FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes for the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 13th February 2024
in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm

Present: Cllr Kilbee, Cllr C. Winter, Cllr Charter, Cllr Davies
In attendance: Miss J. Challis (Clerk), Cllr Mellen, 3 members of the public

23.238 Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence
Cllr Kilbee welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Trew and Cllr Black; approval proposed by Cllr Davies, seconded by Cllr Charter and approved unanimously.

23.239 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.

23.240 Contribution by Members of the Public
A member of the public asked if the council could look into more bark surfacing for the pathway from Church Meadow to the churchyard, as it has become muddy and slippery.
ACTION – Clerk to speak to the contractor who felled the two dead beech trees on the green.

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

23.242 To consider requests for dispensations on agenda items
None.

23.243 To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23rd January 2024
Cllr Davies proposed approving the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23rd January 2024 as a true and correct record; seconded by Cllr Winter and approved unanimously.

23.244 Matters arising from the Parish Council meeting held on 23rd January 2024
All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

23.245 Chairman's Report
You will probably remember that Nige Arthur took a sabbatical last summer as he was embarking on a long trip overseas. He has indicated that he has no intention of returning to the Council at the moment. I should like it recorded that the Council is very grateful to Nige for the work that he did on behalf of the village, whilst he was a Councillor.
We currently have one councillor co-option vacancy, and I am very pleased to welcome Perry Saunders to the meeting tonight, in the hope that he might be willing to join us.
Cllr Trew cannot be with us tonight but has requested that someone else takes over the management of the VAS equipment. He stepped in as an interim measure when Andy Brownlie gave up. This interim period turned out to be about 2 years and, with the pressure of work, he needs to step down.
Is anyone prepared to take over this role, or know of someone outside the Council who would be prepared to do so?
Since the last meeting MKM Agriculture have collected the ride-on mower for service. I decided that it was not necessary to have the self-propelled mower serviced this year, as it had hardly been used last summer. Unfortunately, they found that the Blade Shaft had been bent (when the Grave Marker was damaged) and needed to be replaced. That is why their invoice, payment of which will be tabled this evening, is higher than expected.
Cllr Davies and Cllr Charter volunteered to take over the management of the VAS equipment.

23.246 Clerk's Report

- MSDC have confirmed receipt of the precept 2024/25, which gives Finningham a Council Tax Band D amount of £45.79.
- MSDC Infrastructure Team have confirmed a drainage survey that assists in mitigating against/preventing future flooding, would be eligible for locality grant funding.
- SALC is conducting a member survey to review its business plan and all activities linked with objectives set out in the SALC Constitution. The survey runs until 29th March 2024; full details have been sent to councillors.
- Buckingham Palace garden Party 8th May 2024 – Suffolk has been allocated two invitations; SALC are inviting councils to submit nominations for the Mayor/Chairperson of the council by 22nd February 2024. Details shared with councillors.
- The Great Big Green Week 8th -16 June 2024 - MSDC are asking councils to let them know of any green/climate events they have planned that the District Council could help support or host: Get involved - Great Big Green Week.
- D-Day 80 6th June 2024 – Bruno Peek the Pageant Master has advised that there will be an official nationwide beacon lighting ceremony at 9:15pm on 6th June. Cllr Kilbee asked councillors to give consideration to any other arrangements for discussion at the next meeting.
- National Grid have circulated a January update on their Norwich to Tilbury proposal, which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.
- Cllr Winter has advised that the Footpath Warden and a member of the public have given the flag pole a Spring clean. They report that the rope will probably be fine for this year, but will need replacing next. The St. Georges Flag is now flying, the Union Flag is a little frayed. Future agenda item.

23.247 New Parish Councillor co-option

Deferred.

Cllr Kilbee proposed moving to agenda item 14 for which a member of the public was present. Approved unanimously.

(23.251 To discuss Annual Newsletter progress)
Cllr Kilbee thanked the member of the public who previously volunteered to design the newsletter, and has put together a draft copy, with content supplied by councillors and the Clerk. The draft copy was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting, and their feedback taken into consideration with amendments made. The Finningham Green survey needs to be finalised and included as an insert. Councillors agreed that the survey should be available to download from the council website and Facebook page too, with an agreed drop off address for residents unable to return it electronically. The previously agreed expenditure for the newsletter does not include the survey. Cllr Charter proposed expenditure up to £50 for the survey to be printed by the same company printing the newsletter, seconded by Cllr Davies, and approved unanimously.
ACTION – Cllr Kilbee/Clerk to prepare draft survey to circulate to councillors for feedback/approval.

7:55pm the member of the public left the meeting.

7:56pm Cllr Mellen arrived.

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

(23.239 Visiting speakers)
Cllr Mellen read through his District and County Council reports. In addition, Cllr Mellen said that numerous reports have been made on the Highways Reporting Tool regarding lorries encroaching on highway verges and causing damage. Cllr Kilbee has emailed Cllr Mellen directly with his concerns regarding the section of road where the new footpath is due to be installed. Cllr Mellen advised that he will try and arrange for the Community Engineer to conduct a site visit.
Cllr Kilbee thanked Cllr Mellen for his reports.

23.248 New gov.uk email addresses and domain

The new gov.uk email addresses and domain are now live. Councillors and the Clerk confirmed there to be no issues. The new address to contact the Clerk, who is the first point of contact for the council, is clerk@finninghamparishcouncil.gov.uk. Any correspondence sent to finninghamparishcouncil@gmail.com will still be received. The new domain name is https://finninghamparishcouncil.gov.uk/. A uniform outgoing signature for councillors and the clerk will be included on all emails.

