

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 10th June 2014

in Fimmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Mike Kerford-Byrnes (Chairman) (MKB), Katherine Grimston (Vice Chair) (KG), Kevin Ochel (KO), Amanda Hodgkins (AH), Stephen Trice (ST), District Councillor Barry Wood (BW) and County Councillor Catherine Fulljames (CF)

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO) (SC), and 15 members of the public

1. Apologies Apologies were received from County Councillor Catherine Fulljames, for possible lateness, Parish Councillor Mike Kirby, Mrs Veneeta Rayner, Head Teacher, Mike Geelan, Chairman of Fimmere Sports Association, John Cunningham, villager and Hugh Smith, Chairman of the Poores Plot

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 14th of May 2013 were circulated and approved.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

The PC officers for 2014/2015 having been appointed at the PC meeting on June 3rd 2014 these appointments were announced as follows:

Chairman Mike Kerford-Byrnes (having indicated in a letter his willingness to continue)
Proposed: Kevin Ochel
Seconded: Amanda Hodgkins
Carried unanimously

Vice Chair Katherine Grimston (having indicated her willingness to continue)
Proposed: Kevin Ochel
Seconded: Amanda Hodgkins
Carried unanimously

RFO Sharron Chalcraft (having indicated her willingness to continue)
Proposed: Katherine Grimston
Seconded: Kevin Ochel
Carried unanimously

Parish Clerk Sharron Chalcraft (having indicated her willingness to continue)
Proposed: Katherine Grimston
Seconded: Kevin Ochel
Carried unanimously

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The report is attached

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

The report is attached

BW raises a question. SC is to check with OALC whether the annual presentation of accounts by the PC needs to be on an accruals basis as the District Council's is.

6. REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR MRS CATHERINE FULLJAMES

CF has been the County Councillor for Finmere for 25 years last month. CF attends the Finmere PC meeting when she is needed, there are a lot of parishes in her remit; she has had to attend three meetings tonight. OCC set the council tax for the next year in February. There has been less funding from government this year and more to do so the council tax had to be increased by 1.99%, or 46p per week for a Band D property.

BT has promised good broadband coverage of 92% of parishes by the end of 2015. In Ploughley Division there are 22 villages, Stoke Lyne is particularly bad but this is a very rural area.

On housing OCC has limited input but the economic development of the county brings a need for more houses and therefore more infrastructure; roads, schools etc. CF meets regularly with the four Bicester County Councillors to discuss such matters as the roads and the implications of HS2.

Potholes are a big cause for concern for the public at the moment. OCC has set aside £116 million to deal with them all, an increase of £23 million. There is now a phone line in place where members of the public can report the holes themselves. Launton has a monthly magazine write up by the "Grumpy Old Men of Launton", CF is to go out with them to see the problem in their area.

The incinerator at Ardley is now built, looking like a real 'blot on the landscape', and is to be commissioned this week. The cranes were tested last week. The whole thing should be fully operational by September. The site will deal with 300,000 tonnes of waste per annum. There is to be a pipe for heated water from Ardley to Bicester and the site will supply the new eco-town with electricity.

CF meets regularly with BW and MKB to discuss HS2. CF is the only County Councillor who is affected by HS2. Barry Wood is the only District Councillor and Sir Tony Baldry MP is the only MP in the area affected. The railway bridge is to close at Mixbury and the traffic is to go through Finmere. Everyone is lobbying for an alternative bridge not an enormous circuit detour.

There is to be a new train line from Bicester to Oxford, it will have 27 crossings which may cause serious problems. Upper Heyford now has a new primary school for 4 – 11 year olds,

this will take children from 14 – 19 later. This has already affected the numbers of children in local schools.

CF continues to watch the landfill site. BC and MKB are great on the liaison committee. BC produces brilliant notes. CF attended the last liaison meeting where the leachate problem was discussed. CF does watch this problem at County level, they do monitor well and CF chases up the monitoring officer if necessary.

CF thanks the PC on behalf of the village for all their efforts.

Comment – BC points out that at the last quarry liaison meeting the capping was to start by June 11th at the latest.

Comment – With HS2 and the incinerator the A43 will be horrible.

CF points out that Junction 10 of the M40 is the routing agreement.

Ques – Whose rubbish do we get now?

