

FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

*DRAFT Minutes for the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 11th March 2025 in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm*

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

In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk), Cllr Mellen, 1 member of the public

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

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

25.50 Visiting speakers

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

25.51 Contribution by Members of the Public

The member of the public indicated that they were attending the meeting, in relation to an appeal they have made against MSDC's decision to refuse their planning application, DC/24/03098. The Clerk advised that the appeal was included within agenda item 9.

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

None.

25.53 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items

None.

25.54 To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th February 2025

Approval proposed by Cllr Charter, seconded by Cllr Davies and approved unanimously with one abstention (councillor who was not present at the meeting).

25.55 Matters arising from the Parish Council meetings held on 11th February 2025

All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

25.56 Chairman's Report

You will all have experienced the extremely poor condition of the road at the Crossroads. I see that a number of people have reported it and it appears on the Highways Reporting Tool. However, all the reports shall that they have been "Closed". I have therefore, raised a new report in the hope that something will be done. I feel that we need to do more than just reporting the issue and try to make stronger representation the SCC Highways. How we do that, I do not know but open to suggestions.

I met the Vice Chairman of Gislingham PC, Jo Pitt, who asked me about the volunteer group who look after the Dove, as they have a similar problem in Gislingham. Perhaps Paul can tell us if she has made contact with him.

Although I contacted the Mower Service man in Gislingham after our last meeting, I have not heard from him since. I have chased him but as yet, have received no reply. I am currently preparing the Mower Rota, which I think should start in April.

I intend to conduct Jane's Annual Assessment in the next few weeks. If anyone has anything they wish me to raise, please let me know.

I should just like to remind the Council that this is my penultimate meeting before I step down. I hope that someone is ready to take my place.

25.57 Clerk's Report

- Appeal reference APP/W3520/W/25/3360020 has been received against the refusal of DC/24/03098 - Application for Outline Planning Permission (all Matters reserved) Town and Country Planning 1990 (as amended - Erection of 2no detached bungalows. Location: Land South Of White Horse PH, Station Road, Finningham, Suffolk. In order for

the appeal to be discussed, an extension to the deadline for representations would need to be requested to allow it to be included on the next agenda, or an extraordinary meeting would need to be called. However councillors indicated that they did not wish to change or add additional information to their original decision to submit a neutral response.

- 'Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Development Scheme March 2025' was approved by Babergh District Council on Wednesday 26th February 2025 and by Mid Suffolk District Council on Thursday 27th February 2025 for publication. Full details can be found on MSDC's website: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/joint-local-plan>.
- Debby Oask from MSDC Infrastructure has confirmed receipt of the PC's CIL Bid withdrawal. She is happy to arrange a meeting to discuss alternative infrastructure projects within the parish, which the Clerk will arrange.
- The Clerk has received notification of a new NSIP proposal, EcoPower Suffolk. The project comprises an energy farm with solar PV and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) infrastructure, and consists of four main areas situated around Yaxley substation. The emerging project area extends close to nearby villages including Yaxley, Brome, Gislingham, Mellis, Eye and Occold. Whilst it impacts Finningham less, councillors agreed it needs to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

25.58 Devolution – Government consultation on proposals to create a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Norfolk and Suffolk

The consultation is seeking views on proposals to form a Mayoral Combined County Authority for the local government areas of Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council.

The consultation is open until 23:59pm on the 13th April 2025, and is in relation to the proposal to create a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Norfolk and Suffolk, and not the local council restructuring.

After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they strongly disagree with the proposals. The Clerk will collate councillors comments, and draft a response to the consultation questions, for approval at the next meeting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation>

ACTION – Clerk as above.

25.59 To discuss speeding issues on the B1113

Following the previous meeting when Cllr Black raised a request that the council look at speeding on the B1113, the Clerk contacted Suffolk Highways requesting permission to temporarily site a VAS device on the B1113 between Black Horse Barn and Holly Cottage, in order to collect speed data. Permission was denied by SCC's ANPR Officer, who recommended a professional survey be conducted instead. Suffolk Highways have advised they can commission a speed survey in this location at a cost of £415.00.

After discussing, councillors agreed that they need full details from SCC Highways as to exactly what data is collected, and over what period, to ascertain its relevance to their concerns.

8:11pm Cllr Mellen joined the meeting.

Cllr Mellen confirmed that the survey collects data on the volume of traffic, and vehicle speeds, over a 7-day period. Highways can also commission a 'full speeding' report which costs approximately £700 extra. The details are then sent to the Cabinet Member for Highways. It was agreed for the Clerk to ask Suffolk Highways for full details and costs of both reports.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

Cllr Kilbee proposed returning to agenda item 2. Approved unanimously.

(25.50 Visiting speakers)

Cllr Mellen read through his reports, highlighting the local government reform from his district report, and explaining that the MSDC is in favour of 2 or 3 unitary councils, whereas the SCC favours 1. Cllr Mellen also highlighted the devolution proposals in his county report, as well as the changes to Suffolk's library services.

Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Mellen for his reports, and his input on the speeding issues.

25.60 Donation request received from Finningham Parochial Church Council

The Churchwarden has emailed a request on behalf of the PCC, for a donation towards the cost of urgent roof repairs. The costs have been estimated at £15,400.00, but the PCC is anticipating them to be around £20,000.00, due to associated works to the lead flashing. They are hoping to raise approximately £4,000.00 from the annual Flower Festival in May.

