

FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

*DRAFT Minutes for the ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 14th May 2024 in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm*

Present: Cllr Kilbee, Cllr Winter, Cllr Saunders, Cllr Davies, Cllr Trew, Cllr Charter

In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk), Cllr Mellen, Mr Aiken (Footpath Warden), 3 members of the public

23.319 To elect a Chair of the Parish Council 2024/25

Cllr Charter proposed Cllr Kilbee be elected. Cllr Kilbee indicated he was willing to stand. Seconded by Cllr Davies, and approved unanimously with one abstention (Cllr Kilbee). Cllr Kilbee signed a declaration of acceptance of office, which was witnessed by the Clerk.

23.320 To elect a Vice Chair of the Parish Council 2024/25

Cllr Charter proposed Cllr Winter be elected. Cllr Winter indicated she was willing to stand. Seconded by Cllr Saunders, and approved unanimously with one abstention (Cllr Winter). Cllr Winter signed a declaration of acceptance of office, which was witnessed by the Clerk.

23.321 Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Kilbee welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Black and approved unanimously.

23.322 Visiting speakers

Cllr Mellen's reports can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.
The Footpath Warden's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

23.323 Contribution by Members of the Public

A member of the public was present regarding the trees on the byway by the River Dove. Their concerns have previously been brought to the PC's attention via Cllr Trew. The Clerk has already contacted MSDC, SCC and the Environment Agency, but been unable to confirm the landowner. The trees are believed to be poplars and the resident explained that in addition to concerns of falling branches, they impact their daily life and mental well being by blocking out light, dropping pollen, and preventing the installation of satellite TV etc. They believe the landowner to be SCC because Highways have recently been carrying out work to the byway, which implies responsibility.

ACTION – the Clerk will contact Suffolk County Council again, and refer to Cllr Mellen for his advice.

A second member of the public reported that the hedging along the footpath by Green Farm is overgrown and needs to be cut back. The hedge belongs to Green Farm. They also reported that the football goals are in need of repair.

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

None.

23.325 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items

None.

23.326 To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th April 2024

Cllr Charter proposed approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th April 2024 as a true and correct record; seconded by Cllr Winter and approved unanimously.

23.327 Matters arising from the Parish Council meeting held on 9th April 2024

All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

23.328 Chairman's Report

23.329 Clerk's Report

- Suffolk Highways have advised that the cost for the work they carried out in 2023 to install the new Finningham/Gislingham sign on the B1113, was over estimated. Therefore, a refund of £451.77 will be issued to each PC.
- Planning appeal ref: APP/W3520/D/24/3336927, Last Oak, Finningham, IP14 4TW for erection of a cart lodge, (in relation to the refusal of application DC/23/04246), has been granted.
- MSDC have sent details of their Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Policy Consultation running from 23/04/24 to 04/06/24. Details shared with councillors.

23.330 LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct

Circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Saunders proposed readoption of the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct. Seconded by Cllr Davies, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish.

8:09pm Cllr Mellen arrived.

23.331 National Grid Norwich to Tilbury

The Statutory Consultation runs from 10th April to 18th June 2024. Full details are available on National Grid's website, with an interactive map detailing the proposed placement of the pylons, and dates/locations for their public information events; [Norwich to Tilbury | National Grid ET](#). After discussing, Cllr Davies proposed the Parish Council object to the proposal. Seconded by Cllr Saunders and approved unanimously. A detailed response will be drafted for approval at the next meeting.

The Clerk advised that Wortham & Burgate Parish Council have called a Parish Meeting to discuss the consultation on 28th May 2024 at 7:00pm in Wortham Village Hall. Neighbouring parishes are invited to attend. Bron Curtis MSDC Principal Planning Officer, Richard Rout SCC, and Graham Gunby SCC Development Manager Growth Highways and Infrastructure have been invited.

Cllr Kilbee proposed returning to agenda item 4. Approved unanimously.

(23.319 Visiting Speakers)

Cllr Mellen read through his District and County Council reports. There were no questions from councillors.

Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Mellen for his report.

8:25pm Cllr Mellen, Mr Aiken, and 1 member of the public left the meeting.

23.332 Finningham Gazette and village survey update

The Gazette has now been delivered to each residence in the village. Cllr Kilbee thanked councillors who had volunteered to hand deliver the newsletters, and reported that he has received very positive feedback from recipients. Disappointingly though, only a small number have completed and returned the surveys.

The Chair of FOF (Friends of Finningham), who was present as a member of the public, offered to include details of the survey in the next edition of their newsletter, which is about to be published. Cllr Kilbee thanked the Chair of FOF and asked the Clerk to forward the details. It was agreed to include a deadline of 31st May for the return of completed surveys.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

23.333 Finningham GREEN Footpath update

Still ongoing; waiting for Highways to confirm that they have reattended and completed the trial holes, which they were unable to do on 15th January due to adverse weather conditions.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue update.

23.334 Churchyard Maintenance update

Ongoing; still seeking advice on how to proceed from SALC, and whether the PC has authority to agree to the repairs to the fencing without evidence of the closure Order. After discussing, it was agreed to advise the Diocese in the meantime that no evidence of the Order has been found, and that it is their responsibility to provide it.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

23.335 Annual village maintenance survey

The Clerk is preparing a draft maintenance plan, which will be presented at the next meeting. ROSPA (Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents) have advised that they are unable to conduct a risk assessment for the play area, although they can carry out a new inspection if required. The Clerk has contacted Playdale and Wicksteed, (suppliers of the play equipment), for their advice on the surfacing, which the Annual Play Inspection has identified as being below the recommended depth specified in NS EN1176. Wicksteed have responded and requested photographs of the area in order to provide a quotation.