Ans – Bucks. KO points out that the trend to incinerators is because of the high rate of landfill tax.

Ques – Why is it that bottles go out with the rubbish rather than into local bottle banks?

Ans – CF explains that this is a matter in BW's remit.

7. REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MR BARRY WOOD

All councils are building incinerators now; the landfill tax is rising due to the EUFO on climate change. Ten years ago recycling came in, this is now not enough. County councils pay the rising tax and all are now burning to save money. Ardley is to make energy from its waste plant with electricity being sold to the grid. There will still be excess heat and this is to travel as high pressure steam to Bicester for the eco development. The pipe for this is expensive. Upper Heyford is closer and the steam could go there. The incinerator plus HS2 will indeed be a traffic nightmare. CDC is petitioning the government as Banbury will be gridlocked for at least two years. Banbury councillors are fighting alongside BW now.

In Bicester the Pioneer Square development will have been open for a year in July. Bicester Town station is to get more trains; these will be fast and into Marylebone too. This will help commuters in the week and bring in the shoppers for Bicester Village at the weekend. Tesco was to move its large store next to Wyevale. There has been a change in Tesco corporate policy in the last six months; they are concentrating more on the Metro Tesco small outlets rather than more big stores. The site has been suspended and may be stopped. This will not matter as the planning permission is for any store, not just Tesco, and Asda are interested in the area.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment treats Oxfordshire as one area and was completed last April. There was a requirement for 16k more houses in Cherwell by 2031; this has been revised to 22k. These are to go largely in Banbury and Bicester with some at Upper Heyford

and a sprinkling elsewhere. This will lead to village developments in some places like those at Stable Close or Chinalls Close in Finmere.

The council have been lobbying on HS2, there is an ongoing legal struggle and they are petitioning for amelioration. It is felt that the cost of the development will rocket and then the government will have to stop eventually.

CDC was able to hold the council tax at the same level again. Combining with South Northants has helped. It is possible that a new area encompassing Stratford upon Avon will be set up. Things have been £3million cheaper with South Northants and people have said why was this not done before? It had simply never been tried.

On the question of bottle recycling; this matter is looked at every few years. CDC does not co-bin glass; this is more expensive at the operation end as it can break on the belts. There was a £500k profit on blue bins last year, glass would have lost money.

When it comes to housing provision South Northants is currently lagging behind, there have been past planning permissions which have not been carried out.

On roads Junction 10 is to be given some improvements, fairly cosmetic alterations are planned. The first re-design is still bad. There will also be minor improvements to Junction 9.

Ques – Mrs Grimwade asks whether Junction 9 is going to cope with Bicester as it grows.

Ans – CF feels no, BW says yes.

Cllr Wood thanks the PC for their efforts and those attending for their interest and attention.

8. REPORTS OF VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

Church – a report by Reverend Christobel Hargraves – The Reverend Hargraves is moving on in October and it is possible that the Rectory will then be sold. The Church has been involved in a number of village events, including singing, toddlers group and Shelswell by the Sea, these are non religious activities. The Church involvement with the school has continued with Reverend Hargraves being a Foundation Governor there.

The Church needs the support of the village in order to maintain the variety of services there, otherwise only occasional offices will take place at Finmere on high days and holidays alone. There is to be a commemoration of the start of WWI and Reverend Hargraves hopes that the village will join in.

The Church itself is Grade II listed and requires financial support. The cost of maintaining the building is £15k per annum and the funds raised fall £2 - £3k short annually. For the last two years there has been no secretary. Next year there may now be no incumbent, leading to an inter regnum. The incumbent is a PCC member also. That charity, without Trustees, will fold.

School – a report by Mrs Veneeta Rayner, Head Teacher was read by SC – see attached

Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee – a report was given by Illa Moss, Chairman – see attached

Poors Plot Charity – a report was given by Hugh Smith, Trustee – see attached

Neighbourhood Watch – No-one is now running the Neighbourhood Watch; Paul Nash is possibly willing to take it on but has not heard from Roger Fiander so far

Beavers/Cubs/Scouts – a report was received after the meeting – see attached

Football Club – a report was to be given by Tony Diston but he was unable to attend

Cricket Club – a report was submitted by Mike Geelan, Chairman after the meeting – see attached

Brackley and Buckingham Districts Dog Training Club – no report was given this year

