FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes for the ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on
Tuesday 13th June 2023
in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7:30pm

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

23.49 Visiting speakers
Cllr Mellen's District and County Councillor reports can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.
Mr Aiken sent his apologies for being unable to attend the meeting, his Footpath Warden's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

23.50 Contribution by Members of the Public
A member of the public reported that the finger post for footpath 11 needs replacing. The Clerk confirmed that this was included within the Footpath Warden's report, and Suffolk Highways have been made aware, ref report: 00407768.

23.51 Apologies and approval of absence
No apologies received.

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

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

23.54 To approve minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 9th May 2023
Cllr Trew proposed approving the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 9th May 2023 as a true and correct record; seconded by Cllr Winter and approved unanimously. The Chairman then signed the minute book.

23.55 To approve minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 9th May 2023
Cllr Trew proposed approving the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 9th May 2023 as a true and correct record; seconded by Cllr Winter and approved unanimously. The Chairman then signed the minute book.

23.56 Matters arising from the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 9th May 2023
All covered elsewhere on the agenda.

23.57 Chairman's Report
First, a word of thanks to two Councillors (Paul Trew and Jon Charter), together with a member of the Public (Erlin Quantrill) for the work they did on the Green a couple of Saturdays ago to spread the recent delivery of Play Bark over the areas beneath the slide and the activity centre. We should be able to say that we have now met the requirements of the latest Safety Inspection in this regard. However, the problem does not end there, as the weeds are growing vociferously and we need to dress the areas with weed killer. The purchase of a spray and a supply of weedkiller is included in this evening's agenda.
Paul and I have been conducting tests on the batteries and charger for the VAS. It seems as though the charger is not functioning property so, a new one will have to be purchased. This approval can wait until the next meeting as a standard car charger will suffice in the interim.
Following his attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting, Reuben Dimech kindly offered his services to help in getting our Annual Newsletter (Information Publication) off the ground. We shall be setting up a working group to pursue this project.
Other subjects of note are included in our Agenda for this evening.

7:38pm a member of the public arrived

23.58 Clerk's Report

- NG East Anglia GREEN update: National Grid have advised that they are changing the project name from East Anglia GREEN to '*Norwich to Tilbury'*. Their reason being that all National Grid projects that are part of The Great Grid Upgrade will include specific locations in their names to make it easier for people to understand where they are proposing to build new grid infrastructure. The second stage of Public Consultation is due to be held Summer 2023: http://www.nationalgrid.com/norwich-to-tilbury
- The SALC Mid Suffolk Area Forum is due to be held online on Thursday 15th June 2023 at 7pm. Cllr Mellen will be the Guest Speaker.

ACTION – Cllrs to advise Clerk if they would like to attend the SALC Mid Suffolk Area Forum.

23.59 Parish Councillor Co-option

Deferred.

23.60 Finningham GREEN Footpath CIL bid application update

The Clerk has requested an update from MDSC. Christine Thurlow, MSDC Professional Lead – Key Sites and Infrastructure, has advised that there is a meeting due with Suffolk County Council to discuss delivery of infrastructure. Following this, she will discuss the case with Roy Emerson and Katherine Davies, and report further.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue CIL bid application update from Christine Thurlow as above

23.61 To discuss Annual Newsletter to everyone in the village

The member of the public who indicated at the previous meeting that they would be happy to volunteer to help with the design of the newsletter was present, and had forwarded a framework for planning and progressing the newsletter prior to the meeting, which the Clerk shared with councillors. Emily Durrant, was also present in her capacity as Chair of Friends of Finningham (FOF). After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed unanimously to pursue a Welcome Pack to be given to new residents, and updated annually, funded by the Parish Council. It was also agreed for FOF and the Parish Council to produce a newsletter jointly, clarifying the separation between the two to avoid confusion. The cost for this will be shared equally between FOF and the PC. Cllr Kilbee will obtain an updated printing cost for the next meeting, and the member of the public who has volunteered to help with the design will progress this for the next meeting.

ACTION – Cllr Kilbee to obtain updated printing costs

8:12pm Cllr Mellen arrived

Cllr Kilbee proposed returning to agenda item1; agreed unanimously.

(23.49 Visiting Speakers)

Cllr Mellen advised that Mid Suffolk Green Party are now officially the administration of Mid Suffolk District Council, and that he has been elected Leader.

