FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes for the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 12th July 2022
in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm

Present: Cllr A**.** Kilbee, Cllr J. Miller, Cllr L. Charter, Cllr P. Trew, Cllr J. Black
In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk), DC & CC Cllr Mellen, and 2 members of the public.

22.81 Visiting speakers
The Footpath Warden read out his report, a copy of which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.
Cllr Mellen sent a copy of his DC and CC reports prior to the meeting, which can be found as addendums at the end of the minutes.

22.82 Contribution by Members of the Public
None.

22.83 Apologies and approval of absence
Apologies were received from Cllr Winter (family commitments) and Cllr Arthur (on holiday). Cllr Charter proposed approval of the absences; seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously. Apologies were also noted from the Footpath Warden.

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

22.85 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items
None received.

22.86 Approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th June 2022
Cllr Charter proposed approving the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th June 2022 as a true and correct record; seconded by Cllr Miller and approved unanimously with one abstention, (Cllr who was not present at the meeting). The Chairman then signed the minute book.

22.87 Matters arising from the Parish Council meeting held on 14th June 2022
All covered elsewhere on agenda.

22.88 Chairman's Report
A quick update on the installation of the new village sign at Rob Hall Corner. There has been no movement on this except an email from SCC Highways to ask if Gislingham had purchased their own sign and where ours will be for the contractor to collect at the time of installation. Jane can give us an update on the former. On the latter, I ask Jim Miller if he would keep the sign and brackets at the farm, as it is very close to the site. I had a discussion with Nige regarding the work needed on the Green to the Play equipment to satisfy last year's Safety Audit. Most of it could be done by a work party in a morning or so. One difficult problem is the Activity Equipment. Evidently, the chains do not comply with the current standards. I have been in touch with the suppliers, Playdale, who told me that, as the equipment was installed before the Standard was put in place, we do not have to comply with it. I need to verify that statement, as I do not want to leave us exposed if there is an incident. To be able to do the work we shall need some volunteers. This comes back to the problem of getting the message through to the village residents. I am hoping that Emily's presentation later in the Agenda will give us something to work on.

22.89 Clerk's Report
Gislingham Parish Council have approved purchase of their side of the village sign at Rob Hall Corner, but it has not yet been delivered.

There is an update on the bus services from Gislingham which go to Stowmarket and Diss, via Finningham, as below. These commenced at the end of June.

BUS SERVICE UPDATE :
Thursday 457 Service to STOWMARKET (via Finningham/Bacton/Cotton/Mendlesham/Stowupland)
Leaves Gislingham 9.30am - Arrives Stowmarket (Argos) 10.30am
Leaves Stowmarket (Argos) 1.00pm - Arrives Gislingham 1.55pm
Friday 456 Service to DISS (via Haughley/Bacton/Finningham/Eye)
Leaves Gislingham 10.06am - Arrives Diss (bus station) 10.35am
Leaves Diss (bus station) 1.15pm - Arrives Gislingham 1.46pm

National Grid East Anglia GREEN Energy Enablement consultation: The council's objection response was sent to National Grid and copied to Jo Churchill MP. Acknowledgments have been received from National Grid and Jo Churchill.

22.90 Presentation by Emily Durrant on village green play equipment, and communication ideas (between Parish Council and residents)

Cllr Kilbee introduced member of the public Emily Durrant who had previously contacted the Parish Council in relation to the play equipment on the green. Cllr Kilbee has invited Emily to present her suggestions for improvements to the play equipment, alongside ideas for ways to achieve better communication between residents and the council.

8:07pm Cllr Black arrived at the meeting.

Communication:
There followed a discussion with ideas from Emily to create a more digitalised communication system, including organising a leaflet drop asking residents if they would be happy to share their email addresses to enable the council to create an online database. This is something that was started by the previous Clerk so some of the groundwork has already been done.

8:21pm Cllr Mellen arrived at the meeting.

Cllr Mellen said that he was planning to deliver some brochures locally and was happy to include a leaflet from the council whilst delivering in Finningham.
After further discussion it was agreed to progress the database, and a Facebook page which the Clerk will create, alongside the website. Cllr Kilbee will speak to Friends of Finningham regarding their newsletter, which may be a better direction for Emily to channel her ideas.

