

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 4th February 2014 in Fimmere 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) and two members of the public

1. Apologies:-No apologies were received

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 7th of January 2014 were approved with corrections.

3. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

This was carried forward as the County Councillor was unable to attend.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.01 **Village Notice Boards** MKB has liaised with Phillip Rushforth, Village Hall Committee, and the boards are to be moved out in March, hopefully to be fitted in place. The floor of the village hall is to be replaced in April. c/f

4.02 **Drain Cover Land** c/f

4.03 **Greensleeves Development Waste** MKB has talked again with Bob Duxbury, CDC and it appears that only the owner Mr Slater can take action and any enforcement would be served on him. KG points out that the water runoff has been no worse than usual in the recent appalling weather. It is not felt that anything can be done about this matter by the PC.

4.04 **Moss on pavements** SC has emailed Cliff Monger, OCC Highways, and he cannot remember which locations in the village he marked with green paint. Valley Rd definitely had green paint and the hard core is now visible through the tarmac near Titch's Cottage. Mere Road also had some markings and many areas in Chinalls Close were marked. SC is to send an email to remind Cliff Monger of the locations. c/f

4.05 **Car valuables signs** c/f

4.06 **VAS Signs** c/f

4.07 **Banbury Road Signage** The work is now scheduled. MKB is to remind Julie Shay, CDC, about KG's post code. c/f

- 4.08 **List of assets (the pond)** SC has received an email from Graham Warrington, OCC, confirming that he has handed this issue to his colleague Lisa Gray-Wright of OCC Environment and Economy. SC is to check with her shortly. c/f
- 4.09 **Salt bins** SC has checked with Paul Wilson, OCC, and he has apologised for the oversight and is getting the second bag delivered by the end of this week. c/f
- 4.10 **Stiles** SC has received an email from Sarah Aldous, OCC Footpaths, explaining that there are delays in contacting landowners about the stiles. KO points out that one landowner who is frequently abroad is currently in Finmere for a few days. SC is to phone Sarah Aldous and let her know. c/f
- 4.11 **Public Space in Chinalls Close** SC has written to Somerlee Homes but has received no reply so far. c/f
- 4.12 **Play Areas Inspection Report** SC has received an email from Peter Grimwade, Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee, explaining that nothing has been heard from John Hicks and it would appear that there was no 2012 report. The 2014 inspection has been requested and will take place in June.
- 4.13 **Christmas Lights** The lights can be left in situ and MKB is to ensure the ends are taped up safely out of reach. c/f
- 4.14 **Church Clock Repairs** Mr Meecham has sent an invoice to the PCC which Phillip Rushforth gives to SC. She is to pay this as previously agreed. There is also documentation showing that the warranty is still in place.
- 4.15 **Defibrillator** SC has spoken with the South Central Ambulance Service and has been referred to Dick Tracy who is their officer in charge of these issues. SC has left a message on his mobile but so far has received no reply. c/f
- 4.16 **Freedom of Information** SC has completed and placed the basic sheets and the full sheet on the notice boards and has compiled the extra lists needed for the web site and sent them to Paul Nash. AH has submitted a profile and picture and these have been sent to Paul Nash also.
- 4.17 **HS2 Petitioning Information** The consultation deadline has now been moved to the 27th of February. No further details of heights/depths have arrived yet. There has been much in the news about the suppression of a commissioned report, using legislation not activated since the ‘weapons of mass destruction’ days before the Gulf War. KG feels that the PC should write and complain about the lack of availability of information. SC is to liaise with MKB about compiling a complaint. If no further information is received then the submission will have to be made using the currently available information, with no further details as to the access provision for Warren or Widmore Farms and no concrete idea of the impact of raising the A421. MKB is to try and ensure that the PC case will not be prejudiced by this lack of information. c/f
- 4.18 **War Memorial Flowers** This invoice has been paid.
- 4.19 **Playing Field Tree Surgery** MKB has offered his equipment for this task. Phillip Rushforth suggests that March would be a good time to get the work done. c/f
- 4.20 **Parish Precept** SC has submitted the PC’s decision to CDC.

