

FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

*DRAFT Minutes for the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 11th February 2024 in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm*

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

In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk), Cllr Mellen

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

Cllr Kilbee welcomed everyone to the meeting. Approval of apologies received from Cllr Trew proposed by Cllr Saunder, seconded by Cllr Winter, and approved unanimously.

25.24 Visiting speakers

Cllr Mellen's reports can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes. Cllr Mellen highlighted the Government's proposals for Devolution in Suffolk, and confirmed that the county council elections due in May 2025 have been cancelled.
Mr Aiken's Footpath Warden's Report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

25.25 Contribution by Members of the Public

None.

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

None.

25.27 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items

None.

25.28 To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th January 2025

Approval proposed by Cllr Davies, seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously with two abstentions (councillors who were not present at the meeting).

25.29 Matters arising from the Parish Council meetings held on 14th January 2025

All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

25.30 Chairman's Report

First let me thank Councillor Charter for taking the January Meeting in my absence. Looking at the Minutes, I see that business was concluded in double quick time, makes me wonder if I waffle too much!

As I have only been back for just over a week, there is little for me to report, other than that which is in the Agenda.

Councillor Black has raised the issue of controlling the speeding along the B1113 following a recent fatal accident, undoubtedly caused by a speeding issue. Unfortunately, his request to include this item in the Agenda came too late for this meeting but I do not see why we cannot open the discussion on the actions we can take to improve the safety of this section of road. I feel that we should create a Working Group on this matter, as I think that it will take quite a long time and dedicated effort to get anywhere (this is from previous experience). In actual fact, the roads in and around the village are in a deplorable state and we need to hold Suffolk County Council Roads Department to account. How to do this is anyone's guess. With the devolution issue hanging over their heads, I can understand that many will be worried about their jobs in the future.

It is not long now before I take my leave of the Council but, if you decided to form a Working Group on the B1113 issue, I should like to offer my services as a member of the Public.

25.31 Clerk's Report

- MSDC have confirmed the precept request 2025/26 gives the Parish a Council Tax Band D amount of £47.80. This is an increase of 4.40% on 2024/25. These are the amounts that will be shown on the Council Tax Bill.
- As already mentioned in the Chairman's report, Cllr Black has requested the council looks at speeding on the B1113 following a fatal motorbike accident in January 2025. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting to enable it to be discussed fully, however councillors indicated that they are in favour of investigating the criteria requirements to extend the 30mph speed limit upon entering the village. Cllr Mellen's advice will be sought on this issue too.
- Suffolk Highways have advised that they are planning to carry out railway bridge improvement works along Station Road, Bacton.
The works are programmed to take place between 24th February and 16th June 2025.
The latest updates on this can be found on the highways traffic disruption website:
<https://one.network/>.

25.32 National Grid Norwich to Tilbury new localised consultations

National Grid have announced targeted consultations on proposed changes to Norwich to Tilbury, running from Thursday 30 January until Monday 3 March 2025. This is following feedback received in response to the public consultation held last year.

Full details can be found on National Grid's website, and the consultation is open to anyone, although the proposed changes do not affect Finningham directly.

<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury/public-consultation-and-programme>

Councillors noted that the nearest changes are in Gislegham, where repositioning of pylons RG114-118 is proposed to move the route further away from residential properties.

The council has not been sent a formal invitation to comment because the targeted consultations are outside of Finningham. Councillors agreed unanimously that the council does not wish to submit a comment.

25.33 Suffolk Devolution Proposals

As already reported by Cllr Mellen, the English Devolution White Paper published on 16 December 2024, set out the government's vision to simplify local government structures. The proposal will see the district and county councils replaced by a unitary council and an elected mayor. SCC have already agreed to recommend Suffolk for inclusion. SALC have set up a dedicated information page for members, the details of which have been shared with councillors. Councillors discussed the proposals, sharing the same concerns expressed by Cllr Mellen, regarding the loss of local democratic responsibility.

25.34 To discuss plans for VE day 80th Anniversary – 8th May 2025

Cllr Saunders reported that he attended the FoF (Friends of Finningham) meeting held on 27th January 2025, where the VE Day 80 was discussed. FoF are organising an event on the 8th May to coincide with the official beacon lighting ceremony due to take place at 9:30pm. They have arranged for a 1940s singer to attend, and are looking at organising a mobile fish and chips caterer. Fish & chips is being encouraged by the Pageant Master as this was the only food which was not rationed during WWII. FoF have asked if the Parish Council's insurance will provide liability cover for the event, or whether they need to organise their own. The Clerk advised that the council's insurance will only provide cover for events organised by the PC, up to a total number of 1000 attendees.

After discussing, it was agreed that the PC will arrange for the beacon to be lit, and liaise with FoF regarding the other events being organised.

ACTION – Clerk to advise FoF re the insurance, as above.

