

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 2nd April 2013 in Finmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Katharine Grimston (KG) (Vice Chairman) who chaired the meeting, Barbara Cunningham (BC), Dr Adrian Wood (AW), Anna Wood (ANNW), Mike Kirby (MK) and Kevin Ochel (KO)

In attendance:-Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk, RFO) (SC) and two members of the public

1. Apologies:-Apologies were received from Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes (MKB) (Chairman) and County Councillor Catherine Fulljames (CF)

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 12th of March were approved with corrections.

3. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.01 **APM May Minutes** c/f

4.02 **Village Notice Boards** The board in the car park of the Village Hall needs refurbishing and possibly moving as it is being damaged by the ball when people are playing football using the goalposts but no nets. This is to be carried out by the same working party that placed it. Proposed BC, seconded MK, carried unanimously.

4.03 **Drain Cover Land** c/f

4.04 **Greensleeves Development Waste** c/f

4.05 **Moss on pavements** SC has given all details to CF. SC is to ring about the moss problem as soon as the new financial year starts so that Finmere are at the top of the queue when funding becomes available. c/f

4.06 **Spring Clean (Dog fouling issues)** AW has been unable to find details of proof needed as unfortunately Natalie Holmes no longer works for the council. SC is to chase this matter up with the Dog Warden and also to find out about polythene bag dispensers which AW understands are available along with a dispenser, to be placed at the entrance to the playing field.

4.07 **Car valuables signs** c/f

4.08 **Fly Tipping** c/f

4.09 **VAS Signs** c/f

- 4.10 **Bench request** SC has downloaded the form but we are too late for the current years funding. SC is to submit the form straight away in order to be at the front of the queue for funding from next year's budget.
- 4.11 **Dog Bin invoice** Another invoice has now been received for the correct amount of bins. This has only increased by £31.70. SC is to pay this invoice, as previously decided. BC points out that the lid of the dog bin in the playing field is not closing properly. AW suggests that it be examined during the spring clean and any appropriate action taken. c/f
- 4.12 **Banbury Road Signage** SC has received replies from the householders of numbers 1 and 3 James Court who are happy to allow a sign to be placed on their wall as long as they are consulted as to the precise location. SC is to chase up a reply from the owner of number 2.
- 4.13 **List of assets** SC has added the notice boards to the list as requested. The two landowners concerned with the pond have replied to SC's request for information. Mr Bonamy-Price has sent a copy of a newsletter/leaflet giving information about Finmere in general. This has a section dealing with the pond which shows that in the 1920's a special rate was raised by the council to pay for the pond's cleaning. The PC tried to claim the land as common land in the 1930's but the claim was disputed. "The matter was not resolved until July 1993, when it was agreed that two thirds of the pond belonged to Hill Leys, a third to the Parish and the land alongside Fulwell Rd to the cottage known as The Mere." Mr Tompkins has sent a copy of a letter from the then Clerk Anita Bilbo dated July 5 1993, "The total area is therefore, now in tripartite ownership between the Allens (then of Hill Leys), yourselves and the Council. The enclosed map shows the division of ownership as we now understand it to be, the red area is yours, the green area the Allens and the blue area is Common Land in the care of the Council." Unfortunately this map is not available. The letter goes on to thank Mr Tompkins for his efforts in tending the common land and improving the condition of the pond. This work he has continued to do to this day. It is clear that if Mr Tompkins were unable to continue caring for this land then the PC would have to add it to the grass cutting list. This does not really answer the question of whether the pond itself, rather than the land beside it, is one third in the ownership of the PC however. MKB may hold more details as the owner of Hill Leys. SC is to talk to Anita Bilbo and check the minutes of the time. c/f
- 4.14 **Pothole on Fulwell Road** More potholes are still present though some orange markings have appeared. In Mere Rd there are no markings however. SC has also forwarded an email from CF giving details of a new system of reporting potholes which means that members of the public can photograph potholes and send details straight to the OCC Highways team. AW and ANNW agree to take photographs of the worst potholes in Mere Rd and submit them. SC has emailed Cliff Monger, OCC Highways, to ask if the potholes in Mere Rd had been deemed actionable by the safety survey but has had no reply. Attendees at the Finmere Conservative Branch AGM raised the matter of the state of the village roads. CF has attempted to get an inspection of Finmere roads for potholes but has been informed that the safety inspection has only recently been carried out. There are also large potholes at the entrance to The Pines on Valley Road with no markings evident. c/f

