

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 6th of May 2014 in Finmere Village Hall

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

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO) and one member of the public

1. Apologies:-Apologies were received from KG for possible late arrival

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 1st of April 2014 were approved with corrections. The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of April 11th were reviewed but need to be on the agenda for the June meeting to be officially ratified.

3. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

This was postponed as the County Councillor was unable to attend.

At this point MKB informed the PC that BC had decided not to stand as a councillor for the next four year term but instead to concentrate on her work with the PCC. MKB offered grateful thanks to BC for her hard work over her seven years as a councillor and congratulated her on her contribution. All present heartily endorsed these sentiments, the Church will benefit greatly from BC's efforts.

4. MATTERS ARISING

- 4.01 **APM** SC is to send out notification of the APM as soon as possible, and the agendas as soon as we know if Opes are to attend.
- 4.02 **Obtaining a defibrillator** SC has not heard from Dick Tracy (SWAS) and is to chase things up as well as chasing up the school regarding permission for siting the box.
- 4.03 **Village Notice Boards** MKB has moved these to Hill Leys for minor repairs before placing. c/f
- 4.04 **Moss on pavements** SC is to chase up Cliff Monger as these repairs have not yet been carried out. c/f
- 4.05 **VAS Signs** c/f

- 4.06 **List of assets (the pond)** SC has received the paperwork from OCC. The plan shows the pond as half in the ownership of Hill Leys and half, the roadside half, in ownership of the PC. MKB takes the plans and is to discuss them with Mr Tompkins who had been understood to be the owner of one third of the pond. SC is to list part of the pond as an asset at the value of £1. c/f
- 4.07 **Salt bins** OCC have agreed to withdraw the invoice.
- 4.08 **Stiles** Nothing heard. c/f
- 4.09 **Public Space in Chinalls Close** SC has received a letter from Malcolm Saunders confirming the willingness of CDC Legal Dept to carry out the work and detailing their charges. It is decided to proceed with this matter, proposed - MKB, seconded – MK, carried unanimously. The agreement section of this letter is signed by MKB and SC and is to be returned. c/f
- 4.10 **Christmas Lights** These have now been taped up.
- 4.11 **Playing Field Tree Surgery** SC has forwarded the list of works and Phillip Rushforth (PR), Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee, has confirmed that the millennium tree referred to is in the corner of the Village Hall car park, near the end of the hall, with its own three sided fence and a plaque.
- 4.12 **Christmas light tree** This is still to be pruned. c/f
- 4.13 **Printer** SC has still not had chance to look at printers again. c/f
- 4.14 **Blocked gullies** SC has still received no reply. She is to try again and inform County Councillor Catherine Fulljames of the situation. c/f
- 4.15 **Finmere House wall** The fallen wall is still partly blocking the road but MKB confirms that the materials have been ordered and a contractor booked. The delivery time for the materials is some three weeks. There is concern among the PC that the blockage of the road should be allowed to continue for so long, although the fact that the insurers want to keep everyone at a safe distance from the damaged wall is understood this process would not have been allowed to obstruct the public in an urban area. c/f
- 4.16 **Traffic speed in Mere Road** SC has spoken to Peter Egawhary, OCC Traffic Technician. He is sympathetic and suggests contacting Croughton PC to see what process they went through to get the limit agreed. To start the process we need to write formally to Anthony Kirkwood, Team Manager of Road Safety at the Department for Environment and Economy. If he does proceed this will require a traffic regulation order. This is a statutory instrument and applying for it initiates a statutory process. It is likely that he will request further information before proceeding. There is a 'Community Scheme for Speed Monitoring' which allows the PC to hold a speed gun, which takes registration information, date, time, speed etc. The police do not prosecute on this evidence but will send a strongly worded letter. Nigel Clark of the Traffic Monitoring Unit, can also install tubes across the road which monitor traffic flow, speed etc. This will probably be required first. Once you proceed the costs are some £2.5k – £3.5k. Peter is not sure how much of this cost is borne by the PC. SC is to contact Croughton PC. Any traffic monitoring must be carried out in term time. c/f