The Clerk shared details of funding available for minor repairs and improvement grants from the Church of England Suffolk, and has also contacted MSDC for advice on additional funding sources.

After discussing, Cllr Davies proposed that due to the parish council's limited reserve funds, and alternative funding sources available to the PCC, the council advises that they are regrettably unable to provide a donation on this occasion. Seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to advise PCC as above.

25.61 To discuss plans for VE day 80th Anniversary – 8th May 2025, including approval of expenditure

The Chair of Friends of Finningham has reported that they have secured live entertainment and a mobile pizza van. They will be arranging insurance for the events that they are organising. The live music performance will be 7:30 to 9pm, and they have requested the PC arranges for piped music to be played between 9-9:30pm, prior to the lighting of the beacon. Friends of Finningham will obtain the music licence for this, and Cllr Kilbee has organised for a PA system to be available.

Friends of Finningham need to put marquees up on the Village Green, which they will ensure are sited as far away as possible from the Beacon.

Councillors agreed unanimously that they have no objection to the marquees, but need sight of the insurance schedule to satisfy the PC's own insurance cover and risk management.

ACTION – Clerk to request a copy of insurance documents, as above.

25.62 Approval of quotations for additional cemetery plot reserve markers and new row markers
Awaiting updated quotations.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue quotations as above.

25.63 Churchyard Maintenance responsibility update

The Clerk has emailed the Diocese and their representative from Birketts Solicitors, to confirm that the PC has approached the Ministry of Justice, the Gazette (which is the official public record holder), as well as the Diocese itself, with no evidence of the closure Order being found.

Therefore, without sight of the Order, the PC is unable to take on the ongoing maintenance of the churchyard.

ACTION – Clerk to update councillors once a reply has been received.

25.64 Village green improvements quotations

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

ACTION – Clerk to pursue meetings.

25.65 Graffiti update and to consider painting and/or sealing the table tennis table

Cllr Saunders has removed as much of the graffiti on the table tennis table as possible, using the specialised cleaning product purchased. Playcrete, the supplier of the table, has recommended it is sealed with a concrete sealant to prevent any future incidences of graffiti from staining permanently. The sealant can be clear or coloured, but the latter would require the lines to be repainted as well.

Cllr Charter proposed approval of expenditure up to £75 to purchase the clear sealant. Seconded by Cllr Saunders and approved unanimously.

Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Saunders for kindly giving up his time to clean the table.

ACTION – Cllr Saunders/Clerk to arrange purchase of the sealant.

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

Cllr Trew reported that he met with Ed King from the River Waveney Trust for a walk round the village to look at the water courses. Ed King was primarily looking at maintenance of the watercourses in Finningham, which are important in their prevention of flooding in other areas such as Westhorpe. He explained Moon Lane for example is actually a natural flood plain so building on it should be discouraged due to the disruption of natural processes. Cllr Trew will keep in touch with Ed King, but reported that there is no action to take at the moment. Cllr Trew also confirmed that he has been in touch with Gislingham Parish Council, in his capacity as a member of the River Dove Group and not a Finningham Parish Councillor, to advise them on river management.

Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Trew.

25.67 To discuss Annual Parish (village) and Annual Parish Council meeting arrangements

The Annual Parish meeting will be held at 7pm on Tuesday 13th May, followed by the Annual Parish Council meeting at 7:30pm. The Clerk will invite reports from groups and organisations within the village for the Annual Parish Meeting.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

25.68 Correspondence

All covered on the agenda.

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

Balances as of 29th January 2025

Community Bank Account: £2,624.57

Deposit Account: £10,421.14

b. Requests for payment

Clerk admin payment March	£412.74
Clerk March expenses mileage (Feb PC & March agenda meeting)	£20.61
HMRC PAYE/NIC March	£104.43
P. Saunders expenses – graffiti remover	£13.98
Clerk holiday pay 2024/25	£612.31
HMRC PAYE/NIC on holiday pay	£153.08

Cllr Charter proposed authorisation of the above payments, seconded by Cllr Kilbee and approved unanimously with 1 abstention against P. Saunders expenses (Cllr Saunders).

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

Cllr Davies reported that he has raised a complaint with Barclays, regarding issues experienced setting up the new mandate, and subsequent delays. Barclays advise that they have sent a letter to the registered address for the PC, but it has not been received.

25.70 Planning

a. To consider applications:

- **DC/25/00081** Householder Application - Erection of two storey rear and single storey side extension including double garage (following demolition of conservatory and existing garage). Wychwood, Gislingham Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4HY.
- **DC/25/00881** Full Planning Application - Construct new access entrance on land adjoining Green Lane Farm including gate.Land Adjacent Green Lane Farm, Green Lane, Finningham, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4TJ.
- **DC/24/05458** Householder application – Replacement of existing static unit for continued use as annex to Green Lane Farm, Green Lane Farm, Green Lane, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4TJ.

After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they have no objection to any of the planning applications above.

ACTION – Clerk to add no objection comments to MSDC Planning Portal, as above.

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 – **APPLICATION WITHDRAWN.**

8:58pm Cllr Mellen left the meeting.

25.71 To discuss date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 15th April 2025, at 7:30pm in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham. This is one week later than usual to ensure the meeting is quorate. The Suffolk Devolution consultation response will therefore be approved by quorate email, and submitted by the 13th April 2025 deadline.

25.72 Questions to Chairman

None.

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

EcoPower Suffolk NSIP proposal.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9:09pm.