- 4.15 **Salt bins** AW has tried to contact Johnny Brooks to find out how much salt is remaining in store but has been unable to get in touch, this is a very busy time of year for farmers. He will continue to chase this up. c/f
- 4.16 **Developments at Chippings** SC has spoken with OCC Drainage and they have confirmed that permissions are required for any work of placing culverts or sluicing and that payment is due for these permissions. SC has written to the owner of Chippings at their request, informing him of the requirements and giving him their contact details. c/f
- 4.17 **Stiles** SC has heard nothing further. c/f
- 4.18 **Cold Calling Signs** c/f
- 4.19 **Flooding** KG has recently seen the landowner in question and will try to find out if they carried out the work.
- 4.20 **Community Services Parish Update** SC has sent out some invites to the Parish Meeting and will send the rest by the end of the week.
- 4.21 **Adult Learning Service** SC has heard back from Rosemary Fiander, villager, there were no takers for the service.
- 4.22 **Playing Field Report** SC has spoken to the bank and there is a £10 charge for cancelling the cheque, which would have to be done as the old cheque could possibly be presented and cashed in error. This cost will need to be passed on to Mr Hicks as he is responsible for losing the cheque. SC has asked for his contact details and is to discuss this with him. c/f
- 4.23 **Internal Auditor** Following the review of procedures at the March meeting it was proposed that MKB approach Mr John Dayer, villager, and he has confirmed that he is happy to perform the internal audit for this year.
- 4.24 **Membership Renewals** These have been paid.
- 4.25 **Spring Clean** The form has been returned.
- 4.26 **Newsletter** As MKB is currently away KG requests that SC prepare a poster about the Spring Clean which KG will post on the notice boards. Also SC can email the school and ask them to disseminate the information.
- 4.27 **Notice Board in Valley Road** SC gives KG her letter and KG confirms that the matter will be sorted out.
- 4.28 **Finch Hatton Works** AW has replied to the homeowners email and confirmed that the PC has no concerns.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was reported that there was £1,611.48 in the Treasurer Account and £5,289.18 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid out:

£73.24 to Sharron Chalcraft (admin and running costs)
£50.00 to ORCC for membership (general admin)
£35.00 to OPFA for membership (general admin)
£133.07 to OALC for membership (general admin)
£48.00 to SLCC for membership (general admin)
£300.00 to R Wakelin for gas heater servicing (S137)

SC explains that a new folder will be needed for preparation of the accounts and also ink and paper for the printer are running out. She will visit an office store and buy any necessary supplies, proposed KG, seconded KO, carried unanimously.

MKB raised with SC in a telephone conversation last week the matter of whether the PC's ownership of the Village Hall made a difference and allowed the PC to spend reserves on the hall rather than only S137 money. SC has checked with OALC about this and the PC is allowed to spend money on the hall as it sees fit. OALC will be sending more details as to how VAT operates in this situation.

Phillip Rushforth, Village Hall Committee, who is one of the members of the public present, gives details of how this matter arose. OPES is about to put a considerable amount of money into the Grantscape administered landfill tax account. However 5 – 6% of this can be kept back for local village funding. At the last quarry liaison meeting BC suggested that the village hall could benefit from this money. The Village Hall Committee met on the 12th and the PC meeting on the same evening voted to have them carry on in their role of looking after the hall until such time as a joint committee for the hall and field is constituted. SC is to put this in a letter for Paul Nash, one of three committee members running with this effort to obtain funding. Together with Stephen Trice and Peter Grimwade he is attempting to obtain funding through the quick turnaround funding mechanism for this 'village percentage' of the landfill tax. Hopefully replacement windows and doors, a new kitchen and also toilets, including disabled facilities, can be provided by the available grant, this project to be entitled Phase One. Altogether some £25,000 could be available. However this application will need to be in and approved and the requisite contribution of 11% from the Village Hall Committee will have to be paid by the end of April. The Committee have most of the 11% of funding in place but may need to turn to the PC to meet any shortfall. It is decided that this is too good an opportunity to miss and that the PC can use reserves and has sufficient funds to be able to help as necessary, proposed BC, seconded ANNW, 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

The parking of vehicles on top of the mound has stopped. A severe odour incident took place on Sunday 17th of March. There was an awful smell and when BC returned home she found four messages left by villagers complaining about it. AW and ANNW also rang to complain. The complaint number should be placed in the next newsletter as it seems a lot of villagers have misplaced it.

