FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes for the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 12th March 2024
in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm

Present: Cllr Kilbee, Cllr Trew, Cllr Davies, Cllr Charter, Cllr Black
In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk), Cllr Mellen, 1 member of the public

23.265 Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence
Cllr Kilbee welcomed everyone to the meeting, and noted apologies received from Mr Aiken.

23.266 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.

23.267 Contribution by Members of the Public
None; the member of the public was present in relation to agenda item 10.

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

23.269 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items
None.

23.270 To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th February 2024
Cllr Davies proposed approving the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th February 2024 as a true and correct record; seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously with one abstention (councillor who was not present at the meeting).

23.271 Matters arising from the Parish Council meeting held on 13th February 2024
All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

23.272 Chairman's Report
Last night I attended a meeting of Friends of Finningham where I was asked to give updates on various issues. I took the opportunity to remind those present that all this information was readily available in the Minutes of our meetings and even better, if they attended our meetings in person. That idea fell on deaf ears. I was able to explain the reasons why the Church footpath had been removed. I explained that the Gazette would be available for distribution (with the Questionnaire) towards the end of this month. Two members of FoF offered to help with the distribution, as they do with the Newsletter.
I also took the opportunity to explain the 36.7% rise in the Parish Council's portion of the new Council Tax. There was no adverse reaction. Admittedly, there were only a few people at the meeting.
I have been in touch with the Basketball England, to get their advice on the best size for the hardstanding. Although we have received some quotations, these were based on an area that was really a guess and, if we can get funding, we can request further quotations based on these recommendations.
The Mowing Rota for this coming season has now been distributed and will start early in April (dependent on the weather).
On a personal note, has anyone found out how to access the new email system on their mobile phone?

23.273 Clerk's Report
- MSDC have forwarded the annual play inspection report. All items were recorded as low risk, and the report will be considered in full at the next meeting.

- Funding application for the emergency work to fell the two dead beech trees on the green; MSDC Infrastructure Team have said that unfortunately there is now no 2023/24 funding left from Cllr Mellen's locality budget, and despite being emergency work, they will not accept a retrospective application for 2024/25. Cllr Mellen is looking at whether it is eligible for his County Council budget.
- Top Garden Services have provided pricing to deliver bark chipping for the path from Church Meadow to the Churchyard (the need for new surfacing was raised by a member of the public at the last meeting). Cllr Charter voiced concern that bark chipping may make the path inaccessible for wheelchair users. To be an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.
- At the previous meeting Cllr Winter reported under correspondence, that she had been approached by a resident whose son wishes to carry out litter picks as part of his Duke of Edinburgh award. The resident has now contacted the Clerk directly, and confirmed all necessary risk assessments will be completed as the litter pick is not being conducted on behalf of the Parish Council.
- A Planning Appeal, APP/W3520/D24/3336927, has been received against original application DC/23/04246. This was a householder application for the erection of a cart lodge, Last Oak, Westhorpe Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, IP14 4TW.

23.274 **New Parish Councillor co-option**

Cllr Kilbee introduced the member of the public who had previously indicated their interest in becoming a Parish Councillor. Cllr Charter proposed the co-option be approved, seconded by Cllr Davies, and approved unanimously. Cllr Perry Saunders took a seat alongside councillors, and completed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office (witnessed and signed by the Clerk), and signed an acceptance form to receive summons electronically.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange for Cllr Saunders to complete a Register of Interests form, and ask CAS (Community Action Suffolk) to create a PC gov.uk email account.

23.275 **New gov.uk email addresses and domain**

The clerk shared a proposed email signature which councillors agreed was satisfactory for all outgoing emails sent by the Clerk. It was agreed for councillors to use a shortened version.

23.276 **Finningham GREEN Footpath update**

Ongoing; Highways are still to confirm a date to complete the trial holes, which they were unable to do on 15th January due to adverse weather conditions.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue update.

23.277 **Finningham Green; basketball hoop surfacing and quotations received**

MSDC Infrastructure Team have advised that Capital Grants for 2024/25 are yet to be confirmed, so an application cannot be made at present. The Clerk will investigate alternative funding sources.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

23.278 **Approval of new sign on Finningham Green**

Cllr Kilbee will circulate a draft for councillors to approve. The Clerk will send the approved design to the sign company in Diss, in order for it to be progressed by the end of the month in line with the Pride in Your Place grant criteria.

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee/Clerk as above

23.279 **To discuss Annual Newsletter progress**

Cllr Kilbee shared a draft copy of the newsletter, which was approved unanimously.

The Clerk created a draft survey which was also shared with councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Davies suggested a couple of amendments, and after discussing further, councillors agreed they were happy to go ahead taking the suggestions into account. The member of the public who volunteered to design the newsletter will put the survey into the same format, and arrange for it to be printed by Vistaprint with the newsletter. Expenditure of up to £50 for the survey printing approved at the 13th February 2024 meeting, however councillors felt this may need to be increased.

Approval of the survey and increased expenditure of up to £100 to cover printing costs proposed by Cllr Davies. Seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee to forward approved survey to member of the public for printing, as above

23.280 **Churchyard Maintenance update**

No further updates at the moment.

ACTION – Clerk to seek further advice from SALC.

23.281 Cemetery winter maintenance

So far Cllr Kilbee, Cllr Trew, Cllr Davies and Cllr Charter have volunteered to carry out the work required. A date has been set for Saturday 23rd March, meeting at 10am in the cemetery, and new volunteers are welcome. The Clerk will send a Volunteer Risk Assessment to Cllr Kilbee, which every volunteer, including councillors, needs to sign to confirm they have read and understood it.

