FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on
Tuesday 12th April 2022
in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm

Present: Cllr A**.** Kilbee, Cllr J. Miller, Cllr N. Arthur, Cllr L. Charter, Cllr P. Trew

In attendance: Miss. N. Hill (outgoing Clerk), Miss J. Challis (new Clerk), DC & CC Cllr Mellen, Mr D. Aiken - Footpath Warden, and 1 member of the public.

22.01 Visiting speakers
Cllr Mellen's County and District reports were sent to councillors prior to the meeting and can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.
The Footpath Warden reported that he has contacted SCC regarding the footbridge crossing the river Dove at Eastlands Lane, Finningham. A Public Rights of Way report, ref. 4357811, was previously raised as the footbridge is in a poor condition, but no action has been taken other than safety barriers being placed at each end.

22.02 Contribution by Members of the Public
None.

22.03 Apologies and approval of absence.
No apologies received.

22.04 Approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th March 2022.
Cllr Miller proposed approving the minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2022 as a true and correct record, seconded by Cllr Charter, and approved unanimously. The Chairman then signed the minute book.

22.05 To receive any pecuniary or non-pecuniary declarations of interest from Members and any Gifts of Hospitality.
None.

22.06 Matters arising from the meeting held on 8th February 2022.
21.247 The Clerk (Miss N Hill) has emailed Mr A. Strickland to confirm the council give consent to the laying of concrete slabs in the churchyard.

22.07 Chairman's Report
I have recently complied and circulated the Mowing Rota for the maintenance of the Graveyard and Cemetery. The new mower worked well although, I must admit that it takes a bit of getting used to! I have promised the members of the Rota that I shall run a couple of familiarisation sessions to help them and to comply with our Health and Safety requirements. We need to address the problem of the long grass in both the Graveyard and the Cemetery. Employing the MSDC, that we have been trying to do for some considerable time, seems impossible so, I feel that we need to grasp that nettle (pun intended!) ourselves. This could include the Graveyard but I need to find out if Andy Brownlie is going to do it on our behalf again this year. I am afraid that he only did it twice last year and it was left to look very untidy for most of the summer.
We need also to get a response for MSDC regarding this year's cutting of the green programme. It seemed to work well last year so, I am hoping that the same can be said for this year. Natalie has reported to me that she is getting nowhere in the removal of the grass cuttings and other detritus on the Green, Graveyard and Cemetery. Perhaps we should call in a contractor to do this for us. It certainly should not be left for another year.
I am aware that there are some residents who litter pick their own section of road but I am also aware that there are parts of the village which are decidedly scruffy. For instance, the bridge under the B1113 need cleaning and/or painting, together with many road signs.
Following a discussion at the last Parish Council meeting, when the question of the uncontrolled illegal development at Moon Lane was raised, I contacted the Environment Agency and after been given the run-around, (to be expected) I was able to report our concerns that raw effluent

was being discharged into the Dove, as there was no evidence of sanitation for the growing number of mobile homes. I was promised that some action would be taken but I was not very convinced.
ACTION – Clerk (J. Challis) to contact MSDC again requesting the grass be cut prior to the Flower Festival, and asking if they would be able to provide a cost to remove the grass cuttings on the green, and in the graveyard and cemetery.

22.08 Clerk's Report
Nothing to report.

22.09 Member's permission to receive Agendas by email
In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, member's permission is required to receive Agendas (Summons) electronically.
All members present confirmed their consent.
Action – Clerk (J. Challis) to request email consent from Cllr Black and Cllr Winter.

22.10 To discuss MSDC's Community Governance Review
MSDC are carrying out a Community Governance Review of Parishes, Town Councils and Unparished areas. The first stage of the review process will be a consultation and the District Council will be inviting residents and other interested persons or organisations to submit their views. The deadline for submissions to the first stage of the review is Friday 27th May 2022. Councillors agreed to discuss the review further at the next meeting, prior to the first stage submission deadline.
ACTION – Clerk (J. Challis) to include on May agenda and arrange for Notice of Review document to be published on the website and noticeboard.