Cllr Mellen highlighted his Locality Funding available for 2023/24. Applications from any Parish or Community Groups should be made to Cllr Mellen directly; Andrew.mellen@midsuffolk.gov.uk, 07790 992619. In addition to his report, Cllr Mellen advised that part of the difficulty with the progression of the Finningham Green Footpath CIL bid, is that it is one of the first joint applications between Suffolk Highways and a Parish Council.

Following his invitation for questions, a member of the public asked if a request could be made for an ANPR speed camera to address speeding outside of the pub, and the Chair of FOF reported that there is a section of pavement in the village that is impassable due to an overgrown conifer. The Clerk will complete an application form for a temporary ANPR speed camera in the village, and raise a Highways report against the conifer hedging which is blocking the pavement.

There being no further questions, Cllr Kilbee congratulated Cllr Mellen on his election as Leader of the District Council, and thanked him for his reports.

23.62 Playground Improvements including:

- **To discuss and approve new surfacing underneath basketball hoop**

Cllr Kilbee explained that he has received reports from residents that the basketball hoop cannot be used effectively because there is no appropriate surfacing underneath. He has obtained a quotation from a soft play company and will seek additional quotations for the next meeting. Councillors agreed that improvements to the surfacing should be made.

- **To discuss and approve purchase of weedkiller and spray**

Due to the number of weeds coming through on the play area, Cllr Kilbee proposed expenditure of up to £60.00, in order to purchase a child/pet safe weedkiller and sprayer. Seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously.
ACTION – Cllr Kilbee to obtain addition quotations for surfacing, and arrange purchase of weedkiller and sprayer, as above

The Chair of FOF was also present for this item, regarding updates and improvements to the play area. She would like to conduct a village survey to ascertain support and ideas for this, from all demographics. Cllr Winter said that whilst Finningham Green is not registered as a village Green, any updates/improvements to the play area need to be sympathetic to this status. Following a discussion, during which points were also raised regarding vandalism and anti-social behaviour, the Chair of FOF agreed to conduct a survey and report the results back to the PC once received.

23.63 Churchyard maintenance update
Following approval to take on maintenance of Finningham Churchyard, as agreed at the meeting held on 11th April 2023, a meeting to discuss the current level of repair is still to be arranged. The Church Warden has advised that he is happy to meet with the PC on behalf of the PCC, but that decisions can only be made by the Diocese. It was therefore agreed to request a meeting directly with Diocese.
ACTION- Clerk to pursue meeting as above

8:54pm Cllr Mellen left the meeting

23.64 To discuss and approve quotations for new Parish Council website
The current platform on the Finningham Village website is a little outdated, and difficult to use, so the Clerk has obtained quotations for a new Parish Council website.

8:56pm a member of the public left the meeting

After discussing, Cllr Trew proposed proceeding with a new website, hosted by Community Action Suffolk which includes the initial framework of the site, and ongoing support. Seconded by Cllr Winter, and approved unanimously.
ACTION – Clerk to instruct CAS to proceed with new website

8:58pm the Chair of FOF left the meeting

23.65 To discuss Parish Council planning responses
Cllr Trew said that he feels it is very important to ensure that the council's planning responses to development follow a consistent approach, whilst taking into account that every application will be assessed on an individual basis. After discussing, it was agreed that an approved set of material considerations will be applied to each application. The Clerk will put a list of material considerations together for councillors to consider and use against applications received.
ACTION – Clerk as above

23.66 To discuss cemetery grass cutting procedure, including approval of purchase of jerry can and fuel
Following the recent damage to a cremation marker, there was a discussion on whether the grass cutting should only be carried out up to a certain distance from the markers, however it was agreed that this is not practical because some markers are not tended. Cllr Kilbee advised he has spoken to all volunteers and stressed the importance of taking extra care when cutting close to the markers, so hopefully this was a one-off incident.
Cllr Kilbee said that to avoid a delay in reimbursement to volunteers for expenses to purchase fuel for the mower, it would be a good idea to purchase a jerry can of fuel to be kept in the locked shed. Cllr Charter said it would be preferable to purchase 2 x 10 litre cans, rather than a heavier 20 litre can, and Cllr Trew advised that a warning sign would need to be put on the outside of the shed to comply with fire safety regulations. After discussing further, Cllr Kilbee proposed approval of expenditure up to £150 for the purchase of 2 x 10 litre jerry cans, fuel and signage. Seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously.
ACTION – Cllr Kilbee to arrange purchase as above

23.67 Volunteer risk assessments
These were forwarded to councillors by the Clerk prior to the meeting, and previously approved by the council on 27th September 2022.
ACTION – Councillors to advise Clerk if they propose any changes/amendments to the Volunteer risk assessments. Cllr Kilbee to ensure all grass cutting volunteers have signed to say they have read and understood the risk assessment.