23.249

Finningham GREEN Footpath update

Ongoing; Highways were unable to complete the trial holes on 15th January to survey underground services in the vicinity of the footpath due to the weather conditions, and are yet to confirm a new date. Cllr Kilbee has contacted Cllr Mellen regarding lorries encroaching this section of the highway; see visiting speakers above.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue update.

23.250

Finningham Green; basketball hoop surfacing and quotations received

Cllr Kilbee is still waiting for all three updated quotations. Councillors agreed unanimously to pursue a Capital Grant application, if the work is agreed.

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee as above.

23.251

To discuss Annual Newsletter progress

See above.

23.252

Churchyard Maintenance update

The Clerk advised that the Coroners and Burials Division of the Ministry of Justice do not hold a copy of the closure Order, and they suggested approaching Ipswich Magistrates Court. The Magistrates Court cannot find any record of the Order, and asked for the date it was requested, and by whom. Both Finningham PCC and the Diocese are unable to provide this information, so the Clerk approached SALC for advice, and was directed to the Privy Council record keepers. Closure Orders are made by the Privy Council, but the record keepers confirmed this afternoon that they are unable to locate it. Further advice will be sought from SALC.

ACTION – Clerk to speak to SALC as above.

23.253

8:50pm a member of the public left the meeting.

23.254 **To discuss quotations for remaining works to trees on the green**

Still awaiting quotations for the work to the horse chestnut tree.

To discuss quotations for cutting the grass on the Green

The Clerk has received 3 quotations for the work which were shared with councillors. After discussing, it was agreed to proceed with the quotation received from Top Garden Services, for cutting of the green every 14 days from April until the end of October, strimming around the play equipment, along all fences and under the trees, blowing any grass clippings off the path and play equipment. Proposed by Cllr Winter, seconded by Cllr Charter, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to advise Top Garden as above, and check whether they are happy to work
23.255 **around any events planned on the green. Clerk to advise and thank unsuccessful applicants.**

Cemetery winter maintenance

Cllr Kilbee is in the process of speaking to residents who currently volunteer for the mowing rota, to see if they would be happy to include work to the cemetery on it, and arrange a date. Cllr Charter and Cllr Davies both volunteered their help, and indicated that a Saturday morning would
23.256 suit them best.

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee as above.

Eastlands bridge and village flooding

Cllr Mellen forwarded an update received from SCC Drainage and Structures Teams, which was shared with councillors.

Drainage Team's response: The current ford is a Dutch ford which will flood during periods of very high flow making road access difficult at times.

Structures Team's response: the footbridge in this location was in very poor condition and removed in consultation with the landowner in the interest of public safety.

Ownership/maintenance responsibility for the bridge was uncertain.

There is no public right of way running parallel to Eastland Lane, and no space to construct a new separate footbridge. Whilst replacing the current ford structure with a bridge would address the issues, there is no funding available, as already advised.

Cllr Mellen has asked for clarification on the question of the Dutch ford holding back the flow of the river, so flood water backs up in to the village, which was not addressed by the Drainage Team.

After discussing, it was agreed to wait for the additional clarification, and send a written update to
23.257 the member of the public who previously attended a meeting regarding this issue.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

Annual Parish Council Meeting and Annual Parish (Village) Meeting arrangements

The Annual meetings will be held on Tuesday 14th May 2024 in St. Bartholomews Church. The Annual Parish (Village) meeting will start at 7pm, followed by the Annual Parish council meeting at
23.258 7:30pm. The Clerk will invite guest speakers to attend the Annual Parish (Village) meeting, and request reports from village organisations.
ACTION – Clerk as above

23.259

Correspondence received
All covered elsewhere.

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 February	£304.20
Clerk February expenses	£20.61
HMRC February 2024 PAYE/NIC	£76.05
Top Garden Services – fell two dead beech trees on the green	£1,320.00
Community Action Suffolk – gov.uk domain name and mailboxes	£306.00
MKM Agriculture Ltd – ride on mower annual service	£488.40

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

23.260

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

Planning

a) To consider applications

- 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.
- 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.

Councillors agreed unanimously they have no objection to either application.
ACTION – Clerk to add comments to 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.**
- DC/23/01300 - APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - Proposal: Householder Application - Erection of single-storey rear extension. Location: Yew Tree House, Church Lane, Finningham, IP14 4JB – **GRANTED.**

23.261

- DC/23/01301 - APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - Proposal: Application for Listed Building Consent - Erection of single storey rear extension and associated internal and external alterations as per Schedule of Works. Location: Yew Tree House, Church Lane, Finningham, IP14 4JB – **GRANTED.**

Policies/Documents review

- **Financial Regulations**
- **Standing Orders**
- **Internal Control Statement**
- **Risk Assessment & Management**

23.262 The above policies 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.

23.263 To discuss date of the next meeting
The next meeting will be held on 12th March 2024 at 7.30pm, in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham.

Questions to Chairman
Cllr Winter reported that she has been approached by a resident whose son would like to carry out a litter pick as part of his Duke of Edinburgh award volunteer work. Cllr Kilbee asked Cllr
23.264 Winter to direct the resident to the Clerk, for confirmation that the council supports this volunteering, but that as it is not being conducted on behalf of the council so the resident will need to ensure all relevant risk assessments are undertaken.

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 9:21pm.