22.11 Update from the Village Footpath Map Working Group
Nothing to report.

22.12 To discuss flooding within the village.
Suffolk Highways have confirmed the flooding on Westhorpe Road remains on their list for further investigation, ref CR355552. They arranged for silt and debris blocking the drainage system to be cleared in February 2022, however there is a 15m pipe under the road which still requires CCTV investigation to determine where the outlet is, to clear and/or repair, and reinstate the outfall.

22.13 To discuss the emergency plan.
Ongoing; Version 1 of the Emergency Plan which was prepared by Cllr Charter in May 2021, needs resending to councillors as a reminder for their further consideration/input.
ACTION – Clerk

7:55pm Cllr Mellen arrived.
Cllr Kilbee proposed returning to agenda item 1. Approved unanimously.

22.01 (Visiting speakers)
DC Cllr Report
Cllr Kilbee asked for information on the Net Carbon Zero Toolkit. Cllr Mellen explained it is guidance for developers and homeowners to help reduce the carbon footprint in new and existing dwellings. Approval for MSDC to adopt it was unanimous, but it is not yet mandatory.
CC Cllr Report
Cllr Mellen highlighted Stowmarket's 'Gateway 14' which is part of a national strategy to create freeports across the country in an attempt to generate economic activity through tax incentives. It is a significant project for MSDC but will result in increased lorry traffic on the A140.
Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Mellen for his reports.

22.14 To discuss an annual newsletter to everyone in the village. T
Cllr Charter has created a first draft of the newsletter and now needs input from everyone else. The Chair thanked Cllr Charter for the work she has done. Cllr Kilbee has obtained two cover examples, one matt and one gloss version which he circulated for councillors to see.
ACTION – Clerk (N. Hill) to circulate draft newsletter for further discussion at the next meeting.

22.15 To discuss and approve plans to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022.
Cllr Miller has built a beacon which will sit on top of a telegraph pole. Councillors discussed the best location on which to site the beacon which will be left in place permanently. Positioning it on the green near the flagpole, where there is a gap away from the trees was suggested. Cllr Kilbee will put a stake in this location for other councillors to visit and check, in order for the location to be agreed at the next meeting.

Cllr Trew shared designs for the commemorative mugs which the design company has estimated will cost approximately £8.00 per mug. Councillors agreed unanimously on their preferred design, which includes the official purple QPJ logo, and the Finningham village sign with the wording 'presented by Finningham Parish Council'.
Cllr Charter proposed agreeing up to £2,000.00 to spend on the mugs. Seconded by Cllr Miller and approved unanimously. Cllr Mellen advised he may be able to provide funding towards the QPJ but needs to check whether commemorative mugs are eligible.
ACTION – Cllr Kilbee to stake proposed location of beacon. Cllr Trew to instruct design company to go ahead with mugs.

8:33pm Cllr Mellen left the meeting

22.16 To discuss and approve training on how to use the defib
Deferred to next meeting.

22.17 To discuss poles for the new 4 dog bins
Costs advised by Glasdons: 2 x Fido 25 posts @ £73.55 each incl. delivery.
2 x Retriever 50 posts @ £82.69 each incl. delivery
Total of £312.48 plus vat
Proposed by Cllr Charter, seconded by Cllr Arthur and approved unanimously. CIL funds can be used.
ACTION – Clerk (J. challis) to order

22.18 To discuss cemetery reserve plot markers
Cllr Kilbee explained that the Parish Council is responsible for the reserve marker plots, and suggested changing the current system to small markers that can be mown over. After discussing it was agreed to discuss further at a future meeting.

8:41pm Footpath Warden left the meeting

22.19 To discuss New Councillor Training
Cllr Trew and Cllr Charter would both like to attend SALC's New Councillor Training webinars. Councillors agreed unanimously for Cllr Trew and Cllr Charter to book training when suitable dates are available, with two abstentions. The bookings need to be forwarded to the Clerk to be made through the SALC portal.