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Rubble in Valley Road Villagers have been concerned about the rubble still sitting in the road following the collapse of part of the Finmere House wall some months ago. This happened at the height of the flooding problem and it was difficult for Mr and Mrs Jones to get an assessor to attend, which delayed matters. The report then took some time to come in and then three quotes had to be obtained, builders also proved to be busy due to the flood damage. After 4-6 weeks most of the rubble was moved. The insurance company however insisted that the wall could easily sustain further damage and was not stable enough to have people walking and driving next to it so some rubble, and the attendant cones, remained. The stone for the repairs has now been delivered and a contractor has been booked. The work is to start by next Monday at the latest. A tower scaffold will need to be erected which will need to be put in and out of place every day. A bit more of the wall has come down in the last couple of weeks.

Ques – Anita Bilbo – Is the cause of this collapse known?

Ans – MKB explains that the Jones's were away on holiday when it happened and apparently the wall came down overnight, some 6 other walls in the area have been affected by the extremely wet weather over the winter.

MKB thanked those attending on behalf of the PC.

The public meeting closed at 9.00p.m.

Members of the PC present then voted on the acceptance of the internal audit invoice in the sum of £168.56. This is to be paid by SC, proposed - MKB, seconded AH, carried unanimously.

MKB signed the Written Statement of Employment Particulars as agreed by the PC at the June 3rd meeting.

SC presented MKB with the code envelope for the PC computer which was signed across the seal and is to be kept safe in case of need.

Planning application 14/00815/F – Land to the south east of Chippings – construction of a single storey dwelling with associated parking – was taken by KO and AH.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL RFO'S REPORT 2013 – 2014

Income for the year increased by some £1,900 in the year 2013/14; this was partly due to the PC raising of the precept by £550 for this year and the PC finally receiving their VAT refund for the last two years of some £695 and also to a grant of £750 from OCC for the placing of a bench.

There were increased staff costs this year of some £59 due to a back dated pay raise being implemented. Also there was the expenditure on purchasing and fitting the bench of some £730. There were some £280 of costs for computer repair and also the early arrival of an invoice for dog bin emptying led to three such invoices falling within the financial year. The PC also spent £1,500 on the Village Hall, which counts as a running cost now that it is owned by the PC.

The income over expenditure balance for the year is £1,276.85, partly because the weather this year meant that the expected extra expenditure on grass cutting did not materialise. Again this surplus arises because the PC did not spend all the S137 money available, the remainder being carried over into reserves. S137 is a pot of money, some £2,250 worked out by multiplying the allowable amount per head by the population. This sum can be spent on benefitting the village; for example uses this year have been the donation to the Royal British Legion for the commemorative wreath and maintenance of the church clock. If unspent this money is carried over into reserves.

Following a pay rise for the Parish Clerk/RFO position, back dated to April 2013, there was a review of Parish Clerk hours. These needed to be brought into line with current guidelines, having been based on erroneous information in the past. This will result in an increase in the PC wages bill for 2014/15.

It was felt that although full expenditure of S137 would have meant a reduction in reserves this year, and staff costs and possible extra grass cutting would make next year even harder, the demand for S137 has diminished now that the PC owns the hall and the reserve is currently above the recommended one year's precept and therefore needs to be brought into line. Therefore the PC decided to leave the precept unchanged for 2014/15 and trust that the PC finances will finish the year in line with guidelines.

The total fixed assets on the PC register have increased, partly due to the bench but also the adding of the notice boards, the PC has been carrying out an ongoing review of assets and regularising those previously unregistered. Some £22 of the bench grant from OCC remains unspent and the PC will be sounding out the village in a newsletter about placing a dedication plaque on the bench, this would finish the spending of the grant monies correctly.

This is perhaps a good time to remind everyone that the monthly financial report, given at the PC meeting and detailed in the minutes is available to view online, the minutes being posted only after their approval at the following monthly meeting. Anyone wishing to apply for S137 monies can contact the Clerk or approach any of the Councillors who can explain the criteria for eligibility.

