

FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

*Minutes for the ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 12th September 2023
in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm*

Present: Cllr A. Kilbee, Cllr C. Winter, Cllr J. Charter

In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk), Mr D. Aiken (Footpath Warden), Cllr Mellen, 1 member of the public.

23.103 Visiting speakers

Cllr Mellen's District and County Councillor reports can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

Mr Aiken's Footpath Warden's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

23.104 Contribution by Members of the Public

None.

23.105 Apologies and approval of absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Trew, and approved unanimously.

23.106 To receive any pecuniary or non-pecuniary declarations of interest from Members and any Gifts of Hospitality.

None.

23.107 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items

None.

23.108 To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th July 2023

Cllr Kilbee proposed approving the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th July 2023 as a true and correct record; seconded by Cllr Winter and approved unanimously. The Chairman then signed the minute book.

23.109 Matters arising from the Parish Council meeting held on 11th July 2023

All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

23.110 Chairman's Report

The Family Fun Day organised by the Friends of Finningham was a successful venture marred only by a very sudden rainstorm halfway through the afternoon. Unfortunately, the support from the residents was not as could have been hoped. Also, a number of the stall holders and amusement providers did not honour their commitments.

The Parish Council and Friends of Finningham had a joint Information Centre but that was poorly attended and little was gained from our presence. However, I feel that, in spite of the number of people who actually came to speak to us, it was a worthwhile exercise. Many thanks to Jon and Paul for their help in setting up staffing the stall and helping with the generators (which were put to good use).

I have noticed that the Flagpole is in dire need of a good clean. I shall be requesting help with that in the near future.

I was approached by Chris Kerridge who told me that the lady who lives in Pipkin, Church Meadow has complained about a tree in the Cemetery which has grown so much that it is likely to cause damage to her chimney. I called on her but had no reply so, I arranged a meeting with the company who have quoted for cutting the Green next year and have also suggested some work on various trees on the Green which are in a poor state. This will be discussed later in the Agenda.

We need now to turn our attention to the publication of our Newsletter at the end of the year and I would appreciate some help in putting together an article or two. The idea of a Village database seems to be fraught with difficulties, particularly with GDPR. I feel that we need to go carefully with this but still strive to find a solution.

Although Paul's application has been submitted to Barclays Bank, no further progress has been made to add his name to one of the signatories. This is becoming urgent, as I shall be away for the first three weeks of October and I'm not sure if I shall be able to Authorise payments from there. I suggest that Chaterine makes the payments this month and I shall authorise them, that way we shall both know what to do when the roles are reversed. I assume that James is still on the list of signatories so, when he is confirmed as a Councillor, we can apply for him to be able to do online banking.

During August I conducted an Annual Appraisal of Jane's work. This will be available for you to see during the In Camera item on the Agenda.

7:39pm Mr Aiken arrived.

Cllr Kilbee proposed return to agenda item 1, approved unanimously.

(23.103 Visiting speakers)

Mr Aiken read through his Footpath Wardens report.

Cllr Kilbee thanked Mr Aiken for his report.

23.111 Clerk's Report

- MSDC Pride in your Place campaign - funding is being offered for projects to improve the appearance and cleanliness of towns and villages. Parishes with a population over 1,500 can apply for up to £400.00 in funding, and those with a population below 1,500 up to £250.00. Applications must be received by 31st October 2023.
- MSDC's Free Trees, Hedging and Wildflower Scheme is continuing for 2024 as part of the Biodiversity Action Plan: [Our trees, hedgerows and wildflowers scheme - Mid Suffolk District Council - Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils - Working Together](#)
- NALC are working with The Parkinson Partnership LLP to update the 2019 model Financial Regulations for England and Wales. To help NALC with the update, they are seeking views on the technical aspect of the regulations by 5th November 2023, and the responses will inform the revision and content of these regulations. Deadline to complete the form is 5 November 2023.
- Model Financial Regulations consultation free events:
NALC will be hosting two free events next month as part of the consultation to inform an update to their Model Financial Regulations. The events are taking place on Monday 2 October at 12noon - 1 pm and Thursday 12 October 6.30 - 7.30 pm. The events will provide an opportunity to speak directly with Steve Parkinson from The Parkinson Partnership LLP, who is working with NALC to update this essential document for local town and parish councils.
- Notification of planning appeal AP/23/00064 has been received:
Appeal Reference: APP/W3520/W/23/3325321.
Appeal by: Mr S Hardwick Mr M Hardwick And Mrs W Leggett
Proposal: Application for Outline Planning Permission (Access points to be considered, Appearance, Layout, Landscaping and Scale to be reserved) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Erection of 3No dwellings and garage (following demolition of existing buildings). Location: Maple Lodge, Gislingham Road, Finningham, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4HZ
The Chief Executive of MSDC has emailed the results of an external and internal review of the May 2023 elections. The details have been forwarded to councillors.

