

MINUTES OF A MEETING



Fradley Parish Council

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Minutes of the Fradley Annual Parish Meeting (Parish Assembly) held at 6:30pm at Fradley Village Hall on 15 May 2025

Present:

Cllrs Mike Ashcroft, Phil Beswick, Stuart Gilmour (Vice Chair) and David Leytham (Chair).

In Attendance:

Claire Crompton (Clerk/RFO) and 0 Members of the Public.

25/01/PA – Chair's Introduction and Welcome

The meeting was opened by Cllr David Leytham, Chair of Fradley Parish Council, who welcomed everyone.

25/02/PA – Apologies for Absence.

There were no apologies for absence.

25/03/PA – To confirm the minutes of the Fradley Annual Parish Meeting (Parish Assembly) held on 16th May 2024

RESOLVED: *The draft minutes of the Fradley Annual Parish Meeting (Parish Assembly) held on 16th May 2024 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record. AGREED: unanimously.*

25/04/PA – Annual Report of the Council 2024/2025.

Annual Report of the Council 2024/2025

Introduction by Cllr David Leytham – Chair

The first part of our new year saw us operating with a new way of working. Six new work groups, each with a specific function had been set up to allow our Councillors to concentrate their efforts on specific issues. Sadly, 5 Councillor resignations, leaving us with only 4 members, led to the suspension of the work group project. Our full complement of Councillors, based on the number of residents we have, is 10, so suddenly being reduced to 4 meant we had to think again on what we wanted to achieve in our new financial year.

Despite losing over half our Councillors we managed to produce our first newsletter, which was distributed across the Parish. From a survey in it we learned that people wanted us to put on a major community event, make provision for older children and put up Christmas lights in public places. We are working with ideas for the major event and the Christmas lights, but finding somewhere for teenagers is proving to be much more difficult. We will keep trying with that.

You may be aware that housing developers are required to put money into a fund to pay for projects that benefit the community. This 'Section 106' money has supported the recently completed work on our Hay End Lane play area and will go towards refurbishing the play area in Worthington Road.

As the year wore on, we were faced with challenging planning applications from property developers and industry. Despite our objections, the County Council allowed Cemex to conduct their concrete and transportation business on the A513 in Alrewas, on a 24 hour 7 days a week basis. On a happier note, and closer to home, we were successful in blocking two major housing developments that were obviously unsustainable.

Whilst these planning applications were being resisted, we were making preparations for the planting of an oak tree in Watersmeet, to commemorate the late Queen Elizabeth's reign. Staffordshire's Lord-Lieutenant, Sir Ian Dudson, joined us in early May 2025 as we celebrated our late Queen's reign and reflected on the sacrifices made by our armed forces in conflicts around the world.

We also drew up plans to convert three Second World War pill boxes into bat 'houses', used our community grant funds to support local groups and charities, and entered into a grounds maintenance contract with a new contractor. We are delighted with the improvement in the areas we maintain and are looking forward to developing our relationship with our new contractors.

We hope you will have seen that we have installed new litter bins and flower planters across the Parish. The planters and bins are both practical and attractive and are funded by 'S106' contributions from housing developers.

As Christmas approached, we joined other local organisations in placing a decorated Christmas tree in our Parish Church. We thank our Vicar, Elizabeth, for giving us the opportunity to spread our Christmas good will message across the Parish.

In January and in April 2025 we joined residents in opposing applications to convert private houses into Children's Homes. The District Council refused both applications, which relieved residents, who quite rightly objected to the applications on the grounds that the houses were in quiet estate roads that were unsuitable for the volumes of traffic generated by Children's Homes.

In December 2024 we learned that Bown Pool had been polluted. We were concerned about this but were unable to do anything about it simply because we don't own it or have the authority to deal with it. Eventually, in April, the Environment Agency told us the person responsible for polluting the pool had been dealt with. Sadly, some residents used social media to attack us over what they thought was a lack of action from us. When the pool was polluted, we couldn't act because we weren't legally competent or physically able to do anything other than encourage the Environment Agency to act swiftly to prevent further harm, which is what we did.

As our year comes to an end, we are faced with another issue of concern that we don't have powers to deal with. I am referring to the constant problems brought about by parked lorries causing obstruction and danger to road users in Common Lane. We share residents' and road users' concerns over this and are working with Staffordshire County Council and our local PCSO team to try to bring about solutions to it.


As for the new financial year, I can give you some pointers –

Defibrillators – do we have enough? If not, how many do we need? How much will it cost?

Worthington Road play park – renovation plans are complete and they are with Lichfield District Council who will be dealing with contractors on our behalf.

S106 funds – we have access to a fair amount of money and feel we should prioritise on new notice boards, benches, history boards and finger posts.

Christmas lights – we have found a contractor who may be able to help us decorate the Village this year.



Major community event - we hope to work with another party to set one up.

Environmental issues – we hope to find funding to fit out three canal side ‘pill boxes’ as bat houses. Our wildflower garden in Watersmeet has been prepared and planted.

Newsletter – we are aiming to produce and deliver our next newsletter by 13th October

Grounds maintenance – we are ‘quartering’ the Parish map to give each Councillor a patch to supervise.

Finally – Local Government regulations tell us we should have 10 Councillors (the number is based on population figures) and we have four, with a good chance of two applications coming in soon. We need more Councillors. Give it some thought. Contact us if you want to join us. See our web site for contact details.

25/05/PA – Open Forum for residents to ask questions, raise issues or make comment.

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Meeting closed at 19.00pm