2nd June 2014

Parish Council AGM – Report from Finmere C E Primary School

Number on Roll

We are happy to report that we are sustaining our on role pupil numbers and due to our very good Ofsted Inspection back in October are beginning to attract pupils from further afield. One of our appeals continues to be the excellent child to teacher ratios which we are able to provide as a small school. The two unit teaching: a 'Reception/ KS1 Unit' (Year R, Year 1 and Year 2) led by Mrs Sauvain and Miss Harkness, ably assisted by Mrs Preston and a 'KS2 Unit' (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6) led by Mrs Godfrey, ably assisted by Mrs Pickwick continues to serve us well and was deemed to be a very positive strength of the school in the Ofsted Report (Oct 2013). Our team was also reinforced when we welcomed Mrs Ruth Cousins to our school at the end of December, who provides additional support for individual children across both key stages to satisfy their individual needs.

Significant Events

As a result of strong leadership, excellent teaching and flexible approach, our standards have risen. The attainment, provision and progress of our school were judged to be very good, with our finger tips touching outstanding. As the Headteacher, I feel both privileged and proud to be part of this wonderful school and fully embrace the community of Finmere in which we all serve to share in our success.

Improvements to School Building

We continue to make improvements to the school building. This year, FOSFA (the parent and friends association) kindly gave us the funding to erect a large outdoor learning facility to further our passion for outdoor learning. We have named our new feature 'SKULAN' in honour of our Swedish friends, from where our inspiration for outdoor learning came. (Skulan means school in Swedish.)

Links with the Community

The school continues to enjoy strong links with Finmere Church. Rev. Chris Hargraves takes collective worship on a weekly basis and pupils enjoy her visits to the school. We hold special services throughout the year such as Remembrance, Harvest and The Nativity in our local parish Church. These services are always well attended by parents,

relatives and friends of the school and we would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome members of the local community to join us for these special events. We promote Christian values and encourage pupils to respect others, forgive, treat others as they would like to be treated and make time to reflect.

We also have strong links with Sweden and have undertaken an exchange visit two years running. Swedish teachers and pupils stay with us in October and we return the favour by visiting their county in May.

Day 2



All smiles as we arrived at school.

I, along with Mrs Preston and six children have just returned from a four day visit to Onums Friskola, (a small school in Sweden) which is located in Onum in Vastra Gotaland. We had a wonderful trip and will retain happy memories of our time with our host families and friends for many years to come.

Charitable Works

The school is very conscience of charities and communities that are less fortunate than us. In our small way we try to help by holding special occasions to raise funds that support others. This year our events included McMillian Nurses, Comic relief, Children in need and Carols around the Christmas tree.

FOFSA (Friends of Finmere School Association) Events

In conclusion we would like to sincerely thank members of the community who have supported our fundraising events once again this year such as the annual Bonfire and fireworks evening which was once again was a resounding success. Without this very committed group our school would be severely disadvantaged and behalf of all our pupils, staff, governors and parents may I take this opportunity to thank them for all their hard work and for the passion they share for Finmere School.

Veneeta Rayner

Headteacher

Chairman's Report on Village Hall and Playing Fields year end May 2014

The hall continues to be used by a variety of people, Beavers, Cubs, Insane Dance and dog training.

The hall also hosts annual events such as the Finmere Festival, Bonfire Night. We have bookings for parties for children of varying ages, wedding parties and hope with the refurbishment there will be an increase in hire for such events. The hall is also used as a polling station. The village hall and playing fields require maintenance like any other building and grassy area. Our thanks go to Alan & Trevor Jones who spend many hours each summer looking after the playing field, Alan also looks after the interior of the hall.

The Village Hall Management Committee is still continuing to operate under the authority of the Parish Council and I believe we are waiting for the official documents to be drawn.

In July 2013, the village hall received a grant from OPES Industries, derived from a percentage of landfill taxes due to the government by OPES. With the aid of the grant, the hall committee commenced a program of renovation, beginning with the replacement of all external windows and doors, refurbishment of the kitchen and cavity wall insulation. This phase of refurbishing was duly completed in September 2013. A further grant was received from OPES and we also received a grant from OCCR which enabled us complete refurbishment of the toilet facilities which included installation of disabled toilet and the lobby. A further grant was received which has enabled us to replace the heating and we are in the process of installing new doors, the kitchen hatch, new lighting, new floor and upon completion of these a new floor. The good news is that we have in principle been granted a further grant which will enable us to go into our next phase of looking at resurfacing the car park, new furniture and cabinets, canopy over the entrance, screening off the recycling area, install gates or security bollards and if fund permit a new stage and new Modula lighting and curtain for the stage. Like any building the village hall requires a lot of maintenance. Thanks to Steve, Paul, Phillip, Peter, Trevor and Allen for their sheer hard work and long hours dedicated to the refurbishing project and the maintenance of the village hall.

