

FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

*DRAFT Minutes for the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 9th July 2024 in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm*

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

In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk),

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

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

24.82 Visiting speakers

The Footpath Warden's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes. Cllr Mellen sent his apologies in advance of the meeting; his reports can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

24.83 Contribution by Members of the Public

None.

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

None.

24.85 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items

None.

24.86 To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th June 2024

Cllr Saunders proposed approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th June 2024 as a true and correct record; seconded by Cllr Davies and approved unanimously.

24.87 Matters arising from the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 11th June 2024

All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

24.88 Chairman's Report

A note of thanks to Jane and Paul who sorted out the last-minute request for an interment in our Cemetery. I received the original phone call from the Funeral Director whilst on a train in Switzerland so, I was not in a position to help very much. I'm pleased to say that the burial went well.

I have received a request from Andy Brownlie for the Parish Council to allow the Fish and Chip van to park on the grass next to the Barn on the Green, when he makes his weekly visit. This is because Lorna has withdrawn her permission for him to park outside the Pub. We can discuss this under "Correspondence". (Since I wrote this, I have sent an email to all Councillors asking for their thoughts on this proposal).

I should also thank those who have been involved in the arrangements for the meeting on Thursday to discuss the proposed Pylon line. This included a vote of thanks to our District Councillor, Andy Mellen for including a very prominent notice in his recent Newsletter which enabled the message regarding the meeting to be brought to the attention of the residents. I know that Jane had difficulties in getting the notice of the meeting posted on the Friends of Finningham Facebook and website.

As I understand that a Screen and Projector are necessary for the presentation on Thursday, I have investigated the hire of such equipment. The cost is prohibitive. However, the supplier has suggested a 65" screen TV with HDMI input facilities at a cost of £220. If I give him an answer by tomorrow morning, he can guarantee delivery in time for the meeting. I realise that this is not on the Agenda so, probably we cannot authorise the expenditure but perhaps Jane can give us guidance on this.

The Clerk confirmed that the expenditure cannot not be approved as it is not an agenda item, and will advise invited guest speakers that unfortunately a projector will not be available for the Parish Meeting on 11th July 2024.

24.89 Clerk's Report

All covered on the agenda.

24.90 National Grid Norwich to Tilbury Statutory Consultation

The consultation ends at 11:59pm on Friday 26th July 2024, A Parish meeting has been called on 11th July 2024 to discuss the consultation, and allow residents an opportunity to gather information to assist with their responses. Cllr Richard Rout, Cllr Andrew Stringer, Cllr Rowland Warboys, and Bron Curtis MSDC Principal Planning Officer have been invited. Cllr Mellen has sent his apologies, but has advertised the meeting in his summer newsletter, which has been delivered to all households within the parish. Representatives from the Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk Pylon Group have confirmed their attendance.

The Parish Council's draft objection response, prepared by Cllr Saunders, will be finalised following the Parish Meeting, and submitted to National Grid by the above deadline.

ACTION – Cllr Saunders/Clerk to ensure PC's response is submitted prior to the deadline.

24.91 Finningham GREEN Footpath update

As discussed during Cllr Mellen's report, the trial holes have now been completed, and BT have provided an updated estimate of approximately £6k for the works required as part of the design costs. This cost is to divert the BT infrastructure along the whole length of the proposed footpath. The Suffolk & Essex Water main will not require diverting as it is below the carriageway and not beneath the footpath. Cllr Mellen has confirmed he can fund the new estimated cost from BT from his Highways budget, however MSDC are due to hold a CIL fund meeting, and will discuss whether the additional cost can be included with the District CIL offer.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue update.

24.92 To discuss cemetery plot records

Following a request for a new internment, Cllr Trew reported that he assisted the Clerk in marking out the new plot in preparation for the burial. Although there are well maintained burial records, and a map detailing the plot layout, it was very hard to identify the plots, and establish which ones are reserved. Cllr Trew suggested the map needs to be updated to an online excel document to make it easier to identify the plots, and the rows and plots physically marked out. The historical burial record books can be kept updated alongside the more user-friendly digital version.

After discussing it was agreed for Cllr Kilbee, Cllr Trew and the Clerk to review and update the plot records, and physically mark out the rows and plots.

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee, Cllr Trew, Clerk as above.

24.93 Parish Council village survey update

The Clerk reported that no further completed surveys have been received. Cllrs were disappointed at such a small response but requested the results be collated and published.

ACTION – Clerk to collate and publish results.

24.94 Finningham Green Footpath update

Cllr Mellen has agreed to fund the additional design costs, estimated to be approximately £6,000.00, from his Highways budget. These costs are for further investigations in relation to the underground BT cabling.

Denise Mortimer, MSDC Community Works Project Manager, has advised that the CIL Team are in the process of discussing whether further CIL funding can be provided, as this is one of the first applications for projects of this nature. There is concern that the original cost estimate for the project may increase following completion of the design investigations.

Cllr Davies said that having spoken to two residents about the proposed footpath, it has been suggested to him that concave, taller kerbstones, which will have the effect of raising the path, may be an option. This will address the issues of the BT cabling. Cllr Davies has already forwarded the suggestion to Cllr Mellen who will follow it up with SCC Highways.