ACTION – Clerk to submit application for Pride in your Place funding.

23.112 Parish Councillor Co-option

Former Parish Councillor James Black was present having indicated his interest in rejoining the Council. Cllr Kilbee proposed that James Black be co-opted as a councillor; seconded by Cllr Winter and approved unanimously. Cllr Black took a seat alongside councillors, and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed and signed by the Clerk. Cllr Black also signed his acceptance to receive summons electronically, and will complete the Register of Interest form within the 28 days deadline.

23.113 National Grid Norwich to Tilbury update

The second non-statutory consultation on Norwich to Tilbury closed on 21st August 2023, but residents can still send feedback directly to National Grid: contact@n-t.nationalgrid.com.

23.114 Finningham GREEN Footpath CIL bid application update, including consideration of footpath name

The professional fees, as approved at the last meeting, based on a 50/50 split with Cllr Mellen, have now been paid. MSDC Infrastructure Team have confirmed that the CIL bid application has been officially approved by Cabinet; £52,000.00 for eligible costs. An offer letter has been sent to Suffolk Highways. The footpath name was discussed and it was agreed to draw up a short list of

names for residents to choose their preferred option from. Once the shortlist has been agreed by councillors, it will be shared with residents using the Council's online platforms, and possibly as an insertion in the newsletter. The names will be discussed again once work has begun.

23.115 To discuss Annual Newsletter to everyone in the village, including approval of printing costs

The member of the public helping with the production of the newsletter has provided printing costs. Cllr Trew is also obtaining costs which will be presented to councillors for their consideration at a future meeting.

23.116 Churchyard Maintenance update

Cllr Kilbee has spoken to the Assistant to the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) CofE Suffolk, who has said that in their opinion, despite NALC's advice, there is no obligation on the PCC to put everything into good repair and condition before transferring the responsibility of the churchyard maintenance.

The Clerk has forwarded copies of the correspondence to SALC, who are speaking to NALC on the Parish Council's behalf, to clarify the legal basis for NALC's advice that it is expected everything will be in a good state of repair prior to a transfer of responsibility.

8:24 Cllr Mellen arrived.

Cllr Kilbee proposed returning to agenda item 1, approved unanimously.

(23.103 Visiting speakers)

Cllr Mellen read through his DC and CC reports. Cllr Charter asked Cllr Mellen material consideration criteria when the council receives new planning consultation requests for new development. Cllr Mellen said that the county is in a good position because we now have a 10-year housing supply, and are close to getting the Local Plan in place. If an application is received for new development, then a sustainable location is always an important material consideration. Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Mellen for his reports.

23.117 Playground Improvements update, including consideration of annual Play Inspection assessment

Cllr Kilbee advised that Friends of Finningham conducted a village survey at the Family fun Day in August, and shared the results with councillors. It was noted that it was only completed by a small number of residents, and did not provide feedback on the playground specifically, or the demographic completing the survey. After discussing, it was agreed to create a more specific, detailed survey, which would be included within the first issue of the annual newsletter. It was agreed unanimously to proceed with a basic play inspection, which MSDC have advised will be carried out at the end of the year.