Play Equipment:
Emily presented ideas to develop the play equipment on the green further by way of a track making use of the area around the trees. Councillors agreed that the green is a village asset to be made best use of, but were unsure that a bike track was appropriate, raising concerns it may spoil the green. Cllr Kilbee suggested looking at ways to organise a survey to ask residents what they would like to see. Cllr Trew suggested looking at some form of log cabin that could be used for teas/coffee and be a permanent feature on the green.
It was decided to discuss the green and development of the play equipment further at the next meeting.
Cllr Kilbee thanked Emily for her input and invited her to attend the next meeting.
ACTION

- **Cllr Kilbee to speak to Friends of Finningham as above**
- **Clerk to set up a Facebook for the council**
- **Cllr Kilbee to liaise with Cllr Mellen re leaflet drop**

Cllr Kilbee proposed returning to agenda item 1, approved unanimously.

(22.81 Visiting speakers)
Cllr Mellen read through his District and County Councillor reports.
Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Mellen for his reports, and his help with the leaflet drop discussed under the previous agenda item.

8:27pm Cllr Mellen and Emily Durrant left the meeting.

22.91 Update from the Village Footpath Map Working Group

Cllr Black reported that the QR codes have been affixed to the footpath posts. There is nothing that needs to be added to the information against each of the walking routes. After discussing it was agreed that there is no need for the leaflets and the project can now be classed as complete.

22.92 To discuss the emergency plan.

Ways to share details of the plan to residents other than the website were discussed under agenda item 10. The plan itself is ongoing.

22.93 To discuss and approve an Annual Newsletter to everyone in the village, incl. approval of Newsletter name.

Cllr Kilbee again reminded councillors and the clerk to forward a photograph of themselves with a short autobiography to be included in the first newsletter and asked them to consider suggestions for a name. Cllr Winter is collating a list of local services to include and will forward a first draft of the newsletter to councillors once ready.

ACTION – Clerk/all councillors

22.94 To discuss the footpath from the crossroads to the green

Cllr Kilbee reported that disappointingly, following approval from the Parish Council to proceed with the footpath work at the last meeting, there has been no progress from either SCC or Suffolk Highways. The Principal Engineer at SCC has advised that they are waiting for a response from Suffolk Highways and will update as soon as it has been received.

ACTION –Cllr Kilbee to advise as soon as an update has been received

22.95 To discuss organising a litter pick

Cllr Kilbee proposed councillors formed a working group to spend a day litter picking and cleaning the play equipment. After discussing, Cllr Trew suggested delegating areas of the green and equipment and spreading the work over a few days to fit in around councillor's other commitments. Agreed unanimously. Cllr Kilbee will make Cllr Arthur once he has returned from holiday.

ACTION – All councillors as above

22.96 To discuss new battery and pads for the defibrillator

This item needs to be discussed with Cllr Winter to see whether a new battery and/or pads are required. Cllr Kilbee proposed approving spending up to £200 for a new battery and/or pads if they are needed, rather than waiting until the next meeting in September. Seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee to speak to Cllr Winter to see if a new battery and/or pads are required, and arrange their purchase if needed

22.97 Correspondence received

- Parish Trees, Hedgerows and Wildflowers Scheme 2022 - In 2021, as part of a biodiversity action plan, BMSDC provided free trees and hedgerow plants to all parishes.

They are repeating the scheme in 2022, offering trees and hedging for planting on land with public access, whether owned by a council, parish or community group. After discussing councillors decided to request wildflowers to be planted on the area of land by the school layby, which will not affect the line of sight for traffic in either direction, and possibly the edge of the green near the parking area by the houses.

- BMSDC Corporate Peer Challenge Review - BMSDC invited the Local Government Association in to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge Review in March 2022. The Peer Team spoke to more than 200 people, including officers, councillors, stakeholders, and partners to provide a sense check on how they are performing – and suggest some improvement opportunities. The findings have been published and can be viewed BMSDC's website: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/The_Council/Performance/Babergh-Mid-Suffolk- Corporate-Peer-Challenge-report.pdf

22.98 Finance

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

Balances as of 29/06/2022

Community Bank Account

Balance as of 29 June 2022: £23,275.46

(Balance as of 28 May 2022: £24,790.09)

Receipts (since 28 May 2022): £1,36.00

Payments (since 28 May 2022): £2,750.63

Deposit Account

Balance as of 29 June 2022: £3,330.43

General funds: £12,548.90
Reserves (1/2 of precept & election costs): £4,256.85
Restricted funds (CIL & grants not spent): £9,800.14

b. Requests for payment
Admin J. Challis - £203.49
HMRC J. Challis - £50.80
Clerk expenses (J. Challis mileage) - £31.32
Anglia Signs (beacon plaque) - £124.99
SWALEC (electricity DD) - £35.19
TOTAL payments - £445.79

Cllr Charter proposed authorisation of the above payments; seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously.
ACTION - Cllr Kilbee and Cllr Winter to pay the above approved payments by bank transfer (dual authorisation)

Due to there being no meeting in August, Cllr Kilbee proposed that any urgent payment requests received from the Clerk be approved by email and recorded in the October minutes. Seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously.