23.68 Damage to cremation marker update

The insurance company (ANSVAR) has confirmed that the damage is covered under the council's insurance policy, and that they are happy to proceed with the quotation provided by Perfitts. Cllr Kilbee has provided photographs and measurements to Perfitts to ensure an exact replica of the original marker. Perfitts have provided an invoice for a 50% deposit, with the balance being due upon completion.

23.69 Correspondence received

A further email has been received from the member of the public who is part of a small group hoping to dedicate a memorial to 13 USAAF Bomber crew members, and 4 council workers and their horse, killed in November 1943 in Brome. They have advised that the horse has been nominated for a PDS Dickins medal which is an award to honour the work of animals in World War II.

An email has been received regarding the footpath on Westhorpe Road being impassable, which will be forwarded to the Footpath Warden.

ACTION – Clerk to forward email to Doug Aiken

23.70 To approve Internal Audit 2022/23 comments

Deferred.

23.71 To approve AGAR statements and Certificate of Exemption 2022/23

The AGAR statements and Certificate of Exemption were forwarded to councillors prior to the meeting. Approval proposed by Cllr Kilbee, seconded by Cllr Trew and approved unanimously. The Chairman and the Clerk/RFO signed the Certificate of Exemption and Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR.

ACTION – Clerk to send publish and send Certificate of Exemption to the External Auditor

23.72 To approve Accounting Statements 2022/23

The Accounting Statements were forwarded to councillors prior to the meeting. The Notification of Public rights will be set as 19th June to 28th July 2023. Cllr Trew proposed approval of the Accounting Statements and period of Notification of Public rights. Seconded Cllr Winter and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to publish all required Accounting documents

23.73 Finance

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

Balances as of 28/04/2023

Community Bank Account

Balance as of 28 April 2023: £24,347.31

(Balance as of 29 March 2023: £25,265.63)

Receipts (since 29 March 2023): £3,738.39

Payments (since 29 March 2023): £4,656.71

Deposit Account

Balance as of 28 April 2023: £3,337.46

General funds: £11,399.75

Reserves (1/2 of precept & election costs): £4,262.85

Restricted funds (CIL & grants not spent): £12,022.17

b. Requests for payment

Admin J. Challis - £321.14

HMRC J. Challis - £80.29

Clerk expenses (J. Challis mileage) - £20.61

J. Lawes Ltd (playbark) - £812.00

I. Armstrong expenses (mower fuel) - £10.24

HL Perfitt – replacement marker deposit - £429.00

TOTAL payments - £1,673.28

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

ACTION - Cllr Kilbee and Cllr Winter to pay the above approved payments, (dual authorisation).

c) To approve councillor to conduct quarterly account check

Cllr Trew indicated that he is happy to conduct the quarterly account checks. Agreed unanimously with 1 abstention (Cllr Trew).

23.74 Planning

- **To consider applications**
- DC/23/01970 – Application for Planning Permission – Householder application – erection of single storey rear extension. Location: Kilmorie Cottage, Church Lane, Finningham, IP14 4JB.

Councillors agreed unanimously that they have no comment against this application.

- **Decisions & to consider planning matters coming forth.**
- DC/23/01226 Proposal: Full Planning Application – Erection of 1no. detached dwelling and garage with new vehicular access (following demolition of existing single storey dwelling) Ivy Place, Wickham Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4HT – **AWAITING DECISION**
- DC/23/01687 – Application for Outline Planning Permission (Access points to be considered, Appearance, Layout, Landscaping and Scale to be reserved) Twon and County Planning Act 1990 (as emended) – Erection of 3No dwellings and garage (following demolition of existing buildings). Location: Maple Lodge, Gislingham Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4HZ - **REFUSED**
- DC/23/01806 – APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA – Proposal: Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area – Fell 2No. Scots Pines (T1 & T2) Carpenters, Wickham Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4HT - **GRANTED**

23.75 To discuss date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 11th July 2023 at 7.30pm, in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham.

23.76 Questions to Chairman

None.

23.77 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the June agenda.

Nothing extra received.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.42pm.