ACTION – Clerk to complete draft maintenance plan, and forward photos to Wicksteed, as above.

23.336 To consider surfacing of the path between Church Meadow and the Churchyard

Mr Aiken has looked at the path, which was reported as being very muddy by a member of the public at the 13th February 2024 meeting. Bark chipping was discussed as an option to address the mud, but Cllr Trew raised concern that this would make it inaccessible for wheelchair users. Mr Aiken has advised that as with other PROW (public rights of way) footpaths, the path will always be subject to tree root growth, and mud, depending upon the weather conditions. After discussing, councillors agreed not to take any action, because there will be times when weather conditions make the path less easy to traverse for all users.

23.337 Eastlands bridge and village flooding

Cllr Trew reported that there is an ongoing issue with logs and debris becoming wedged against the pipes underneath the bridge. Residents and the River Dove Group have been clearing the bridge when this occurs. A resident has emailed to bring to the PC's attention, a section of Wickham Road which has recently flooded. It appears to be a ditch which cannot empty because there is a blocked piped section of road. Cllr Mellen is aware and has raised a report to Highways.

23.338 To discuss graffiti in the village

Top Garden Services have advised that scraping back the bark to remove the graffiti from the tree on the green, will likely cause it to die. They are looking at appropriate chemical solutions to remove the spray paint without harming the tree.

Cllr Trew has reported that the dog bin on Mill Lane has been vandalised. It has been removed from the post and the fixings broken, meaning that it is unable to be repaired. It is currently sitting on the ground, but still being used and emptied by MSDC. Approval of expenditure for a replacement bin will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to follow up with Top Garden Services as above, and include expenditure for a new dog bin on the June agenda.

23.339 To discuss D-Day 80 Anniversary arrangements, and approval of any expenditure

The beacon will be lit at 9:15pm on Thursday 6th June 2024, in line with the national lighting ceremony. Residents will be invited to gather on the green, and bring their own refreshments. Former councillor, Mr Miller, was present as a member of the public, and offered to provide material to light the beacon with. Cllr Kilbee thanked him for his kind offer. No expenditure requirements for approval.

The Chair of FOF agreed to include the details in their newsletter.

ACTION – Clerk to forward details to Chair of FOF as above.

23.340 Correspondence received

Email received from resident regarding the flooding on Wickham Road; discussed above.

Email received from the Chair of FOF, requesting permission from the PC to site a sports pavilion on the Green. It is intended to be a non-permanent structure. This will be included as a future agenda item to allow it to be discussed and a decision made.

9:07pm two members of the public left the meeting.

23.341 Finance**a. RFO's report (bank balance, receipts, and payments)****Balances as of 28th April 2024**

Community Bank Account: £13,530.51

Deposit Account: £3,377.64

b. Requests for payment

Clerk admin payment May	£365.04
Clerk expenses – mileage (April PC & May agenda meeting)	£20.61
HMRC May 2024 PAYE/NIC	£155.81
R. Dimech expenses – Vista Print (printing of survey to go in newsletter)	£91.26

T. Kilbee expenses – fuel for mower and generators	£50.07
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Cllr Trew proposed authorisation of the above payments, seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously, with one abstention against T. Kilbee expenses (Cllr Kilbee).

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee and either Cllr Winter or Cllr Trew to pay approved payments above, online, (dual authorisation).

c. Review of Parish Council Reserves

The Clerk prepared a breakdown of reserves, which was shared with councillors.

Cllr Trew proposed approval of the reserves, and the transfer of £8,000.00 from the PC's current account, to the deposit account. Seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee and either Cllr Winter or Cllr Trew to arrange online account transfer as above, (dual authorisation).

23.342 Planning

a) **To consider applications – none**

b) **Decisions & to consider planning matters coming forth**

- DC/24/00567 Proposal: Householder Application – erection of timber framed cartlodge (following the demolition of existing outbuilding). Yeoman House, Church Green, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4HU – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/23/04466 – Proposal: Application for the Modification of a Section 106 Planning Obligation - Variation of S106 legal agreement dated 11.12.2019 relating to DC/17/06190 (affordable dwellings). Location: Green Farm Wickham Road Finningham Suffolk IP14 4HT – **AWAITING DECISION.**

Cllr Charter raised his concern that no decision has been made yet regarding DC/23/04466, and no further details of the viability assessment regarding the affordable housing element are available on the planning portal. Within the application dated 31st August 2023, there are references to additional notes of information, but these are not available on the portal. The Clerk has contacted the Planning Officer dealing with the application, but has not received a response as yet.

ACTION – Clerk to ask Cllr Mellen for his help in obtaining an update.

23.343 To discuss date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 11th June 2024, at 7pm in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham.

23.344 Questions to Chairman

None.

23.345 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the February agenda.

Cllr Trew requested consideration be given to the purchase of a mulcher for the ride on mower. Cllr Winter asked for an electrical connection on the green to be revisited, as it has been over 6 months since the PC decided not to proceed.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9:27pm.