- 4.17 **Cherwell Boundary Review** The information on the new parish electorates is in the correspondence folder. c/f
- 4.18 **Trespassers** This matter is to be in the next newsletter. c/f
- 4.19 **Bins in Mere Rd** Brendan Bodger, CDC Cleansing Services Manager, has confirmed that the PC installs and maintains all dog bins and litter bins. CDC is responsible for emptying the litter bins on the highway. Broxap and Glasdon are both companies which supply litter bins. The prices range from £125 for a plastic bin to £179 for a steel bin; both are quite nice models, black with brass banding, and freestanding. SC has emailed to enquire whether there are any permissions required for the PC to site the bin. SC is to list litter bins on the asset register at the current value of £1. c/f
- 4.20 **Water in Valley Rd** The flow of water has eased but the area is still damp.
- 4.21 **Dog Fouling Stickers** This invoice has been paid.
- 4.22 **External Audit** The forms have been displayed.
- 4.23 **Community Policing Awards** These posters have been displayed.
- 4.24 **Historically Significant Items List** SC has forwarded this to AH.
- 4.25 **Footpath at Chinalls Close** The metal stool was cleared away during the spring clean which was well attended by 11 villagers.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was reported that there was £5,489.63 in the Treasurer Account and £5,292.93 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid in:

£3,025.00 from CDC (first half of precept)

The following had been paid out:

£1.81 to OCC for documents

£185.00 to John Donaldson for grass cutting

£8.51 to e.on for electricity

£19.81 to Francis Carne Associates for dog fouling stickers

£204.82 to Sharron Chalcraft for Clerk and RFO duties and internet costs

A membership reminder has been received from ORCC. For a parish the size of Finmere the cost is £50. It is decided to continue membership as the organisation has been very helpful with problems in the past. Proposed MKB, seconded BC, carried unanimously.

SC claims a refund of £26.00 spent on ink, a combination pack of b/w and colour. There is a considerable amount of printing involved with the internal audit. Proposed MKB, seconded KG, carried unanimously.

6. S19/S137

No requests have been received.

7. URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business has been carried out.

8. FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE

A quarry liaison meeting took place in the Opes offices on April 9th. BC presents a report on the meeting. Present were Ben Wragg and Helen Beever of Opes, Councillor Catherine Fulljames and David Flavin of OCC, Louise Greenwood of the Environment Agency and MKB and BC for the PC.

Opes are still seeking investment with one potential investor in the pipeline. They are now accepting waste. Cell's 3 and 6 are being re-contoured. On April 16th they will begin work on Cell 7. The bridleway diversion is to become permanent. The newts have been relocated. Opes are now to be extracting themselves on Shelswell Park land. Smiths will not be carrying out the work as planned. Clay extraction is to be next month. The MRF will be commercial industrial and use traditional methods, gasification may come later. The extension to the north is on hold. There is to be a change to the door location in the MRF and the building is to be extended and the weighbridge altered. The MRF is already under construction and will be 100m by 35m and the same height. There have been no more groundwater breaches; the action on the previous breach is still to be advised. An updated and more robust management plan has been submitted. Leachate is still being shipped out.

Short rotation coppicing is being investigated for leachate management; the nearest place using this system is North Hykeham in Lincolnshire. Clay from Cell 7 will form the capping and liners on Cells 4, 5 and 8. It will take eight weeks for capping to start, no later than June 11th. The PC need to watch that this process is adhered to. A payment plan has been agreed and it is hoped that a new investor will sign off. OCC are to keep a close watch also. April to October is the time set for capping. Material to be used will be stockpiled, this is already happening. The top of the cells will then be pushed down and covered, once the broken down tractor on top of the mound is gone.

The last groundwater breach was in February. There have been seven odour complaints but the EA seem to think that is quite low. The landfill tax to date is £70,000 to the Village Hall. Some 1,600 tonnes of waste is now coming in per month. The EA has had four monitoring dates, almost weekly to mid March and now monthly. The site will be Band D-E by the end of the year. The enforcement panel is to report on the leachate outbreak in a few days. (This report has since arrived and a formal warning letter is to be held on file). Leachate is still seeping but is contained. Cell 7 had been commissioned out of sequence in order to stop this leak, but is now leaking. One and a half tankers per day are being shipped out, 4,500 cubic metres per quarter are to be removed, capping in December 2012 would have prevented all this.