ACTION - Clerk to advise MSDC that the council would like to proceed with a basic play inspection report, and start work on playground improvements survey.

23.118 Community Payback Scheme

Following his meeting with the Project Co-ordinator for Ipswich Probation Service, Cllr Kilbee advised that this project is unfortunately unable to progress any further, due to a lack of supervision.

23.119 Track by the Green: approval of expenditure for additional planings

Additional planings are needed to fill in holes which are starting to appear on the track. Cllr Kilbee has obtained quotations which were shared with councillors. After discussing it was agreed to order a tonne bag of planings from Clarkes of Walsham at a cost of £50.14 plus VAT delivered.

ACTION – Clerk to request pro forma invoice from Clarkes and arrange payment and delivery.

23.120 To discuss quotations for village green grass cutting

The Clerk obtained a quotation from a local contractor to for the 2024 grass cutting of the green. The contractor has provided various options with different frequencies of cutting, which were shared with councillors. Further quotations will be sought, as per FR 10.3, for consideration at a future meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to obtain additional grass cutting quotations, as above.

23.121 To discuss quotations for works required to village green trees

During their site visit, the contractor who provided the grass cutting quotation, noted that work is required to three trees on the green. Two beech trees are dead and need to be felled, and an ash tree requires removal of lower dead wood. Cllr Kilbee arranged to meet with the contractor to discuss further. Details of the subsequent quotation were shared with councillors. The clerk will obtain two further quotations for comparison and consideration, as per FR 10.3, at the next meeting.

23.122 ACTION – Clerk to obtain additional quotations for works to the trees, as above.

23.123 To approve expenditure for urgent works required to sycamore tree in cemetery

Cllr Kilbee reported that a resident has raised concerns that a sycamore tree in the cemetery is encroaching on their property and making contact with their chimney. During his meeting with the contractor, as per the above agenda item, he asked the contractor to provide a cost to pollard the tree. There has not been enough time to seek additional quotations, but after discussing, and due to the urgency of the work required and property damage implications, Cllr Winter proposed proceeding with quotation of £400.00 plus VAT. Seconded by Cllr Black, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to instruct contractor to proceed with the sycamore tree pollard as above.

23.124 To consider using unique Parish Council email addresses

As reported at the previous meeting, NALC advise that in order to comply with GDPR, councils should provide official email accounts for their councillors as well as for their Clerk. Further to this, it is recommended that gov.uk email accounts and domains are used as they demonstrate the councils official local government status, although this is not yet a mandatory requirement. The Clerk provided quotations to change the website domain name, and provide 8 email accounts, to include all councillor seats and the Clerk. Quotations were provided for both gov.uk and co.uk accounts. After discussing and considering the JPAG (Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance), it was agreed to proceed with a gov.uk domain and email accounts, hosted by CAS (Community Action Suffolk) who have provided the Council's new website, at an annual cost of £350.00. Proposed by Cllr Charter, seconded by Cllr Kilbee and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to ask CAS to set up new gov.uk domain name and email addresses, as above

23.125 To approve expenditure for additional beacon plaques

Cllr Kilbee shared proofs with councillors, for additional plaques, made by the original company Anglia Sign Casting, to commemorate the King's Coronation on 6th May 2023, and acknowledge that the beacon was manufactured and donated by Miller Farms. A new plaque will be commissioned for each subsequent official lighting event. Councillors unanimously approved the proof for the King's Coronation event, but felt Miller Farms should approve the wording of the proof relating to their plaque. The total expenditure for both plaques is £195.06 plus VAT delivered. Approval of £195.06 plus VAT expenditure proposed by Cllr Winter: seconded by Cllr Black and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to return signed proofs, once confirmation of wording received from Miller Farms, and request pro forma invoice in order for payment to be made.

23.126 Parish Council Insurance Renewal 2023/24

The Clerk shared details of the insurance renewal from ANSVAR through CAS (Community Action Suffolk) with councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk confirmed that additional quotations for comparison had also been sought, and provided details to councillors. After discussing, Cllr Black proposed proceeding with the renewal from ANSVAR through CAS at £516.75 in total, seconded by Cllr Charter, and proposed unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to instruct CAS as above.

