

**Cyngor Cymuned Freystrop
Freystrop Community Council**



Freystrop Village Hall

Registered Charity Number 508498

**SECOND ANNUAL REPORT
2022/23**



Annual Report for 2022/2023

as required under The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

GOVERNANCE

Freystrop Community Council (FCC) comprises of six Councillors – the maximum number allowed based on the population within the Community. At the beginning of 2022 the previous year's Councillors were still in post.

At the Local Government Election on 5th May 2022 the following Councillors were returned unopposed: Esme Utting (Freystrop Cross), Dawn Harries (Maddox Moor), Ross Harries (Moorland Road) and David Thomas (New Road). Two new candidates stood Anna Simpson (Moorland Road) and Christine Saunders (Lower Freystrop) and were elected unopposed.

The retiring Councillor, George Hughes, was given a recorded vote of thanks at the April meeting for his 15 years of service to the Community and in particular to Lower Freystrop and Little Milford. Unfortunately after 6 months Cllr. Saunders tendered her resignation. The Community Council after consulting Pembrokeshire CC were permitted to co-opt a replacement and Cllr Rebecca Beeden was formally co-opted in November 2022.

In March 2022 the FCC appointed a new Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer Mr Russell Lavis (Moorland Road) and he took up the post on 1st April 2022.



*Targate Road through to Freystrop Cross
(Goff Thornberry)*

The County Councillor for the Llangwm Ward which includes Freystrop Michael John was also returned at the Local Govt. Election.

At the AGM in July Cllr. David Thomas was voted in as Chair with Esme Utting and Dawn Harries as Co-Vice Chairs.

The FCC meetings were all held on "face to face" basis indicating a return to normality after the Covid 19 pandemic.

Matters regularly discussed at meetings related to Highways/Planning responses/Community facilities/Finance (see later in this report for comments on main issues). The public were also able to attend to raise issues of concern. County

Councillor Michael John attended all meetings to update the FCC on county-wide matters. The FCC monthly meetings also included agenda items relating to the Village Hall for which the Community Council are Trustees. However as reported previously the finances relating to the Village Hall are kept entirely separate from the FCC finances with accounts held in two different banks.

A Facebook Page for Freystrop Community Council was set up to improve dissemination of FCC specific issues to residents.



FINANCE

The FCC obtains the majority of its operating funds from the Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) by way of the annual precept. The application for each year's precept is based on a budgeting process the previous November and after ratification by the FCC submitted to PCC in January. The precept for 2022-2023 was for £5000 (the same as the previous year) which equated to £27.80/Band F property in Freystrop. This money is used to pay the salary of the Clerk/FCC insurance/Councillors annual allowance of £150/Chair's allowance of £500/internal and external audit fees/Subscription to One Voice Wales (OVW)/Donations to Church and Chapel towards grounds maintenance.

The FCC is required to submit an Annual Financial Return to Wales Audit. Prior to submission this return is audited by our Internal Auditor and approved by the FCC. Audit Wales have yet to respond to the 2019-20/2020-21/2021-22 submissions-presumably due to the aftermath of the pandemic during which time they took the audit work back "in house" from their external accountants.

The FCC currently has reserves of over£10,000 for earmarked projects (see details below). The FCC Bankers are HSBC Bank in Haverfordwest which holds both the current and deposit accounts. Bank charges are imposed on the current account of £5/month plus 40p/cheque transaction. Nominal interest is received on the deposit account. Bank statements are received on a monthly basis.

Freystrop Community Council Accounts

- Bank Balances as at end of financial year 2022-23 were
 - Current a/c £3542.64 with charges for year of £68.00
 - Deposit a/c (aka Projects) £10333.63 with interest for the year £60.56
 - A total of £10,270 is reserved for specific purposes
 - £1,500 Elections Fund
 - £4,770 Playing Field
 - £4,000 Speed limiting signs

MAJOR ITEMS OF NOTE

Highways

The FCC continued to be concerned about speeding problems in the area particularly at Freystrop Cross, along Targate Road past the Playing Field and at Lower Freystrop. PCC were notified of the problem areas and have carried out monitoring. Both the Police and Community speed watch teams have operated in the area during the past year but the FCC have requested that the periods of monitoring be increased. Also the FCC have decided to fund Speed limit warning signs on the Haverfordwest to Burton Road and have set aside funds for this purpose in reserves. It is understood that a 20mph speed limit will be imposed on part of Targate Road during 2023.