OCC reports confusion over capping. They think that Cells 3, 4, 5 and 6 should be being capped, Opes are capping 4, 5 and 8. This is because the haul road constructed to reach Cell

7 crosses Cells 3 and 6. Opes want to open the MRF early, the PC is opposed to this. BC urges the PC to maintain vigilance. The local MP Sir Tony Baldry has been approached and has offered to help. BC and MKB suggest enrolling his help and are to pursue this. KG urges BC to keep going to the quarry liaison meetings. MKB says it may be possible for her to still go in a private capacity as a 'village representative.' He is to check the quarry liaison definition for meeting attendees. In the case of her still attending it would also be possible for BC to give a report to the PC on the meetings as she does now.

The site will be split by HS2, with a 2017 start date for construction. Excavation and filling to level the ground should be finished by 2020 though this date may be extended. The CDC petition on HS2 mentions the site.

9. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS

This is still being chased up by MKB. c/f

10. PLAYING FIELD CONDITION

An email has been received from John Cunningham, villager, regarding the condition of the play area at the playing field. He points out that the play area needs attention with regard to health and safety, in particular in the area around the climbing frames where the bark cover has eroded and the surrounding planks are now standing proud. SC is to contact Phillip Rushforth, Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee, about the bark condition and the possibility of installing rubber matting. SC is also to contact the Grimwades to see if the inspection can be moved up at all and if advice and guidance can be obtained from Mr Hicks the inspector. It would probably be a good idea to replace the bark anyway in the short term.

11. ADOPTION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Following the review of procedures carried out under urgent business and reported in last month's minutes and also after consultation with the internal auditor it has become clear that Finmere PC needs to adopt a formal set of financial regulations. A draft set of regulations has been circulated by SC for councillors to study. It is felt that the regulations are extremely onerous for such a small PC with only very little monthly monetary expenditure and a small precept. There is a provision under clause 18.2 that the PC can suspend any part of the regulations by resolution provided reasons are recorded and an assessment of the risks drawn up and presented in advance. It is decided to adopt the financial regulations. Proposed - MKB, seconded - BC, carried unanimously. It is further decided following discussion to suspend certain sections of the regulations as they would be unduly onerous to carry out. These sections are to be detailed and notified to all councillors by SC along with a risk assessment as detailed in clause 18.2. The suspension of these sections of the regulations will be voted on at the June 3rd meeting, to be an agenda item. Proposed - BC, seconded - KG, carried unanimously. The financial regulations with suspensions marked can be posted on the web after the June meeting.

12. ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS

Following the review of procedures carried out under urgent business and reported in last month's minutes and also after consultation with the internal auditor it has become clear that Finmere PC needs to adopt a formal set of standing orders. SC has obtained a copy of the standing orders from a similar sized PC and these have been circulated for councillors to study. Unlike the draft financial regulations provided by NALC these standing orders are able to be adjusted to suit a particular PC, provided that the main body and intent of the document is kept. Various small adjustments are discussed and implemented if felt necessary. The revised standing orders are approved, proposed – MKB, seconded – BC, carried unanimously. SC is to prepare the final document for posting on the web and to circulate to all councillors.

13. CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT FOR CLERK/RFO

Following the review of procedures carried out under urgent business and reported in last month's minutes and also after consultation with the internal auditor it has become clear that Finmere PC needs to provide the clerk/RFO with a contract of employment or a similar document. SC has circulated a copy of the standard NALC provided contract. This seems overly complicated and restrictive and is more suitable for those holding a full time salaried position as Town Clerk than for SC. BC has spoken to Barry Wood, CDC, on this matter and he has put BC in touch with Paula Goodwin, HR at CDC. BC has also spoken with Jane Olds who is a clerk/RFO to three PC's including Fringford. She works for some 14 hours pcm for Fringford and 16 hours pcm for Stratton Audley and does not have such a large contract of employment. SC is happy to have a written statement of employment particulars and can extrapolate the contents of such a document from the sample contract. This is to be an agenda item for next month.

14. RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS AND BANK RECONCILIATION FOR 2013/14

The receipts and payment account for 2013-14 is presented along with a bank reconciliation sheet and the explanatory notes for the annual return prepared by SC. This account is agreed by the PC and signed by MKB as Chairman and SC as RFO. Proposed – MKB, seconded – KG, carried unanimously.

15. INSURANCE RENEWAL

SC has received a renewal quote from Zurich Municipal in the sum of £243.80. Came & Company were contacted for a quote and confirmed that they were unable to match this amount if the PC assets were to be covered. Aon were also contacted for a quote and including their new business rate they were able to offer cover for the sum of £192.54. The council decided to proceed with Aon. Proposed – MKB, seconded MK, carried unanimously.

16. HS2 PETITION

MKB is to prepare a petition for submission. The road being moved up and down will be an issue as will safe access to Warren Farm. Also the light pollution increase and the effect on the local barn owl population will be raised. The fact that many local roads will become traffic rat runs during the construction period will also be included. MKB has been involved with the CDC petition and has been interviewed for Sunday Politics on BBC South. It has emerged that the government is to borrow money to pay for HS2 and MKB may include worries about the possibility of a rise in interest rates in the petition also. He is to circulate the petition before submission.

17. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Non-material amendment to Condition A33 of planning permission 10/01516/CM – Finmere Quarry - to continue development without complying with condition A3 of planning permission APPIU 3100/A/06/2030592 (extension to Finmere Quarry to extract sand and gravel from land south-west of Finmere, including the relocation of plant and restoration of the quarry using imported inert waste to agriculture, woodland and grassland) for an extension to the life of the development of the consented extension to Finmere Quarry to provide for the erection of straw bale screening on the north western boundary of Phase 3 prior to the commencement of operations in Phase 3 – approved

18. CORRESPONDENCE

Oxford University Hospitals Biomedical Research Centre open day invite – poster displayed

ORCC membership reminder – see Section 5 Financial Report above

Great War centenary bookmark information – taken by KG to be shown to the school

HS2 realigned access requirements letter – this letter explains that various design changes have been identified which will mean the proposal of amendments to the Bill. One of these changes involves the necessity for realigned access arrangements through Warren Farm. Documents relating to this proposed Additional Provision will be deposited with the PC in due course

Emails printed:

Litter bin email from Brendan Bodger – see Section 4 Matters Arising above

HS2 improved compensation information – taken by MKB

Chinalls Close open space legal permissions – see Section 4 Matters Arising above

Information on the quarry – an email correspondence between David Flavin, OCC Environment and Economy, and BC

Sir Tony Baldry MP request for confirmation on quarry issues – to be dealt with by MKB/BC

Request for health and safety clarification on the play area by John Cunningham, villager – see Section 10 Playing Field Condition above

Protecting a Community Asset – new information on PC powers to preserve things for the community – taken by MKB

Emails forwarded:

Oxontime publicity

Proposed housing figures for Cherwell District

Invite to a rural sounding board

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

WWI centenary mug range info

Local elections timetable

Usual reports

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Verge at Stable Close It has again been brought to the attention of the PC that certain villagers are parking both tractors and cars on the grass verge in and around Stable Close. There is a safety issue with regards to visibility. SC is to speak to Cliff Monger, OCC Highways.

Playing Field Problems On a recent warm Sunday a large group of people were seen barbecuing on the playing field with a bonfire also lit. A chunk of the railings were cut out of the fence and a vehicle was observed driving around the field and over the cricket square and artificial pitch. On the following Monday Trevor Jones, in charge of pitch preparation for the Finmere Cricket Club, again saw a large crowd on the field and called the police. By the time they arrived everyone had left. Alan Jones, also in charge of pitch preparation, cleared up a considerable amount of rubbish from the barbecue and bonfire site. Also children with studded boots have been observed playing ball games on the cricket square and they have been asked to refrain.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 3rd of June 2014.

The meeting closed at 11.05 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

Clerks and Councils Direct May 2014

Information on new Parish electorates