- 4.21 **Minutes** SC has forwarded the rest of the minutes to Paul Nash.
- 4.22 **Airfield** BC has seen the airfield land (70 acres) for sale in a Banbury estate agents, this is land belonging to the Tredwell family. AVDC has identified it as suitable for business development (category b1, b2 and b8) in their local development plan but this plan has been thrown out by the Inspector due to lack of cooperation with neighbouring authorities during the drafting stage. Other local authorities have also had their plans thrown out. SC has asked Tingewick PC to keep the PC informed of any applications. They have agreed.
- 4.23 **Christmas light tree** This will also be pruned in March. c/f
- 4.24 **Water Stratford Road Condition** SC has raised this with Cliff Monger, OCC Highways, he has referred her to Simon Marsden, OCC Asset Technician, whose department decides on which roads qualify for resurfacing. SC has emailed him and received a reply from OCC that her query will be responded to within ten days. c/f

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was reported that there was £2,859.52 in the Treasurer Account and £5,292.01 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid out:

£8.69 to e.on for electricity

£14.00 to Beryl Smith for war memorial flowers

£73.24 to Sharron Chalcraft for Clerk duties and internet costs

A cheque for £200 has been received from Finmere Sports Association. SC is to bank this shortly.

An invoice has been received in the sum of £192.00 from P A Meecham for Church clock maintenance. SC is to pay this as previously agreed.

A membership reminder has been received from OPFA in the sum of £40. SC is to pay this. Proposed MKB, seconded BC, carried unanimously.

6. S19/S137

No requests have been received other than the invoice for the Church clock. BC suggests that it may be wise to invest in a new printer as SC's own printer is often troublesome and the PC does not own one. SC is to look in Staples for a machine that can print, photocopy and scan. MKB is to liaise with her.

7. URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business has been carried out.

8. FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE

MKB contacted the EA and they confirmed that they had already been out to check the leachate levels. From February to September the levels were dropping. They are now going up but are still not as high as last February. Helen Bever is phoning in figures to the EA on a regular basis. BC points out that the skips on top of the mound are now back and it appears that tipping is being carried out on the top of the mound. MKB explains that they are tipping on the top and then moving it back to the rear of the mound for contouring and into the cells. BC says that the material must be shifting in the wind as it definitely appears to be coming to the front of the mound. There is definitely more rubbish blowing around near the site. MKB is to call the EA again.

KO stresses that the leachate levels are an accident waiting to happen. There is often a phenomenon of 'coning' near a pump site, with levels much higher at a short distance from the pump. Leachate will probably always be a problem at the site now. Even after capping the leachate left at higher levels will filter down. This is another reason why OPES are unable to find a buyer.

9. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS

MKB has still had no news from David Endicott, solicitor. It will cost the PC to go elsewhere but progress needs to be made in this matter. It is felt best if MKB looks for another suitable person to carry out the work.

10. PLAYING FIELD CONDITION

The field has been walked and checked this month by MK who reports lots of rabbit holes but the ground is too wet to fill them. The field is felt to be safe for the public.

11. PARISH CLERK HOURS

SC explains that she has been liaising with OALC on several issues to do with pay. Firstly a pay rise has been agreed and the amount payable for her SCP (spinal column point on the salary scale) has increased, from £10.498 to £10.603 said increase to be backdated to April 2013.

Secondly SC has checked and found that Ian Macpherson, former treasurer, moved her from one spinal column to the next in 2008 and again in 2009. Since then she has not altered her position on the chart. Jan Gosset, OALC, explained that the timing of movement up the SCP's and the highest SCP which will be paid is usually defined in the salary section of the contract of employment. SC does not have one of these. A 'one size fits all' template has been forwarded by Jan Gosset and SC is to adjust this for parish level, BC suggests that other examples of a similar parish should be available on the web. It is felt that the top SCP shown on the chart sent by NALC which is SCP 27 is the highest appropriate, as the LC1 – 4 job

descriptions which determine SCP's are not held by the PC. Definitely SC was transferred to SCP 23 by Ian Macpherson in 2009, this being known to be an LC2 level.

The major issue on pay is the amount of hours paid each month. Ian Macpherson was told in 2005 that the hours for the Clerk were 6 per month and for the RFO 4 hours. Jan Gosset has forwarded a report recommending salary levels produced by SLCC in 2003. This does recommend, for a parish the size of Finmere, 6 hours per month for the Clerk to service meetings and 4 hours per month for financial matters, it also however recommends 4.25 hours per month for admin and 4 for other work. SC feels this would much more accurately reflect the amount of hours she spends.

The councillors stress that they do not want to underpay SC in any way for her efforts. She must implement the backdated pay raise which has been agreed. It is felt best that she should transfer to SCP 24 and be paid an extra 8.25 hours per month, bringing the total to 14.25 for Clerks duties and 4 for the RFO role, from April 2014. Proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously.

SC is also to keep a diary of how many hours she spends in case this increase is insufficient. This diary is to be reviewed after three months.