The Clerk confirmed that the correspondence address for both Barclays bank accounts have been updated.

c. Reapproval of trade account with Lawes
After discussing, it was agreed that in order to comply with NALC's model financial regulations, the trade account would be closed, and any purchases made would be reimbursed by an expenses system.
ACTION – Clerk to advise Lawes as above

22.99 To consider and approve Standing Orders
Deferred.

22.100 To consider and approve Financial Regulations
Deferred.

22.101 To consider and approve Internet Banking Policy
Deferred.

22.102 To consider and approve Asset Register
Deferred.

22.103 To consider and approve Internal Control Statement
Deferred.

22.104 To consider and approve Risk Assessment for Volunteers
Deferred.

22.105 Planning
a. To consider applications – None.
b. Decisions & to consider planning matters coming forth.

- **AWAITING DECISION**: DC/22/02811 – Application for Planning Permission. Planning Application – Erection of an open Dutch style barn for storing machinery, equipment, and hay for agricultural purposes. Mill Farm, Station Road, Finningham, IP14 4TH
- **AWAITING DECISION**: DC/22/02995 – Application for works to tree (s) in a conservation area. Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area – Coppice 1No. Yew tree (T1). Yeoman House, Church Green, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4HU
- **GRANTED**: DC/22/02242 – Application for Planning Permission. Full Application – Erection of agricultural building for the drying, cleaning and storage of combinable crops, machinery, and agricultural inputs. Rob Hall, Walsham Road, Finningham, Suffolk, IP14 4JL.
- **WITHDRAWN**: DC/22/02359 – Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for a Proposed: Erection, Extension or Alteration of a building for Agricultural or Forestry Use. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order

2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 6 – Erection of a steel framed open dutch style barn with a corrugated roof to protect farm machinery and cropped hay. Mill Farm, Station Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, IP14 4 TH.
All planning applications received up to the date of the meeting will be discussed.

22.106 Questions to Chairman
None.

22.107 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the September agenda.
None.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.24pm

FOOTPATH WARDEN'S REPORT

The long-awaited cutting of our designated footpaths etc. were eventually carried out on the 25th June by SCC mowing team. This was not soon enough, as we had some areas that had become difficult to use, and although I had asked for a time scale for the work to be done, I had not heard back.

Prow report Ref. 00363805 12/06/22 regarding broken boards on footbridge at footpath 005; We have received a reply from SCC 24/06/22 to confirm that their contractors will be carrying out remedial work in due course.

Acting on an issue raised about bridleway 007 (Jenny's Lane) by Gislingham pc, about it being impassable on a horse because of overgrown trees, and difficult to negotiate on foot because of tree roots, I have looked at this area, and cannot see, other than the normal trimming back that I do, that this should warrant a formal report. I will however, ask Ken Larcombe of SCC prow if he would take a look for us, and give better judgement as to whether it does require work by their contractors.

Doug Aiken

District Councillor's Report for Parish Councils - July 2022

Councillor Andy Mellen, Bacton Ward (Bacton, Cotton, Finningham, Westhorpe and Wyverstone)