The playground too requires maintenance. Once again the usual suspects got together on a Saturday morning and spread new bark on the surface. It is amazing the amount of bark required and the cost. Thanks to the team.

Financially, other than the grants for refurbishing, the hall just about breaks even, but thanks are due to the Parish Council whose financial support has helped the hall, to maintain some cash reserves.

Illa Moss

Chairman

POOR'S PLOT CHARITY
Annual Report 2013/14
to Finmere Parish Meeting, 10th June 2014

The Poor's Plot trustees are pleased to make their report to the Parish Meeting as follows. The trustees comprised Anita Bilbo (secretary), Hugh Smith (chairman) and Sharron Chalcraft, until 5th February 2014, when Sharron Chalcraft resigned and Phillip Rushforth and Paul Nash were appointed.

Activities and Financial Position

The charity continued to hold the 12 acre Poor's Plot field out on agricultural rent, and to administer the village allotment area and its fees. We are very grateful to Mr Peter Lepper for making the allotment land in Water Stratford Road available, and for continuing to play such an active part in providing it. There are 24 allotment plots of which all were let during the year following 8 changes that took place in September. The trustees would welcome any new interest in holding an allotment by any individuals.

The allotments' main gate was kindly rehung during the year by Peter Lepper, and the trustees subsequently conducted a risk assessment of the allotment area. No significant issues or unacceptable risks were identified. There is currently an issue of rubbish left by a previous allotment holder, and the trustees are shortly to conduct a site visit to decide on any action that is required on this.

The trustees have continued to rebuild the charity's financial position from a previous operating deficit in earlier years. In September the annual rent for allotments was reviewed and was increased to £10 per plot. The accounts summary for the year to 2014 is:

Income £930.00
Expenses £79.50
Surplus £850.50

Since its annual income is below the £5,000 threshold, the charity is not required to register with the Charity Commission. It is however important that the income from allotment and agricultural renting should be put to good use, in the spirit in which the charity was set up. Expenses in the year were for insurance premium. As no deserving causes were identified to the trustees, the charity has (since the year-end) paid a grant to support the village clock renovation fund.

We are pleased to report a closing bank balance of £4,510.01 at 28th February 2014. Our account with the Lloyds TSB Group was allocated to TSB when the bank was split. The interest rate on deposits is unchanged at zero percent.

Outlook

The trustees continue to discuss options for the further application of Poor's Plot funds, and welcome any viable suggestions that Finmere residents may wish to make in this regard.

BEAVERS/CUBS/SCOUTS

Dear Sharron

Sorry I have only just read your email. Unfortunately we will be unable to attend the meeting. Both Beavers and Cubs are doing well we have 16 Beavers and 19 Cubs at present. They have been doing various sponsored activities to celebrate our 10 years at Finmere all the money raised will go to The Air Ambulance. A weekend camp is booked for the Cubs in July and the Beavers are having a day at The Dinosaur and Farm Park in Milton Keynes

Regards
Gloria Fowley
Finmere Scout Group

FINMERE CRICKET CLUB

2013 Season in Review/Prospect 2014 Season

For 2013 the cricket club re-focussed on cricket for cricket's sake – no leagues, no cup competitions, no away games. Just a sequence of “friendly” fixtures all played at Finmere. The club was well supported by the village, not just in terms of players but also in terms of back-room help from the player's family members and other club “friends”.

The season was relatively successful, with the club winning 6 out of 7 fixtures, including one evening 20:20 fixture against a works team raised by one of the club's sponsors, Lloyd Woodworking of Brackley.

Several new players were recruited, to include three juniors.

In addition to securing shirt sponsorship from five local businesses, we also held a couple of successful fundraising events. As a consequence, as we begin the new 2014 season, the club remains financially viable.

We have a series of Sunday friendlies scheduled this Summer – everyone in the village is welcome to come up and watch. Or, if you so wish, to dust off your whites and have a try out – we are always on the look-out for new players (my email details are below if you are interested).

Michael Geelan

CHAIRMAN

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