

To ratify payments made, and income received, between meetings

Biz Stationery	Newsletter iss 4	£215.74
Allotment	Bond refund	£75.00 x3
Amazon	Reflectors for the fencing at Upper Framilode	£6.99
BuyAPlan	Ordnance Survey map x2	£196.78
Water Plus	Allotments	-£30.38

Proposed, seconded with two in favour and one abstention.

Received

HMRC VAT	Repayment	£1579.95

To review and approve April 2026 bank reconciliation and accounting spreadsheet. These have already been circulated to the Councillors.
Proposed, seconded with all in favour

120426 **Review and Adoption of Amendments in the Code of Conduct** – Following the review of the Council's Standing Orders at the meeting in March 2026, item 150326, the Code of Conduct requires to be similarly amended – item 4.7(a) and (b) to bring it in line with the Standing Orders. The amendments were resolved to be actioned. Proposed, seconded, with all in favour.

130426 **To review and approve the end of Financial Year Accounts and Bank Reconciliation 2025/26**
The end of year accounting spreadsheet (cashbook) and end of year bank reconciliation form have been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting for their review. The Financial Year Accounts and Bank Reconciliation 2025/26 were resolved as an accurate record of the years transactions. Proposed, seconded, with all in favour.

140426 **To review and approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26.** The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26 has been circulated to the Councillors for their consideration prior to approval at the meeting. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26 was resolved as an accurate record of the years transactions. Proposed, seconded, with all in favour.

150426 **To receive feedback from the Clerks review carried out on 24th April**. Cllr Lever and Jeffries. Cllr Jeffries conveyed that the review was carried out in a very relaxed manner, all favourable. Cllr Lever continued that they think the Clerk is excellent, slight concern that she may do too much but she says she loves her job and that she will say if she needs help. Couple of things suggested to enhance her qualifications would be to do the FILCA (Financia Introduction to Local Council Administration) but this wouldn't be until January 2027. The other suggestion the Clerk suggested is a Parish Council accreditation, SLCC have Council Awards which Cllrs Lever and Jeffries thought was an excellent suggestion and something that the PC should aim to achieve. They finished by thanking the Clerk for her hard work and all the additional hours she puts in.

160426 **The following Policies and Regulations are to be reviewed:**
- Document Retention Policy
- Equality Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Transparency Policy
- Complaints Policy

These policies, having all been reviewed by the Councillors, were resolved to be adopted. Proposed, seconded with all in favour.

Signed / Date

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170426 **To be discussed and resolved for adoption by the Council,**

- Health and Safety Policy

Following discussion, it was agreed that this policy needed amending to include Councillors as well as already listed, employees, volunteers and contractors. This will be reviewed again at the next meeting.
Action: Clerk to amend the draft policy and re-circulate to Councillors.

180426 **To discuss the concerns raised by the Memorial Hall Committee re dog fouling and dog control on the Memorial Hall Playing Field.** The Committee are considering installing signage instructing that dogs should be kept on leads when on the playing field. – A robust and thorough discussion by the Councillors around responsible dog ownership on the playing field which has a mixture of users for various recreational and social reasons. It was agreed that the Memorial Hall Committee should be contacted to request a meeting to discuss various aspects of the use of the playing field, possible solutions and whether the Parish Council can assist.
Action: Clerk to contact the Memorial Hall Committee to propose a meeting.

190426 **To receive an update on the proposals and considerations for the disused Section of the Stroudwater Canal at Upper Framilode:**

- An Extra Ordinary Meeting was held on 1st April at which it was decided to respectfully decline a Member of the Publics offer of funding in the form of a CIC to carry out work on the canal.
- Formal Notification: The Parish Council has considered options for managing the area in line with its responsibilities as landowner and to bring clear community benefit. Proposed works include vegetation clearance using contractors and ongoing ecological management. The project will be undertaken by the Parish Council in partnership with local environmental and biodiversity groups, where appropriate.
- Funding: The project is anticipated to be funded through a combination of grant funding and contributions from external bodies, including local authorities, charitable organisations, and environmental funding programmes
- To discuss the need to advertise for Tender the work on the disused section of the Stroudwater Navigation within the Ecological and biodiversity considerations. Approval of the Invitation to Tender and Tender Pack.
- What work can be carried out by the Parish Council now which does not involve Truxors?
- To consider an informal meeting with all consultees to discuss the potential way forward within ecological and biodiversity guidelines, funding, voluntary contribution, public consultation.

The disused section of canal was discussed at length and positively including what work can be carried out without disturbing nesting birds and who would carry out the work.

Cllr L Jeffries left the meeting at 21:00

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.

The Parish Council and a small number of volunteers will arrange the work to be carried out and a date which is convenient to all. The Invitation to Tender and the Tender Pack were reviewed and with minor amendments are ready to be published, these will also be sent to the two companies who have already met with the Council. It was agreed that an informal meeting with the consultees would be a positive step forward, to be suggested no earlier than June due to other commitments.
Action: Clerk to make slight amendments to the Invitation to Tender and Tender Pack before advertising. Also to contact the various bodies who have been advising on the canal, to invite them to an informal meeting. People who have shown an interest in helping with the work on the canal, to be contacted.

190426 **Date of next meeting 13th May 2026.**

The meeting closed at 21:12.

Signed: *Kay Brown 23rd* April 2026

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

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