23.127 To discuss the defibrillator

Cllr Winter reported that she has received feedback that the lock of the cabinet in which the defibrillator is housed, does not work properly, and is very difficult to open. Cllr Winter has checked herself and agrees that there is a problem with it. After discussing, it was agreed to look at replacement cabinets, which will be considered at the next meeting.

ACTION – Clerk/Cllr Winter as above

9:30pm Cllr Mellen left the meeting

23.128 Correspondence received

The Clerk has received an email from a resident making complaint that a section of their hedge on Station Road was cut without permission. The hedge was cut back by the Parish Council because it was obscuring the sightline of the drivers coming down Station Road where the new Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) has been installed. The Clerk has replied and apologised unreservedly on behalf of the councillors who carried out the work.

23.129 To approve Internal Audit 2022/23 comments

Deferred.

23.130 Finance

a. RFO's report (bank balance, receipts, and payments)

Balances as of 28/04/2023

Community Bank Account

Balance as of 28 April 2023: £24,347.31

(Balance as of 29 March 2023: £25,265.63)

Receipts (since 29 March 2023): £3,738.39

Payments (since 29 March 2023): £4,656.71

Deposit Account

Balance as of 28 April 2023: £3,337.46

General funds: £11,399.75

Reserves (1/2 of precept & election costs): £4,262.85

Restricted funds (CIL & grants not spent): £12,022.17

b. Requests for payment

August Payments:	
Clerk admin payment August 2023	£250.10
Clerk August expenses	£10.71
HMRC August PAYE/NIC	£62.52
ICO annual fee – DIRECT DEBIT	£35.00
SCC – Walsham Road Footpath design costs	£1,344.97
T. Kilbee expenses PC/FOF banner	£32.09
September Payments:	
Clerk admin September	£306.94
Clerk expenses September	£76.73
CAS – website hosting and initial set up	£207.00
MSDC – PC election costs	£133.70

Cllr Winter proposed authorisation of the above payments, seconded by Cllr Black and approved unanimously, with one abstention against Cllr Kilbee's expenses.

The August payments were made on 18th August 2023, following quorate email approval, as approved at the meeting held on 11th July 2023, due to there being no meeting in August.

ACTION - Cllr Kilbee and Cllr Winter to pay the above approved September payments, (dual authorisation).

23.131 Planning

a) To consider applications

- DC/23/04036 – Application for Planning Permission. Proposal: Householder Application - Erection of two storey extension (following removal of single storey extension). Location: 7 Westhorpe Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 4TN

After discussing councillors agreed unanimously that they have no objection to this application.

ACTION – Clerk to add comments to MSDC Planning Portal as above

b) Decisions & to consider planning matters coming forth

- DC/23/01970 – Application for Planning Permission – Householder application – erection of single storey rear extension. Location: Kilmore Cottage, Church Lane, Finningham, IP14 4JB – **GRANTED**
- DC/23/02777 Proposal: Householder Application – Erection of a first-floor extension over existing single storey garage and change to additional living accommodation; Erection of detached garage (amended scheme to withdrawn application DC/22/02033). Location: Riverside, Gislingham Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4HY - **GRANTED**
- DC/23/03145 – APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA – Notification of Works to Trees in A Conservation Area – Fell 1 No. Oak (T1), Fell 1 No. Ash (T2), Fell 2No. Oak (T3 and T4). Location: Kilmore Cottage, Church Lane, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4JB - **GRANTED**

23.132 'IN CAMERA'

At this point, Mr Aiken the Footpath Warden, was kindly asked to leave the meeting due to the confidential nature of the items being discussed, which were minuted separately.

9:45 pm Mr Aiken left the meeting.

23.133 To discuss date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 10th October 2023 at 7.30pm, in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham.

23.134 Questions to Chairman

None.

23.135 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the October agenda.

Nothing extra received.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10:00pm.