25.35 Approval of quotations for additional cemetery plot reserve markers and new row markers

A quotation has been received from Spencer Wix, totalling £960.00 plus VAT for 24 markers. Perfitts provided the current markers in January 2023 but are no longer operating. Quotations have been requested from three companies, with only Spencer Wix responding. After discussing, it was agreed to wait until comparable quotations have been obtained before making a decision.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue quotations as above.

8:20pm Cllr Black arrived.

25.36 Finningham Green Footpath; to discuss position of the current CIL bid as submitted to Cabinet

Cllr Kilbee and the Clerk attended an online Teams meeting on 6th February with Cllr Mellen, Darren Smith from SCC Highways, and Debbie Oask from MSDC Infrastructure Team. Darren explained the project is no longer viable due to the high cost of moving the water services which

run underneath the verge, and alternative ideas such as clearing the verge and moving signage to make it more accessible were discussed. There is a liability issue to consider with this though, in that making the pathway more accessible in an unofficial way, is encouraging people to use a pathway that is not an official public right of way. Debbie Oask said that the current CIL application presented to Cabinet (as it was over £10k), needs to be officially withdrawn, but that MSDC are open to discussing other options and infrastructure improvements for the parish. Cllr Davies proposed the council officially withdraw the current CIL bid. Seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously. It was also agreed to ask Debbie Oask if a meeting can be arranged to look at other infrastructure projects. The Clerk will also ask Highways to confirm what the councils share of the design costs was allocated on.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

8:26pm Cllr Mellen left the meeting. Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Mellen for his reports and updates.

25.37 Churchyard Maintenance responsibility update

No further update as yet.

25.38 Annual Village Maintenance plan and village green improvements quotations

The site meetings with play equipment suppliers are still to be held.

25.39 To consider and approve quotations for mower servicing

Cllr Kilbee obtained three quotations to carry out the annual servicing of the ride on mower, which were shared with councillors prior to the meeting.

After discussing, Cllr Charter proposed proceeding with the quotation received from David Proctor in Gislegham for £210.00 plus VAT. Seconded by Cllr Saunders and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk/Cllr Kilbee to arrange for servicing to be carried out.

25.40 Buckingham Palace Garden Party 2025 nominations

SALC has advised that Suffolk has been allocated two pairs of invitations for the Buckingham Palace Garden Party taking place on 7th May 2025. Councils are being invited to submit nominations for the Mayor/Chairperson of the council. Councillors agreed unanimously to nominate Cllr Kilbee and his wife, with one abstention (Cllr Kilbee).

ACTION – Clerk to send nomination as above.

25.41 Village flooding including River Waveney Trust NFM (Natural Flood Management) Schemes

Waiting for an update from Cllr Trew.

25.42 To discuss further incidences of graffiti

As reported by the Clerk at the previous meeting, there has been a recent incident of graffiti to the Footpath Map at the entrance to the Green.

Cllr Saunders reported that in addition, graffiti has appeared on the table tennis table. PC Adam Ferguson has been advised and is carrying out additional patrols in the vicinity. Any crime or suspicious activity can be reported by calling 101, or through the Suffolk Constabulary website: <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/ro/report/>. Always call 999 if it is an emergency.

Mr Aiken the Footpath Warden, has kindly removed the graffiti from the map, however Cllr Saunders has found the table tennis table more difficult to clean. The Clerk has contacted Playcrete, the suppliers of the table, who have recommended two cleaning products and advised sealing the surface so it is easier to clean in future. Cllr Winter proposed expenditure of up to £50.00 to purchase the recommended cleaning products. Seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously. It was also agreed for Cllr Saunders to purchase the cleaner and submit an expenses form for reimbursement at the next meeting; approved unanimously with one abstention (Cllr Saunders).

ACTION – Cllr Saunders as above.

25.43 Correspondence

All covered on the agenda.

25.44 Finance

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

Balances as of 29th October 2024

Community Bank Account: £13,790.74

Deposit Account: £3,377.64

b. Requests for payment

Clerk admin payment February	£430.85
Clerk Feb expenses mileage (Jan PC & Feb agenda meeting)	£21.42
HMRC PAYE/NIC Feb	£107.71
Finningham PCC – hire invoices 13/06/24 & 19/01/25	£445.00

Cllr Saunders proposed authorisation of the above payments, seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously.

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

Cllr Davies reported that the completed bank mandate has been submitted to Barclays; he is waiting for confirmation that the registration process has been completed.

25.45 Planning

- a. To consider applications – None.
- b. Decisions and to consider planning matters coming forth:
 - DC/24/05459 – Application for Listed Building Consent – Replacement of existing static unit for continued use as an annex to Green Lane Farm, Green Lane, Finningham, IP14 4TJ – **AWAITING DECISION**.
 - DC/24/05554 – Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area – Reduce the height of 1No. Beech (T1) by 2-3m, bring in the lateral branches and remove some of the lower limbs, deadwood and hanging branches. Amberley, Church Lane, Finningham, IP14 4JB – **GRANTED**.

25.46 To discuss date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 11th March 2025, at 7:30pm in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham.

25.47 Questions to Chairman

None.

25.48 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the March agenda.

Speeding on the B1113.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8:40pm.