22.20 Correspondence received
An email has been received from a resident regarding the play equipment on the green. Cllr Kilbee will reply
An email has been received from Trading Standards regarding avian influenza and a complaint regarding a loose flock of geese. Cllr Kilbee will reply.
ACTION – Cllr Kilbee

22.21 Clerk's salary
As this agenda item was to be discussed 'IN CAMERA' due to its confidential nature, the member of the public was kindly asked to leave the meeting.
8:58pm the member of the public left the meeting

22.22 Finance
a. RFO's report (bank balance, receipts and payments)
A remittance advice has been received from MSDC confirming payment of the first half of the precept in April 2022

Balances as of 29/03/2022
Community Bank Account
Balance as of 29 March 2022: £22,591.58
Receipts (since 25th Feb 2022): £0.00
Payments (since 25th Feb 2022): £395.58
Deposit Account
Balance as of 29th March 2022: £3,330.18

General funds: £9,793.79
Reserves (1/2 of precept & election costs): £4,721.00
Restricted funds (CIL & grants not spent): £11,406.97

b. Requests for payment
Clerk expenses (J. Challis mileage) - £8.82
SCC (SID/VAS posts) - £570.00

SALC (annual membership) – £266.66
Glasdon UK Ltd (Fido bin) - £152.27
ElanCity (mounting bar) – 47.74
TOTAL payments - £1,045.49

22.23 Planning

a.To consider applications.
None to consider.
b. Decisions & to consider planning matters coming forth.
AWAITING DECISION - DC/22/00906 - Erection of detached double garage with workshop over (following demolition of existing) - School House, Walsham Road, Finningham, Suffolk, IP14 4JF.
GRANTED - DC/22/00486 - Householder Application – Reconstruction of roof tops (following fire damage) and installation of roof windows – Drivers Farm Barn, Gislingham Road, Finningham, Suffolk, IP14 4JA.
All planning applications received up to the date of the meeting will be discussed.

22.24 Questions to Chairman

None.

22.25 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the May agenda.

None.

22.26 The Annual Parish (Village) meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th May 2022 in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham starting at 7:00pm, followed immediately by the Annual Parish Council meeting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.14pm

Andrew Mellen - District Councillor Report for Bacton Ward – April 2022

(Bacton, Cotton, Finningham, Westhorpe & Wyverstone Parishes)

Governance Review	At the last Council meeting, the new Code of Conduct, as suggested by NALC was adopted. This will come into force from the next Annual Council meeting. It was also agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review. Councils should have such reviews every 10-15 years and can consider creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes. Formal communication will be sent to all Parish and Town Councils explaining the process.
Pay Policy Statement	New pay scales for the Senior Management Team were agreed at full council, as well as agreement that the Chief Executive will conduct a pay review for all staff over the next 12 months.
Remote and hybrid meetings	Mid Suffolk District Council agreed to support the petition to Government to allow Councils the flexibility to hold remote and hybrid meetings when appropriate. Currently all voting members of a Council have to be present to make any decisions, but officers and others are allowed to make representations remotely. The technology and license are now ready for this to take place and it is hoped that this will be trialled in the next couple of weeks.
Neighbourhood Plans	Cllr Stringer proposed a motion at Full Council for MSDC to actively encourage communities, especially all the core villages, to create and update neighbourhood plans. The Council will allocate resources in order for this to happen. The vote for this motion was 15 for; 13 against and 1 abstention. All of the Conservative administration group (bar one abstention) voted against this motion, but it was carried.
Net Carbon Zero Toolkit	Cllr Eburne proposed a motion for the Council to adopt the Net Carbon Zero Toolkit as technical guidance for developers and homeowners to help reduce the carbon footprint in new and existing dwellings. This toolkit had been produced by the LGA together with Forest of Dean, West Oxfordshire and Cotswold District Councils. This proposal was unanimously approved.
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	BMSDC's first Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was discussed at last week's Cabinet meeting. The plan sets out the councils' approach to improving and developing the local cycling and walking network across the district over the next 10 years, to support residents in shifting towards more sustainable transport. After an online public consultation almost 200 potential infrastructure improvement schemes across the two districts have been identified and prioritised according to a variety of factors such as effectiveness, policy, economic factors and deliverability. This prioritisation will be key to obtaining local, regional and national funding towards improving sustainable travel facilities and routes in the districts.
Corporate Peer Challenge & Planning peer review	The initial findings of last month's Corporate Peer Challenge have been published and we are awaiting the full report. The initial findings include that BMSDC is a well-run organisation with huge ambition which does not always match capacity and resources. There is more work to do to embed climate concerns and wellbeing into all activities. We also had our planning service reviewed by a team from other Councils – they have come up with a series of recommendations to improve and streamline the process which will be implemented over the next few months.