BC has been looking back through her records and confirms that the first meeting where the extraction of gravel was proposed took place in her house, Woodlea in 1990. At this point it was proposed to fill in the hole with substrate and possibly even a landscaped water feature. On the 12th of July 1993 permission for this was granted on appeal. This proposed that the quarry would be open for ten years, with four more years for landscaping, giving a closing date of 2007. In 1998 permission was granted to fill with commercial and industrial waste, with a completion of landscaping date of 2012. In July 2005 the profile of the mound was amended, giving a completion date of 2014. Now, following extensions for the MERF there is currently no end date for operations. Once you have a problem such as this one you are stuck with it ad infinitum. Current regulations would find that the quarry is too close to the village to allow it to operate. There were repeated promises that there would be no odour. The current EA representatives involved now say glibly that no such assurance should have been made.

9. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS

The meeting of MKB, Phillip Rushforth and David Endicott has not yet taken place. . BC offered to speak to David Endicott and informally ask questions on behalf of the Village Hall and Playing Fields Committees to help get information which the Committee may need to produce for Grantscape, proposed KO, seconded BC, carried unanimously.

10. PLAYING FIELD CONDITION

The field has been walked and checked this month by AW, BC and MK and all is well. SC has reported the broken gas housing to British Gas who have said they will make a site visit. Phillip Rushforth explains that he had a call from them at 8p.m. on one evening last week and they had only managed to find the storage shed at the back of the pavilion, which had one of its two padlocks broken. As it was so dark they were unable to go and check the housing at the time. Phillip Rushforth explains that the housing has been damaged for some time, BC points out that the damage now is a lot worse.

11. SETTING OF AGENDA FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MAY 14TH

BC suggests that there should be a landfill update, many villagers are anxious to know the current situation and what is proposed for the future. SC is to write to Louise Greenwood of EA and Ben Wragg of OPES and invite them to come and speak at the meeting. The agenda is to make mention of their attendance with the item to be – Landfill Update – with representatives from OPES, the landfill operator, and the Environment Agency.

BC suggests that it would be nice if all seven councillors, along with the Clerk, sat at the front this year, as this would be a good way for new villagers to be able to put faces to names. AW remembers that this had been the layout for last year's meeting and it had worked well.

There is also to be an item on Community Transport Volunteer Drivers with a representative explaining how such a scheme can be got off the ground. SC asks if the Emergency Plan should be on the agenda. KG is willing to speak but it is not felt that two voluntary schemes would receive much support. KG is to talk to Jane Woodbridge who has been working on setting up the plan and find out what progress if any has been made.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

Criteria and Implementation of Register of Local Heritage Assets – placed in folder

Dog bin invoice – to be paid as per vote in March Minutes

Emails printed:

Email about the pond ownership

Email about street sign placement at James Court

Emails forwarded:

HS2 Judicial Review

Minutes of PTR meeting

Aspire Oxford Charity Community Textiles Recycling

County Council spring-clean of Oxfordshire Highways

Supporting Community Transport Project Newsletter

News of Consultation on Changes to the Cherwell Local Plan

Usual reports

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Extension in Town Close BC is concerned at the large extension being built behind 15 Town Close but MK confirms that there was an application for this some 6 – 9 months ago, he visited and the PC was happy.

Water Stratford Rd Street Sign BC surprised a couple of youngsters trying to prise this sign apart recently. When tackled they moved away. AW points out that sometimes to approach individuals can be tricky even in a quiet village like Finmere.

Communication of absence KG points out once again that it is important to notify people by telephone as well as email if the matter is urgent or important as electronic communication can go astray or be missed.

Parking on verge at village entrance SC has been asked by a villager to communicate concern over the amount of cars parked on the verge at the Buckingham end entrance to the village. The councillors point out that the verge on one side belongs to Bucks and that few cars seem to park on the other side. SC is to let the villager know this and also to pass the matter on to Tingewick PC.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting, the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, is Tuesday May 7th with the Annual Parish Meeting on the 14th.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

Better together – OCC energy plan

Criteria and Implementation of Register of Local Heritage Assets