Planning

The long-delayed second phase of Summerhill Estate off New Road is still progressing with 13 of the 28 houses built or under construction. The general site layout is as per the 1974 planning approval but with houses of a newer design to those already built under phase1 along the New



Road frontage. The developers have provided a much-needed extension to the Village Hall car park for the benefit of the Community with only the final tarmac surface to be completed.

Community

The FCC was successful in obtaining a £800 grant under PAVS “Warm Rooms” initiative. This operated for 3 months (January –March 2023) providing a warm meeting space for residents once a week. The attendees were entertained in the Village Hall with talks/quizzes. The initiative was aimed at alleviating some of the heating costs for residents due to the Winter energy crisis. Following the acquisition for the community of the telephone kiosk on Freystrop Cross FCC launched a consultation through the Freystrop Facebook group to ascertain the community’s wishes for the asset. A book exchange was the most popular choice. This is a successful venture which has diversified to include CDs and DVDs and even crafting materials.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park supplied all communities with areas within its boundaries with a map of Pembrokeshire detailing its work and items of interest. This was fixed in place in the bus shelter at Freystrop Cross.

A Facebook page for Freystrop Community Council was created. This allows FCC to post as an entity and to interact with other users in its own right. The page is also hosts to items of information relevant to the Community Council but do not fit, for example, the remit of a particular group. Being a public page members of the public do not have to be users of Facebook to read the information contained upon it treating it as ‘just another webpage’ whilst Facebook users can receive updates by liking/following the page.

Liaison with other Authorities and Organisations

The FCC is represented on the liaison body of Pembrokeshire Town and Community Councils which meet with PCC and third sector bodies, e.g. PAVS and PLANED. These meetings, now entitled “Better together”, are still being held online.

The FCC Chair is Vice Chair of One Voice Wales (OVW) Pembrokeshire Area Committee and is their Representative on the OVW National Executive Committee and currently sits on their Policy Committee. This Committee provides input to and receives feedback on wide-ranging issues related to Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) and Audit Wales.

VILLAGE HALL & PLAYING FIELD

As mentioned earlier the FCC has a subsidiary role in maintaining and operating the Village Hall and the Playing Field for the benefit of the Community.

Village Hall

The Hall is being extremely well-used again. Activities such as Pilates/Tai Chi/Craft/Drama/Canine Club are held every week. There also monthly bookings by the FCC itself for its meetings and the Women’s Institute. Pembrokeshire College also run regular First Aid courses. The Freystrop Short Mat Bowls Club has returned after a long lay-off due to the pandemic.



The electricity supply contract with BG Lite which had run for 3 years came to an end on 9th April 2022 and a new 3 year contract commenced on 10 April 2022. This contract has “cushioned” the Hall from the worst effects of the energy crisis.

The original Constitution and Trust Deed for the Village Hall of 1955 is well passed its “sell by” date and although some updated rules were put in place in 1995 the FCC, as the Trustee, consider that an updated Constitution is required for the future governance of both the Hall and the Playing Field.

PCSOs 8090/8023 Adam & Gab Attended Freystrop Warm Room to give a talk regarding Scams



The banking arrangements for the Village Hall and Playing Field are with Barclays Bank which holds both the current and deposit accounts. As the Hall and field are a registered charity a return has to be made of income and expenditure to The Charity Commission each year and to update information relating to the Trustees.

The Hall Committee are indebted to Anna Simpson for taking on the role of Treasurer to improve financial record-keeping as recommended by the Internal Auditor.

The “Warm Rooms” grant obtained by FCC also covered the purchase of several chairs with arms for the Hall for use by those having difficulty using the standard seating. A small portion of the grant contributed to the electricity bill.

Parc Hamdden Freystrop Recreation Park

Parc Hamdden Freystrop Recreation Park continues to be improved with the guidance of the Steering Group.

A further 400 trees have been planted. This completes the work to re-create a hedge line along the western boundary. Several groups of trees have been planted as copses to provide shelter, focal points, habitats and in one instance a maze experience.

The clearance material from the previous year’s work has been used to create a dead hedge feature. Over time many birds, including birds of prey, have been observed using the structure as roosts.

The Outdoor Connections Fund run by PAVS has provided grant money to aid the re-generation of the area. Close to 50% of the cost to purchase a container to add much needed storage for equipment for equipment and tools was successfully applied for in November of 2022. 100% of the costs for buying and installing a picnic bench and banquette was provided by a third round of the funding initiative.



