

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 7th January 2014 in Finmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Mike Kerford-Byrnes (MKB) (Chairman), Katherine Grimston (KG) (Vice Chairman), Barbara Cunningham (BC), Kevin Ochel (KO), Mike Kirby (MK) and Amanda Hodgkins (AH)

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO)

1. Apologies:-No apologies were received

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 3rd of December 2013 were approved with corrections.

3. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

This was carried forward as the County Councillor was unable to attend. CF has informed MKB of a meeting with all HS2 affected villages meeting with OCC councillors; this is to be on Wednesday 8th January in Newton Purcell.

4. MATTERS ARISING

- 4.01 **Village Notice Boards** KO is away for some weeks now and will be unable to help with siting the boards. MKB is to liaise with Phillip Rushforth, Village Hall Committee, and get the boards moved before work on the hall starts. c/f
- 4.02 **Drain Cover Land** c/f
- 4.03 **Greensleeves Development Waste** MKB will talk again to Bob Duxbury, CDC, as to whether any planning conditions apply. c/f
- 4.04 **Moss on pavements** SC has had an email from Phillip Rushforth, villager, pointing out that the work scheduled by Cliff Monger, OCC Highways, has not been carried out under the 28 day list and the paint is fading. SC is to chase this up with Cliff Monger.
- 4.05 **Car valuables signs** c/f
- 4.06 **VAS Signs** The replies have not yet all come back from the councils that MKB emailed. None so far are keen to trade another base. Our current base could possibly be moved. c/f
- 4.07 **Banbury Road Signage** MKB has emailed Julie Shay, OCC, today. She did say that the signage would take 4 – 6 weeks from the last PC meeting to arrive and the weather may have delayed things. c/f

- 4.08 **List of assets (the pond)** SC has now spoken with Graham Warrington, OCC. He is not sure about the ponds ownership but has passed the matter on to the Environment and Economy Directorate who are now responsible for common land and similar issues. c/f

The alder tree actually fell down over the Christmas period, before the contractor had chance to cut it down. Fortunately no damage was done and the wood has now been cleared away.

- 4.09 **Salt bins** KG has confirmed that one bag of salt has arrived. SC is to check as she ordered two bags. c/f
- 4.10 **Stiles** SC has heard nothing more. She is to check with Sarah Aldous, OCC Footpaths, before the next meeting. c/f
- 4.11 **Public Space in Chinalls Close** SC has spoken with the CDC legal department. They are not able to help in this matter without charging. They cannot understand why Somerlee are unwilling to simply sign over the land as no planning could ever be applied for on such a small area and any injury sustained will be their responsibility as they are clearly shown as the owners on the Land Registry. CDC advise that the PC write to Somerlee and put this case as clearly as possible. SC has not written yet as she wanted to make sure which address to write to, the companies house address or the post-rest-ante used by the company. It is felt best to write to both. c/f
- 4.12 **Play Areas Inspection Report** SC has still not heard anything further on this issue, BC explains that the Grimwades are back but that Mr Grimwade, Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee, has been in poor health and may not have had chance to deal with the matter. SC is to check with them. c/f
- 4.13 **Christmas Lights** The lights have looked wonderful this year, MKB thanks MK for his input. It is decided to leave the lights in situ to avoid damage. The ends will be taped and tied into the tree at a height which makes them inaccessible. MKB is to use his equipment to get the job done. c/f
- 4.14 **Church Clock Repairs** Mr Meecham has still not sent an invoice. BC is fairly certain that all is well with the warranty, following discussion at the last PCC meeting, but advises that SC should check with Phillip Rushforth, PCC, who is dealing most closely with the matter.
- 4.15 **Defibrillator** SC has contacted St John's Ambulance, who explained that they only carry out the training for use of defibrillators. They did refer SC to the British Heart Foundation. There is a grant in place which would mean that the PC had a fitted working defibrillator for a cost of £400. First the PC would have to fill in an application and have it endorsed by the local Ambulance Service. MKB explains that Fritwell have a defibrillator, he is to check where it is kept. SC is to check with the local ambulance service, South Central Ambulance Service, and see about obtaining their endorsement. Proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously. KG also checked on funding availability and will continue to pursue enquiries to give extra strings to the PC's bow.
- 4.16 **Freedom of Information** SC has produced the basic sheet for placing on the notice boards. The full sheet of information is now produced; in a reduced form as not all the information on the list is available yet. The cost per sheet of photocopying needs

to be decided upon. MKB points out that the PC do not possess a photocopier and so the cost of copying, plus a cost for travel for the clerk or a councillor would mean that the cost should be the cost of photocopying in Buckingham, plus £4.50. The price of postage must be the cost of an actual second class stamp.