24.95 Churchyard Maintenance update

Ongoing; no further updates.

24.96 Annual village maintenance survey

The Clerk shared a draft plan, which identifies various quarterly maintenance requirements. The aim is for the council to have a proactive approach to village maintenance, and identify any new expenditure requirements prior to discussion of the budget 2025/26.

Cllr Kilbee said the cemetery hedge needs to be included, and is in dire need of cutting back. Cllr Davies said he has already spoken to two residents who have volunteered to cut the hedge, subject to reimbursement of any expenses they may incur. After discussing, it was agreed for Cllr

Davies to speak to the residents further, to ascertain the expenses they anticipate, to carry out the work. To be an agenda item for the September meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to submit final draft for approval at September meeting. Cllr Davies to speak to volunteers regarding cemetery hedge as above.

24.97 Village flooding update

Cllr Mellen updated prior to the meeting that the flooding on Wickham Road has been resolved. Cllr Mellen investigated the issue himself, and discovered the problem to be a pipe blocked with silt. In his summer newsletter Cllr Mellen reports that 'Suffolk County Council highways still have some more work to do to clear the road drains and remove vegetation from the ditches, but Hopefully this long-standing problem is now solved'.

Cllr Trew said that it is important to keep on top of the flooding situation at Eastlands Bridge, particularly as we head into the latter part of the year, and so this will remain an agenda item.

24.98 To discuss trees along byway by River Dove

Cllr Mellen is still looking in to this. In addition, the Clerk has been in contact with Andy Moore from SCC Highways, who has said he will do a site visit, and check the exact location again against SCC's records. Richard Parmee, MSDC Biodiversity Manager, previously advised that MSDC may be able to conduct an official assessment, which in the case the trees are deemed dangerous, will assist in getting them reduced/removed. The Clerk will ask Richard Parmee whether there would be a charge for the assessment.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

24.99 Graffiti and antisocial behaviour in the village

PC Adam Ferguson has been in contact to report further racist graffiti to the trees on the Green. After discussing it was agreed to speak to Top Garden Services again to see if they can remove it without damaging the tree. There was also a discussion on the installation of CCTV, which will be investigated and discussed further at a future meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to speak to Top Garden, and investigate CCTV options, as above.

8:57pm Cllr Trew left the meeting.

24.100 To consider installation of electrical connection on the Green

The Clerk has requested an updated estimate from UK Power Networks, and an engineer will be meeting with Cllr Kilbee on Friday 12th July to do a site visit.

24.101 To consider purchase of a new Union flag

As reported by Cllr Winter at the 11th June 2024 meeting, the Union flag is in poor condition and needs replacing. The Clerk has obtained quotations for an identical 3-yard replacement which were shared with councillors.

Cllr Davies proposed proceeding with an order to Harrison Flags for £113.50 plus VAT and delivery. Seconded by Cllr Winter and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange purchase as above.

24.102 To consider request from Friends of Finningham to site a pavilion on the green

Deferred at the request of Friends of Finningham.

24.103 Correspondence received

A resident has reported that the VAS device on Westhorpe Road does not appear to be working. Cllr Charter is aware and reported that there seems to be an issue with the batteries charging. He has recharged them again and replaced the connections. Cllr Kilbee will also speak to the supplier, Elancity.

As reported within his Chair's report, Cllr Kilbee has received a request from Andy Brownlie for the Parish Council to allow the Fish and Chip van to park on the grass next to the Barn on the Green. Cllrs discussed the request but were mindful that it was not on the agenda as a separate item for approval. It was agreed to monitor the situation to ensure residents living around the green are not negatively impacted, and the green itself is not damaged. Other parking options were discussed, but there is no suitable alternative location within walking distance. The layby outside the old school was suggested, but felt to be too far out of the village and the road too busy.

ACTION – Clerk to update resident, Cllr Kilbee to speak to Elancity.

24.104 Finance

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

Balances as of 29th May 2024

Community Bank Account: £14,103.53

Deposit Account: £3,377.64

b. Requests for payment

Clerk admin payment July	£412.71
Clerk expenses – mileage (June PC meeting, cemetery meeting, 2 x trips to post agendas)	£43.44
HMRC July 2024 PAYE/NIC	£104.43

Cllr Kilbee proposed authorisation of the above payments, seconded by Cllr Winter and approved unanimously.

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

24.105 Planning

a) To consider applications

- DC/24/02757 – Application for works to a tree in a Conservation Area – Reduce 1 No twin stemmed beech tree by up to 2m, mainly on the sides of the tree, up to 3-4m on the longer overextended branches overhanging the roof of the adjacent building. Amberley. Church Lane, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4JB.

Cllrs agreed unanimously that they have no objection to this application.

ACTION – Clerk to update MSDC planning portal as above.

b) Decisions & to consider planning matters coming forth

- 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.**

24.106 To discuss date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th September 2024, at 7:30pm in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham.

24.107 Questions to Chairman

Cllr Saunders said that Mr Aiken the Footpath Warden, has reported his footpath maps to be very out of date. He has tried unsuccessfully to obtain up to date maps from SCC Area Rights of Way. The Clerk said she will download the most up to date definitive map for Finningham, and forward to Mr Aiken.

24.108 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the September agenda.

All as per the agenda.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9:16pm.