Residents' survey	Babergh and Mid Suffolk are carrying out their annual survey of residents. Hopefully this will enable the Councils to understand more about residents' and communities' resilience and to help improve the Councils' service. Up to 8,000 households from the districts have been randomly selected and invited to take part.
Mid Suffolk Council finances	Figures for the full financial year 2021/22 are now available: Mid Suffolk District Council has announced an underspend of £1.2 million against budget with net expenditure on services down by £1.6 million against a budget of £12.7 million. Total reserves stand at just over £24 million up nearly £4 million on the previous financial year. Capital expenditure was £13.3 million against a budget of £30 million. Recent capital expenditure includes £756,000 on the solar carport at the Stowmarket Leisure Centre (not yet operational due to issues with obtaining inverters), £666,000 on the Needham Lake café and £4.5 million on Gateway 14.
Gateway 14	The Range has announced a £200 million investment to base a major distribution centre at Gateway 14 creating 1,650 jobs (across three shifts). Once a reserved matters planning application has been approved, work is expected to start in January 2023 and occupation of the new distribution centre in Autumn 2023.
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	This Fund has been set up by Government as a replacement for EU funding (although with less funds available) and in order to access it Councils must submit an investment plan. Funding is expected to be approximately £140,000 for the rest of this year, £280,000 next year and £780,000 the year after.
Local Planning Issues	Work on the Bellway development site in Bacton was subject of a stop notice due to the developer not having got pre-commencement conditions agreed before starting work. Work has now re-started with HGVs hopefully following the prescribed route in the Construction Management Plan.
Grants for carbon-reduction	A new fund for community-based carbon-reduction projects is now open. Projects could include promoting cycling/walking, improving energy efficiency and raising awareness of climate change. Applications can be made via the Green Suffolk website.
Locality Funding	I welcome applications from any local club or organisation in need of funding towards the cost of a local project.

Parish Report – July 2022

Councillor: **Andy Mellen**

Green, LibDem and Independent Group

Thedwastre North Division

Councillor contact details:

Mobile: 07790 992619

Email: andy.mellen@suffolk.gov.uk

For information on local support during the Cost-of-Living Crisis, visit:
https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/suffolk-advice-and-support-service/

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

For information on supporting Ukrainian refugees in Suffolk, email:
refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk GLI call for a Cost-of-Living Emergency to be declared

There is a Full Council meeting on the 7th July. The opposition group have submitted a motion calling for SCC to declare a Cost-of-Living Emergency, and for the Council to redirect funds and efforts towards targeting those most vulnerable.

Prices for fuel, food and energy are increasing as the real value of wages are cut by the rise in inflation. Our motion calls on the government to provide further support to those falling below the poverty line.

In addition, we are calling on the government to make it easier and cheaper to insulate homes. Our motion asks to waive VAT on energy-saving materials, such as insulation, and adequately fund a retrofitting programme so that households can save money on their bills during winter where energy prices are due to rise even further.

Cabinet Meeting: SEND Capital Programme

Cabinet met on 20th June to vote on funding the next phase of SCC's programme to build more capacity for SEND children in education. The cabinet agreed a package of £15.9m, as part of a £45m programme.

Currently, there is a high demand for SEND services, with requests for placement going up by 32% since 2020. The funding Cabinet have agreed will create three new specialist units across Suffolk.

Our Group supported such a project, but was mindful of the rising demand and what was needed for the future. The Cabinet agreed a third phase was required, which will be discuss later this year.

National Grid East Anglia GREEN consultation: SCC submit a rejecting response

The county council's response to this consultation was submitted and is very much aligned with others: MPs, the affected district councils and individual councillors have all expressed concern about the proposals and have called for an off-shore cable route, as part of a strategic power network linking North Sea windfarms into the grid. There will be a further debate on these issues at the full council meeting on 7th July.

Petition for in-house Suffolk Highways maintenance contract: Still need signatures!

Our Group's petition is still live, requesting that SCC produces an in-house bid for the new Suffolk Highways contract. The contract, which will have been held by Kier for 10 years, is up for renewal next year.

Since Kier's arrival, our Group has seen astronomical prices for the maintenance of Suffolk's highways. Some of these prices include £5,000 for a pair of dropped kerbs, £7,500 to cut down a single tree, and £10,000 to design (not build) four humps in a road.

Our Group believes an in-house bid from SCC to take back control of Suffolk Highways is needed to get things done. The bid would also provide a necessary benchmark for any competitive bid coming from external companies, making sure Suffolk taxpayers money is not exploited.

We need 3,675 signatures to bring this to debate at the Council. Please sign here (ensure you make you name public, or it won't count!):
https://www.petitions.net/for_suffolk_county_council_to_develop_an_in-house_bid_for_suffolk_highways_maintenance

Bridge on A1088 at Stowlangtoft

Detailed plans are now being drawn up for the reconstruction of this bridge, which is currently under a 7.5T temporary weight restriction due to faults discovered during a routine inspection. This temporary restriction expires in November 2023, but Highways are looking to extend this, which probably gives an indication of how long the works are likely to take (Nov. 2023 is two years since the restrictions first came in).