Cllr Andrew Mellen
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Parish Report – April 2022

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COVID-19

Latest SCC information is available here: https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/

Latest Government advice is available here: www.gov.uk/coronavirushave

Sunnica Solar Farm
This large project, stretching across West Suffolk and into Cambridgeshire, has featured in the news recently. The SCC Cabinet voted not to support the current plans by Sunnica to build the country's largest solar farm. Suffolk County Council have asked the Government to reject the plans in their current form, arguing the application fails to properly mitigate the impacts of such a large project.

At the same meeting, the Cabinet voted to support the National Grid's project to improve its energy infrastructure from Bramford to Twinstead, as part of the Government's Net-Zero plan to increase low-carbon energy in the UK.

Full Council 24th March – unanimous support for Ukraine
This Council meeting presented a rare opportunity of solidarity between Councillors, as our Group and the Conservatives shared a single motion in support of Ukraine. The motion condemned the actions of the Russian government, as well as stating our commitment to supporting and welcoming refugees as they become a part of our Suffolk communities. Councillors from all parties supported the motion and together we showed how politics can be put aside during difficult times.

SCC is also preparing to play its part in the "Homes for Ukraine" scheme, where households can register with the government to host refugees from Ukraine. At present, hosts have to form a direct contact with a potential guest, and complete the visa application together. This triggers a notification from the home office for SCC to order a home inspection (usually carried out by the District Council) and also a DBS check on the hosts. Currently visa applications are taking around 3 weeks to be processed, though the government has pledged to reduce this to 48 hrs.

Cabinet 29th March
The Cabinet voted to establish 'Freeport East'. This is part of a national strategy to create freeports across the country, in an attempt to generate economic activity through tax incentives. Felixstowe Port, Harwich Port, and Stowmarket's 'Gateway 14' Business Park are set to become part of Freeport East. Our opposition group is concerned that this project will prioritise foreign direct investment over local businesses, many of which will not be able to compete with the foreign businesses receiving tax relief. The project poses many other issues, Freeports such as this have a reputation for increasing corruption and money laundering. There is also a lack of clear strategy towards net-zero, and a risk of high-skilled jobs being imported, excluding the Suffolk workforce.

The Cabinet also voted on the Enhanced Partnership between SCC and bus operators, in line with the new Bus Back Better strategy, aimed at improving services across Suffolk. The improvement plan was voted for in October 2021, and this partnership outlines how the various stakeholders will interact with one another during the implementation of the improvement plan.

***Update Monday 4th April: SCC's bid for £77m of "Bus back better" funding was turned down.**

Highways, potholes etc.
I am regularly contacted by residents regarding highways issues of various kinds. This past month it has been fallen trees onto fences and footpaths, flooding from ditches onto the highway, and potholes in various locations. All have been

reported and will hopefully be repaired or dealt with in due course. I am continuing to pursue several long-term highways issues, including:

- The provision of a safe pedestrian road crossing on the A1088 at Norton
- Lorry movements down unsuitable roads in Woolpit and Great Ashfield
- Flooding in Finningham – (some progress made).
- Bridge repairs and potholes on the A1088 at Stowlangtoft

Unfortunately, with the Highways department short of funds it can be very difficult to make the progress that communities expect. Luckily, we have not had a very wet winter like last year – and many problem areas have not produced disruption as a result. Please do make use of the highways reporting tool, Suffolk County Council - ReportIT which covers a wide range of faults – and contact me if you feel the response is inadequate.

Website - Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council (suffolkgli.wordpress.com)