SC has contacted Paul Nash, website manager, and he has removed Dr Adrian and Anna Wood's profiles. AH is to submit a profile and picture to him for the web shortly. SC has prepared a new introduction about meetings for the site which complies with all the information regulations. A link will need to be added to an Assets Register, copied from that on Money Manager. There will also need to be a link to a list of services; these include lighting, seating, bins etc. SC is to finalise these documents and get them posted. c/f

- 4.17 **HS2 Petitioning Information** No further details of heights/depths have arrived yet. MKB has had problems contacting anyone at HS2 who is not on leave until after the consultation deadline expires. It has now been confirmed that the information is not ready yet. It is possible that the information will arrive with very little time left to act in which case this matter will be dealt with under urgent business. The deadline for submissions is 24th of this month. c/f
- 4.18 **Parish Clerk Hours** SC has been unable to get information from OALC in time due to the Christmas break. This will be an agenda item in February. c/f

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was reported that there was £2,955.45 in the Treasurer Account and £5,292.01 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid out:

£280.00 to Howard computing for computer repair and maintenance
£240.00 to AC Miskimmon for installation of the bench
£35.00 to ICO Registration for FOI registration
£164.22 to Sharron Chalcraft for Clerk/RFO duties and internet costs

An invoice in the sum of £14.00 has been received from Beryl Smith, villager, for flowers which she has placed around the war memorial. SC is to pay this, proposed KO, seconded KG, carried unanimously.

6. S19/S137

SC is to pay the invoice for the Church clock upon receipt as previously agreed.

7. URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business has been carried out.

8. FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE

BC reports on the quarry liaison meeting held on December 17th at the OPES offices with Ben Wragg and Helen Bever, OPES, Bill Stewart-Jones and Chris Flavin, OCC, Louise Greenwood, EA, and MKB and BC, PC, present. The skip and scrap containers are now gone from the top of the mound. OPES have secured some funding but only for the MRF. Construction should start in the first week of February. The MRF cannot operate until all capping is completed. BC reiterates that with an over-tip of 305,000 tons and another 100,000 being added to stabilise the mound shape over £4 million has been made, where has this money gone? OPES say that money has actually been invested by the new owners; some £600,000, and that all this money has gone in running costs. The capping will cost £1.6 million and there is only £1 million in the bond. Any investor will want to make money from the site, not spend more on capping.

Contractors may start on Cell 7 in January, they may start to cap after that. There are currently 7 employees on site managing it. These fixed costs are using money. The northern extension has now been stripped and straw bales have been put on it. There will probably be quarrying and clay extraction during 2014. Power generation is all operating correctly. There is still thought of a further extension to the north. Cell 7 will be finished first, then Cell 10. There are some minor amendments to the MRF to be proposed. There will be some backfilling but OPES intend to have a second operator on site to carry this out. Monitoring for ground water quality has continued over the past 12 months. More bore holes are needed. Leachate is still a big problem, some cells are not connected to the system and there has been no collection from them yet. Tankers are costing some £150,000 p.a. at the moment. The site is currently non compliant with level limits.

There have been two ground water breaches since the last meeting, also two complaints by neighbours of noise and odour. One of these was proved not to emanate from the site. There has been a contribution of £60,000 from landfill tax through Grantscape for the village hall.

The EA confirm that rules do permit for a treatment and transfer station not an MRF, this gives more options. This would go to the waste team to be regulated. Compliance has had some scores for leachate problems and also some for site condition. The site is currently Band D.

OCC has finally provided a full planning and deadlines list. This shows that capping was to be completed by December 2012; it would have been useful to have all this information from the start.

KO points out that the longer the site operates, the more it becomes a liability not an asset and the less likely it is to obtain funding. Meanwhile bills and leachate levels continue building up. KO explains non compliance with leachate levels. Normally the level of leachate within a cell must remain below the level of the water table. Then if there is a breach in the liner water rushes in and all is contained. If the leachate level is above the water level and there is a breach then the leachate will rush out and contaminate the local water. The compliance level is normally set well below the water table for safety, typically two metres. The hydrogen sulphide problem has been traced to the plasterboard dumped at the site and has now stopped. KO is very concerned with the effect of recent weather conditions on an already non compliant site. KG suggests that the EA should be asked to visit and check now. MKB is to contact them.

9. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS

MKB has heard nothing from David Endicott, possibly due to the holiday period. c/f

10. PLAYING FIELD CONDITION

The field has been walked and checked this month by MK who reports lots of foxes around at the moment. Hopefully they may check the rabbit population. No more has been heard about the cull.

11. PLAYING FIELD TREE SURGERY

BC reports that the Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee are to manage this matter. The clearance needed, given that people need to walk below the trees also, is probably 8 feet. SC is to check with Phillip Rushforth as to when this is to be carried out.

12. PARISH PRECEPT REVIEW

SC provides an estimates table for 2014-15 with explanatory notes. The precept base for the village has again not been adversely affected by local government implementation of national changes and has actually increased to 217.

Income apart from the precept is unlikely to change next year. This year running costs have increased considerably as the village hall expenditure is now a running cost; as the PC owns the hall. This means that there is less money available for S137 this year and the same situation will apply next year.

The outgoings for next year may well be affected by a review of the Clerks hours. There is also the possibility of a local election if there is a surfeit of candidates for the PC in May, this would cost the PC some £850. The internal audit has now to be carried out by a qualified accountant, which will cost more. Also the dog bin costs, which were incorrectly applied this year, are likely to be some £100 higher.

However there is a reserve of almost one year's precept in the Money Manager account, as recommended for fiscal prudence. Also only £260 of the S137 total is actually committed for next year and few requests are received now that the village hall is not involved. MKB confirms that the possible capping of parish councils precept is not now to take place. It is therefore felt that the precept should be kept at the same level of £6,050 for 2014-15. Proposed MKB, seconded BC, carried unanimously.

13. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

13/01565/F – Land adj 9 Town Close and 1 White House, Mere Rd – new dwelling house – permission subject to conditions

Planning permission for OPES Industries Ltd, Finmere Quarry – for continuation of development without complying with conditions 1, 3, 7, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 33, 34, 36

of planning permission 11/00026/CM (to vary the order of landfilling and to extend the timescales for capping cells 4, 5 and 8) – permission granted

13/01788/F – Crow’s Nest, 1 Chinalls Close – garage conversion, construction of new detached garage and boundary wall – the PC had no objections

13/01792/F – Lark Rise, Mere Road – demolition of existing bungalow and detached garage, construction of 2 new 3 bed dwellings with integral garage, off street parking and gardens – The PC made the following comments. There is concern about the line of sight for the access; no fences should be erected at that point. There is anxiety about the capacity of the village sewerage system. Sewage has overflowed regularly for several years now and this development will exacerbate that.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

The precept review form – dealt with under 12 above

OALC invite for Chairman – MKB is to go to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party, one of two Oxfordshire PC Chairmen to receive an invite

Emails printed:

An email was received from Phillip Rushforth – minutes on website need bringing up to date (SC to see to this now that all minutes are on the laptop), Chinalls Close footpath points (dealt with under 4.04 above), Somerlee Homes question (dealt with under 4.11 above), rumours about the playing field (MKB to speak with Phillip Rushforth)

Emails forwarded:

Woodfuel programme bulletin

Tingewick PC email about Airfield – the field is to be named as a strategic employment site. This may prove problematic and SC is to ask Tingewick PC to keep us in the loop.

DCLG Local Government Finance Statement

Food waste recycling plant tour offer – no-one is able to attend

Emergency road closures notice from OCC – also sent to the website

Usual reports

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Christmas light tree KG points out that the branches of the tree are now almost touching the cables going to the Thatched House. These are telephone cables. The tree will need to be lopped. MKB is to organise the equipment necessary.

Water Stratford Road condition The potholes are opening up again. This is made even more obvious by the fact that the road beyond the bridge on the Buckinghamshire side has been fully repaired. Other local sections of Oxfordshire roads have been repaired very well,

such as at Shelswell Park. These were classed as 'failed' roads, which may be why the repairs were so thorough. SC is to raise the issue with Cliff Monger.

Spinney MK points out that the fencing running through the spinney has been removed.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 4th February 2014.

The meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

None