

FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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

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

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

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

Due to apologies being received from both Cllr Kilbee and Cllr Winter, Cllr Saunders proposed that Cllr Charter chair the meeting. Seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously with one abstention (Cllr Charter).

Cllr Charter welcomed everyone to the meeting. Approval of apologies received from Cllr Kilbee, Cllr Winter and Cllr Black were approved unanimously.

25.2 Visiting speakers

Cllr Mellen's 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.

25.3 Contribution by Members of the Public

The member of the public present raised concern that the footpath from Gislingham Road to the old school is overgrown, and area rights of way signs have been removed. The Clerk will confirm the exact locations, and raise a report with Suffolk Highways via their online reporting tool.

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

None.

25.5 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items

None.

25.6 To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th December 2024

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

25.7 Matters arising from the Parish Council meetings held on 10th December 2024

All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

25.8 Chairman's Report

No report due to Cllr Kilbee's absence.

25.9 Clerk's Report

- A resident has reported a fallen tree in the churchyard, along the side as you enter from Church Lane, bordering their property. It appears to be a tree branch which has been damaged in a recent storm, and is now leaning against another tree. The Clerk will report it to the Diocese.
- VE Day 80th anniversary 8th May 2025. There will be an official beacon lighting ceremony at 9:30pm on 8th May 2025. The Chair of Friends of Finningham (FOF) has asked whether the council has any plans yet, and suggested a joint event. Councillors indicated their support for a joint event, and will discuss it further at the next meeting.
- A resident has asked whether the council could help or support the formation of a not-for-profit community buying group for LPG. It was agreed for the council to share the information on their social media platforms, in order for the resident to ascertain whether there is any interest in this. The member of the public commented in their capacity as Chair of FOF, that they would be happy to do the same.
- Cllr Mellen has shared a further update regarding the trees along the river dove; the Acting Chief Planning Officer for MSDC has looked into ownership of the land on which

the trees are growing, however according to Land Registry documents, the land is unregistered and therefore they cannot identify ownership or responsibility.

- Spam emails; councillors have been receiving spam emails purporting to be from fellow Finningham Parish Councillors. CAS has advised to double check and block the sending address of any suspicious emails.
- BMSDC Joint Local Plan and Devolution- In December, the Government announced new housing requirements for every district and borough council in the country. These increased the figure in Babergh to 775 homes a year (up 86%), and in Mid Suffolk up to 734 (up 37%). BMSDC feel there is no option but to formally review the Joint Local Plan, building on the work that has already taken place.
<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning>
- There has been a new act of graffiti, this time to the Footpath Map at the entrance to the Green. This incident is being taken very seriously following the previously racially motivated graffiti in the parish. PC Adam Ferguson is aware and will be conducting additional patrols in the area.
<https://www.suffolk.police.uk/ro/report/>

25.10 National Grid Norwich to Tilbury update

Councillors were aggrieved to receive the following update from National Grid, reneging on their Waveney Valley Alternative proposal:

'During our consultation last summer, we presented proposals for an overhead line across the Waveney Valley, along with an underground cable alternative. We have carefully considered the feedback we received from the public, stakeholders and the findings of our ground investigations (GI) and environmental surveys in the area and we have decided to take forward an overhead line in this area.

We haven't taken this decision lightly and in doing so we carefully considered a range of factors, including potential environmental impacts, planning policy and cost to the consumer. We also carefully considered alternative installation techniques for underground cables in light of the findings from the GI studies and as well as the efforts being made locally by the Waveney and Little Ouse Recovery (WaLOR) project to re-naturalise the river channel.

We looked at trenchless installation techniques – such as horizontal directional drilling (HDD), which could not be used to cross the full length of the valley due to soil conditions and potential interaction with channel naturalisation. We also considered driven pipes and a tunnel – both of which present significant cost, environmental and technical restrictions. We also assessed open-cut techniques, but the impact on the naturalisation project as well as on soil and the local environment would be more significant than an overhead line.

We will hold further discussions with stakeholders on these plans as we finalise our proposals over the coming months.'

Councillors noted that the final proposal detailing the route of the pylons is due to be announced by National Grid in the next few weeks.

25.11 Cemetery plot record update, and approval of expenditure for additional reserve markers and new row markers

Still waiting for the new marker quotations.

25.12 Finningham Green Footpath Update

The online meeting with MSDC Infrastructure Team is due to be arranged by Cllr Mellen.

25.13 Churchyard Maintenance responsibility update

No further update as yet.

25.14 Annual Village Maintenance and village green improvements

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

25.15 Village Flooding

The Clerk has been contacted by the River Waveney Trust (RWT) in relation to their Natural Flood Management (NFM) Schemes within the Waveney catchment area. Cllr Trew agreed to speak to the RWT with a view to arranging a meeting in the village.

ACTION – Cllr Trew as above.

25.16 To consider installing permanent vehicle activated signs on all roads leading into Finningham, and quotations received for new devices.

Cllr Davies proposed that a VAS device be installed on all four routes into the village. All four locations are already Highways approved. There is currently one permanent device on Station Road, and one device rotated between the other three sites. This would require the purchase of two new VAS devices, and a new solar battery for the oldest of the two current devices.

Seconded by Cllr Saunders and approved unanimously.

Cllr Davies proposed proceeding with the quotation received from Elancity. Seconded by Cllr Saunders, and approved unanimously.

Cllr Mellen has previously indicated he can contribute approximately £2,000.00 from his locality budget. This would leave a shortfall of approximately £3,000.00. It was agreed for the Clerk to place the order with Elancity, and pursue additional funding with MSDC.

ACTION – Clerk as above

25.17 Correspondence

All covered on the agenda.

8:07pm Cllr Mellen arrived.

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

(25.2 Visiting speakers)

Cllr Mellen read through his reports highlighting the Devolution and Council reorganisation within his county council report.

Cllrs discussed the Devolution proposals, with comments made that the council reorganisation does not appear to be supporting democracy.

Cllr Charter thanked Cllr Mellen for his reports.

8:19pm Cllr Mellen left the meeting.

25.18 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 January	£563.90
Clerk Jan expenses – mileage & printer ink.	£36.41
HMRC PAYE/NIC Jan	£140.98
121 Computers – new laptop	£548.99

Cllr Davies proposed authorisation of the above payments, (apart from the payment to 121 Computers which was approved at the previous meeting, and paid by dual authorisation on 23rd December 2024), 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).

c. Approval of additional bank signatory, and review of online payment process

There was an issue with the December 2024 payments because despite being set up on the 11th December, they were not actually processed until the 23rd December. This highlighted the need for an additional signatory to ensure payments are set up and authorised within 3 working days, as per the Internet Banking Policy.

Cllr Charter proposed that Cllr Davies be set up as an additional signatory. Seconded by Cllr Saunders and approved unanimously with one abstention (Cllr Davies).

ACTION – Cllr Davies to complete bank mandate as above.

25.19 Planning

a. To consider applications:

- 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.
- 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.

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

ACTION – Clerk to add no objection comments to MSDC planning portal as above.

b. Decisions and to consider planning matters coming forth:

- DC/24/04443 - Application for listed building consent – internal works to re-instate pre-existing internal doorway between The Old House and The Cottage as detailed

within the Heritage Design and Access Statement. The Old House and The Cottage,
Church Path, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4JD – **GRANTED**

25.20 To discuss date of the next meeting

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

25.21 Questions to Chairman

None.

8:26pm the member of the public left the meeting.

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

VE Day 80 anniversary.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8:28pm.