12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

13/01788/F – Crow's Nest, 1 Chinalls Close – garage conversion, construction of new detached garage and boundary wall – permission subject to conditions

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 – planning application has been withdrawn

14/00032/F – 16 Valley Road – Two storey rear extension; to render an existing rear extension; demolish an old wood storage shed – KG declares an interest as she is a neighbour. The size and style of the extension do not appear problematic but the timber cladding proposed is not felt to be entirely appropriate for the setting in the village. BC is to ask the owners about the colour of the cladding, both on fitting and when matured and email the information so that this can be dealt with under urgent business.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

HS2 Hybrid Bill document deposit reminder – this stresses the need to make the information on the consultation available to members of the public. It also confirms the date of the consultation completion as 27th of February.

Local Government Boundary Commission Electoral Review of Cherwell – placed in folder

Letter from Mrs Patricia Riley asking for help in her family history research - taken by BC who is to ask Peter Lepper and Alan Jones, villagers, for their recollections

Emails printed –

An email from Phillip Rushforth, villager, concerning issues already addressed but also raising the matter of the hedge and footpath on the amenity land in Chinalls Close. Phillip Rushforth feels that it may be best for the PC to remove the hedge and remove or relay the path and prune the lower branches of the trees. The money saved by the falling of the alder tree before it could be felled could be used for this purpose. It is felt that the path would be best removed as if the PC replace it they will possibly be liable but the land is not theirs so it is not covered by PC insurance. The hedge and path are some 60' long so this will not be a small job. MKB is to look at the location in the light of day. This is to be an agenda item for March.

Also Phillip raises the issue of a blocked gulley in Fulwell Road. MK points out that the gulley near Cross Tree Cottage also blocks regularly, he unblocks it almost daily. This matter needs a permanent solution. SC is to raise this with Cliff Monger, OCC Highways.

Two emails were also received concerning the Larkrise planning application. The first of these from Roger Fiander, villager, raises the point of not being notified by CDC. SC has replied explaining that CDC no longer notifies neighbours as a matter of course. There is also mention of the removal of a drain on the north side of Mere Road being proposed in the application, the PC do not recall seeing any mention of this in the plans.

The second email is from the Hodgkinsons at Accra. They are disappointed that the PC did not raise more objections in their comments. They raise the point of the second access to the highway increasing traffic flow and therefore danger. The PC did discuss this but felt that the most dangerous access would be the one which already exists, making it difficult to complain on access safety grounds. The Hodgkinsons also are not happy about the proposed removal of the verge. The PC's understanding of the plans was that the verge outside Larkrise would remain. The Hodgkinsons are surprised that the PC had not considered the many comments placed on the CDC planning website by villagers during their discussions. It has not been the practice of the PC in the past to look at the CDC website but rather to visit affected neighbours personally. It is felt that perhaps the checking of village comments prior to discussion should become part of the standard operating procedure of the PC in future. SC is to reply to the Hodgkinsons.

Emails forwarded:

Article on volunteers – sent to MKB for possible inclusion in the next newsletter.

Flood news for website – posted by Paul Nash

Usual reports

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Finnmere House Wall A section of this has collapsed into the road. This is not the first time this has happened and given the current weather conditions may well not be the last. It has been coned off but has been in place for some time now and needs to be moved. MKB is to speak with the owners who are waiting for an insurance assessor to visit and see if matters can be expedited.

Traffic Speed in Mere Road BC has been approached by Gerald Sinclair, villager, who lives at the Red Lion end of Mere Road. He is very concerned at the speed of traffic coming round the blind bend. This is a route used by children walking to the school and with no verge is a very dangerous spot. Mr Sinclair has trouble getting his car in and out of his driveway safely and with three houses fronting the road at this point there are a lot of problems for residents. Mr Sinclair has asked if it would be possible to put a 20m.p.h. speed limit in place. BC points out that Croughton has such a limit, which extends a considerable distance in either direction from the school. MKB has raised this matter at NAG (Neighbourhood Action Group) meetings before but has had no success. He will raise it again. SC is to ask Cliff Monger to provide a suitable contact at OCC. MKB points out that the HS2 plan gives Mere Rd as the alternative/relief route to Featherbed Lane and HS2 can override road limitations.

Newsletter MKB explains that we will need to produce another newsletter in March. The spring clean will be coming up in April and volunteers are needed to help with the project of cleaning all the road signs. Also the terms of office of all councillors are coming to an end in May and anyone interested in standing as a councillor could then be getting involved and interested. Anyone who wishes to submit an article should bring it to the next meeting. This is to be an agenda item.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

BC gives her apologies.

The meeting closed at 9.44 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

Clerks and Councils Direct January 2014

Glasdon leaflet

Local Government Boundary Commission Electoral Review of Cherwell