A 'Happy to Chat' bench was installed in late spring 2022. This was an initiative by Pembrokeshire County Council to supply benches to communities through the work of Norman Industries.

A 3 year Service Level Agreement (SLA) is in place with PCC to cover maintenance and insurance of the Children's Play Area equipment together with grass cutting inside the play area compound.

As part of its 70 year celebrations Pembrokeshire Coast National Park had a programme of tree donation to communities. Four rare Welsh Apples Trees were planted in the orchard area of the recreation park.

The possibility of several funding streams prompted the Steering Group to bring forward plans to improve the children's play area.

Working with Dragon Play of Caerphilly initial ideas were drafted to a plan available to see from the team. Sadly the project was not one that the funders thought fitted their criteria. The team will continue to look for opportunities to upgrade the current play items.

Throughout the year the Steering Group has been supported by a loyal core group of volunteers and many others who have helped out when they can. Thank you all. In addition, Gareth James and Locke Brothers thank you for your assistance with infrastructure works.



The "Happy to Chat" bench installed in 2022 and behind it the new picnic bench from 2023

Freystrop Village Hall Accounts

- Income & Expenditure 2022-23
 - Income of £5679.21
 - Expenditure £5013.27
- Bank Balances as at 31/03/2023
 - Current a/c £4935.03
 - Deposit a/c £13616.37 with interest for the year £13.75



PLANS FOR 2023/2024

Community Council

The precept for 2023/24 has been agreed at £6,000 – based on budget. See Appendix A.

The AGM will be held in June 2023.

A training programme for the Councillors and Clerk will be put in place as required by the new legislation.

Village Hall

Completion of Car Park at the Hall to be carried out by BDS.

A programme of internal improvement works is being prepared which will include provision of a disabled toilet.

Parc Hamdden Freystrop Recreation Park

The monthly Working Party Events will continue at the recreation park.

Funding will be sought to create multi-use paths around the acreage for exercise inclusive of those with mobility issues.

Pledges have been made by residents to fund seating and tables in resting areas of the recreation park and we will be seeking to secure money for further units.

We will look to progress the purchase and installation of new play equipment for children and play/exercise equipment for youths and adults.



CONTACT DETAILS OF CLERK AND COUNCILLORS

Details from 9 January 2023

Dawn S Harries	Maddox Moor		dawnsharries@gmail.com
M Ross Harries	Moorland Road		ross@mrhcs.co.uk
Rebecca A Beeden	St Clement's Park		beccasgemspyro@yahoo.co.uk
Anna M Simpson	Moorland Road		stackrocks24@gmail.com
W David Thomas	New Road	01437 890297	wd.thomas1@btinternet.com
Esme Utting	Freystrop Cross		gutting@pobroadband.co.uk

Clerk

Russell D Lavis	Sivalrid Moorland Road Freystrop SA62 4LE	07812508202	freystropcc@yahoo.com
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Pembrokeshire County Councillor – Llangwm Ward

Michael J John	Millbrook House, 23 Main Street Llangwm SA62 4HP	01437 890175	Michael.john2@btinternet.com
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Appendix A

FREYSTROP COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BUDGET FOR 2023-2024

Precept of £6,000 approved at FCC meeting on 9 January 2023

Freystrop Community Council

Draft budget for 2023-2024

Item

Clerk/RFO Salary Gross	2,840	Assumes no increase in April 2023
Councillors Annual Allowances	1,200	Additional £50/Councillor awaiting approval by IRPW in February 2023
Chairmans Allowance	500	
FCC Fiduciary Insurance	300	
Subscriptions	135	
Training Fees	150	
Donations	300	
External Audit Fees	400	Allows for potentially 3 years of External Audits not yet invoiced
Internal Auditors Honorarium	50	
Annual Community Newsletter	250	
Future Elections Build-up	500	
Bank Charges	100	Assumes HSBC remain as FCC Bank for 2023/24

Total

6,725

List of funds held in reserves:-

Future Elections Fund	1,500	Reduced from £4,000 November 2022
Road Speed Reduction Signs	4,000	Based on 2 signs at sale price in October 2022

Restricted Funds

Held on behalf of FVH for PHFRC	7,500	
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Total

13,000

Suggest 2023/24 Precept Application be made in sum of £6000

WDT 04/01/2023