ACTION – Clerk as above

23.282 Eastlands bridge and village flooding

MSDC Infrastructure have confirmed that drainage surveys which will help to mitigate against the risk of future flooding, are eligible for Locality funding. Nearby parishes of Mellis and Wortham & Burgate have expressed their interest in looking into this further, with a possible combined approach to take into account the river catchment areas, as opposed to just the individual location. The Clerk has contact Amazi Civil Engineers in Ipswich for advice. They have provided a rough estimate of £1,500.00 per parish. Cllr Mellen has expressed his support. After discussing, councillors agreed a professional approach to be worth further consideration, especially if funding is available. Cllr Trew said he would be happy to arrange a site visit with the Amazi engineer.
Cllr Trew updated that the River Dove Group have been very active in removing debris. He has also spoken to Anglian Water because the drains on Gislingham Road have been overflowing and running into the river. Anglian Water have replaced the pumps in the pumping station, and the sewer on Gislingham Road now has a telemetry water flow meter.

ACTION – Clerk to ask Amazi Civil Engineers for further information, and investigate a joint approach with nearby parishes.

8:39pm Cllr Black arrived.

23.283 To discuss graffiti in the village

Cllr Trew shared reports of grafitti on Mill Road bridge. Friends of Finningham have also reported graffiti appearing in the village, some of which uses racist language. They have made a formal police complaint. The Clerk has contacted Adam Ferguson the Local Community Police Engagement Officer, and Suffolk Constabulary to arrange a meeting with the Design Out Crime Officer.
Residents are strongly encouraged to report incidences of graffiti and antisocial behaviour to the police online: https://www.suffolk.police.uk/ro/report/asb/asb-v3/report-antisocial-behaviour/
or by calling 101.

ACTION – Clerk as above

23.284 To consider permission request for metal detecting on the green

Request received from a resident. After discussing it was agreed unanimously to grant permission, on the proviso that the Treasure Act 1996 is adhered to.

ACTION – Clerk to advise resident as above

23.285 To discuss D-Day 80 arrangements, and approval of expenditure

After discussing, it was agreed to light the beacon at 9:15pm on 6th June 2024, in line with the official nationwide lighting of the beacons being organised by Bruno Peek the Pageant master. Those wishing to attend will be invited to bring their own refreshments/picnic.

23.286 Correspondence received

An email has been received from Holloway Jennings Lofthouse, asking for information regarding the approximate age of the water tower adjacent to Station Road, as they are conducting an assessment of the structural condition of the building. The Clerk will advise them to contact the relevant water company.

ACTION – Clerk as above

23.287 Finance

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

Balances as of 30/01/2024
Community Bank Account
Balance as of 30th January 2024: £12,438.72

Deposit Account
Balance as of 30th January 2024: £3,365.06

b. Requests for payment

Clerk admin payment March	£304.20
Clerk March expenses	£20.61

HMRC March 2024 PAYE/NIC	£76.05
R. Dimech expenses – Vista Print (printing of newsletter)	£97.59

Cllr Black proposed authorisation of the above payments, seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously.
ACTION – Cllr Kilbee and either Cllr Winter or Cllr Trew to pay approved payments for the Clerk's admin and mileage, and HMRC, online, (dual authorisation).
R. Dimech expenses payment request raised on 8th March 2024, and paid online (dual authorisation). Expenditure already authorised at the 12th December 2023 meeting.

9:05pm Cllr Mellen arrived.

23.288 Planning

a) To consider applications – none

b) Decisions & to consider planning matters coming forth

- DC/24/00476 Proposal: Notification of works to trees in conservation area – fell no. 1 Oak (T1) to ground level. Fell no. 1 Leyland Cypress (T2) to ground level. No. 1 Ash (T3) reduce the crown by 4 metres in height, 3 metres on sides and remove dead wood and ivy. Fell no. 1 Oak (T4) to ground level. The Cottage, Church Path, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4JD – **GRANTED.**
- DC/24/00567 Proposal: Householder Application – erection of timber framed cartlodge (following the demolition of existing outbuilding). Yeoman House, Church Green, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4HU – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- 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.**

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

(23.266 Visiting speakers)
Cllr Mellen read through his District and County Council reports, highlighting the Public Consultation on Suffolk Devolution within his County report.

Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Mellen.
9:15pm Cllr Mellen left the meeting.

23.289 Policies/Documents review

- **Asset Register**
- **Transparency Code**
- **Parish Publication Scheme**
- **Reserves Policy**
- **Internet Banking Policy**
- **GDPR Policy**
- **Complaints Policy**

The above policies and documents were prepared by the Clerk and circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. After discussing, all policies above were approved unanimously.
ACTION – Clerk to update and publish.

23.290 To consider and approve training requests
Requests: New Councillor Training online session 1 and 2 provided by SALC for Cllr Saunders, at a total cost of £60.00. Approval proposed by Cllr Kilbee, seconded by Cllr Davies and approved unanimously with one abstention (Cllr Saunders).
ACTION – Clerk to send available dates to Cllr Saunders and arrange booking.

23.291 To discuss date of the next meeting
The next meeting will be held on 9th April 2024 at 7.30pm, in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham.

23.292 Questions to Chairman
None.

23.293 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the February agenda.
Covered on the agenda.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9:30pm.