

FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

*DRAFT Minutes for the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 10th June 2025 in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm*

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

In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk), Cllr Mellen, M. Webb (Friends of Finningham), 2 members of the public

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

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

7:34pm one member of the public arrived.

25.124 Visiting speakers

Cllr Mellen read through his District and County reports, which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

Cllr Trew raised his concern that Suffolk Highways is using emergency legislation to conduct works, rather than providing advance notification. Cllr Mellen noted the concern.

Mr Aiken sent his apologies in advance of the meeting. His Footpath Warden's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

7:46pm Cllr Mellen left the meeting.

25.125 Contribution by Members of the Public

Mary Webb asked on behalf of FOF, if consideration could be given to an additional noticeboard outside the Old School house. There has been one previously in this location, but it fell into a poor state of repair and was removed.

A member of the public said that the Eastlands Lane footpath has been over cut by the landowner.

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

None.

25.127 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items

None.

25.128 To approve minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 13th May 2025

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

25.129 Matters arising from the Annual Parish Council meetings held on 13th May 2025

All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

25.130 Chairman's Report

All covered on the agenda.

25.131 Clerk's Report

- White Elm Solar Farm - Non-statutory consultation from 19 May - 30 June 2025 – notification has been received that this project has been paused indefinitely. Councillors noted speculation that it may be politically motivated due to upcoming changes to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill.
- Following the previous meeting, the Church Warden has been advised that there is a tomb in the churchyard in need of attention, which is a potential public safety risk.

- Bron Curtis, MSDC Principal Planning Officer, has forwarded an updated copy of the spreadsheet detailing all NSIPs and energy projects in progress within Suffolk; shared with councillors.
- BMSDC is reviewing its Licensing Policy for 2026- 2031, with a consultation from 30th May to 11th July 2025. The draft policy and a summary of changes have been shared with councillors and are available for viewing on their website: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/licensing-policy-review>
- BMSDC have sent a link to their new mapping page, which provides details of the open spaces for which they have responsibility, full details shared with councillors.

25.132 Members' consent to received summons electronically

All councillors present gave consent to receive summons electronically.

25.133 Parish Council representative to attend Friends of Finningham meetings

After discussing, it was agreed to rotate the councillor attending, as no one was able to commit to being the sole representative.

25.134 Devolution and local government reorganisation update

Suffolk County Council have sent an invitation for two councillors to attend a briefing being held on the local government reorganisation (LGR), in Debenham on the 10th June 2025. As it coincides with this meeting, councillors have been invited to attend alternative meetings in Eye or Woolpit. Cllr Saunders confirmed that he has arranged to attend the meeting being held in Eye tomorrow evening, and will report back at the next meeting.

ACTION – Cllr Saunders as above.

25.135 BMSDC Community Governance Review 2025

Mid Suffolk conducted a district wide Community Governance Review in 2022, however due to the district witnessing a rise in interest from parish/town councils for a new community governance review, a new one is being held with a submission window of 27th October to 7th November 2025. Due to local government reorganisation (LGR) this review will not include any requests involving boundary amendments but will consider the other CGR arrangements in the interest of forward planning. After discussing councillors agreed to give the review further consideration prior to the end of the submission window. To be a future agenda item.

ACTION – Councillors as above.

25.136 Speeding issues on the B1113 and consideration of expenditure for Suffolk Highways to commission a speed survey

Deferred to next meeting.

25.137 Churchyard Maintenance responsibility update

Ongoing; no further update at present.

25.138 Village green improvements quotations

Ongoing.

25.139 Cemetery fees

Following the previous meeting, the Clerk has forwarded fees to councillors, from other cemeteries in the area. Councillors discussed the fees, deciding they need more time to consider any uplift; deferred to next meeting.

ACTION Councillors as above.

25.140 Parish Council Newsletter

Following publication of the Finningham Gazette in April 2024, councillors discussed whether to pursue a second copy of the newsletter. Mary Webb said that the council has previously had a page in the Friends of Finningham newsletter, and was welcome to do so again. The next copy is due to be distributed in September. After discussing, councillors agreed this to be the best way to proceed, rather than publishing a separate newsletter, and thanked Mary Webb. This will be an agenda item for approval prior to September.

ACTION – Clerk/councillors to consider items for a draft insert.

25.141 To consider Pride in Your Place grant application

MSDC's Pride in Your Place grant is open for applications up to £5,000.00. Councillors discussed whether the additional VAS devices would be eligible, but the Clerk advised that MSDC Infrastructure Team have already advised they are not. The VAS devices will be an agenda item for the next meeting, to discuss purchasing from the council reserves. After discussing further, it was agreed to conduct an 'audit' of the village, including items such as signage and the status of the trees on the green, with a view to submitting an application for village improvements.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

25.142 Correspondence received
None.

25.143 To approve accounting statements 2024/25
Approval proposed by Cllr Davies, seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously.
ACTION – Clerk to publish

25.144 To approve CIL Expenditure Report 2024/25
Approval proposed by Cllr Davies, seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously. The Chairman and Clerk signed the report.
ACTION – Clerk to publish and send to MSDC.

25.145 To approve AGAR statements and Certificate of Exemption 2024/25
Approval proposed by Cllr Davies, seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously. The Chairman and Clerk signed AGAR section 1 and 2, and the Certificate of Exemption.
ACTION – Clerk to publish and send Certification of Exemption to the external auditors, PKF Littlejohn.

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

Cllr Davies has spoken to Barclays and arranged for the mandate to be updated. Cllr Charter has been added in his capacity as Chair of the Parish Council (non-signatory). Cllr Winter, Cllr Trew and Cllr Davies are signatories with access to online banking, Cllr Black is a signatory but needs to contact Barclays to arrange access to the online services.

ACTION – Cllr Black as above.

Balances as of 29th March 2025
Community Bank Account: £104.38
Deposit Account: £10,458.00

b. Requests for payment

Clerk admin payment June	£430.85
Clerk June expenses (mileage & ink)	£51.89
HMRC PAYE/NIC June	£107.71

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

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

8:23pm Mary Webb left the meeting.

25.147 Planning

To consider applications:

- **DC/25/02190** - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for an Existing Use or Operation or Activity including those in breach of a Planning Condition. Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – For existing use of static caravan come lodge annex as this has been used since the 1990s to date as you will see from past planning records and addresses to an old council tax record. Caravan at Green Lane Farm, green Lane, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4TJ.
After discussing, councillors agreed they have no comment against this application.
ACTION – Clerk to add no comment response to MSDC Planning Portal as above.

Decisions and to consider planning matters coming forth:

- **DC/25/00949** - Householder Application – Conversion of the existing garage roof space to ancillary accommodation serving the host dwelling. Construction of external staircase and insertion of roof lights and fenestration. 4 Highbank Meadow, Finningham, IP14 4TY – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- **DC/25/00881 Re-consultation** - 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. **Reason(s) for re-consultation: Amended red lined Site Location Plan and Block Plan – WITHDRAWN.**

25.148 To discuss date of the next meeting

After discussing, it was agreed to trial holding meetings on a Monday to accommodate councillors' commitments. The next meeting will be held on Monday 14th July 2025, at 7:30pm in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham.

25.149 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the July agenda.

As per agenda.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8:31pm.

