

MEETING OF
FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 6th September 2016 in Finmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Mike Kerford-Byrnes (MKB) (Chairman), Katherine Grimston (KG) (Vice Chairman), Kevin Ochel (KO), Steve Trice (ST) and Joanne Brooks (JB)

In attendance:- County Councillor Catherine Fulljames (CF), Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO) and four members of the public

1. Apologies:- Apologies were received from Councillors Mike Kirby (MK) and Amanda Hodgkins (AH)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

ST declared an interest in Item 10 and Item 16 (letter from PCC)

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 12th of July 2016 were approved with corrections.

At this point item 12 was discussed (see below) in order that members of the public present for this item could leave if necessary.

4. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

CF has visited the village with Maurice Sheehan and various road problems were looked at and marked. The large puddle which forms on the Water Stratford Rd near Bacons Bridge has been referred to the OCC flooding officer as a culvert will be needed. JB confirms that her husband Johnnie has liaised on this issue before as they own the land that the flooded area gives access to and they are happy to help with any digging works needed. ST points out that there are still blocked drains in Valley Rd, despite the assurance to SC by fix-my-street that reported matters had been fixed. The drain by the post box actually has grass growing out of it and is full of mud. SC is to chase this up with Kathryn Gash, OCC Highways, and copy CF in to the email.

The landfill site has submitted an application to lower the requirements on shielding with hay bales; OCC has decided that an EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) will be needed. David Perriam, OCC planning officer, and the Environment Agency have been talking with the administrators. Ben Wragg is still retained by them to run the site. A buyer for the site is still being sought. MKB points out that there is still a lot of machinery on the top of Cell 7a.

No quarry liaison meetings are taking place. CF suggests that the PC could ask the administrators to reinstate these in order to keep the village informed.

CF points out that the annual free electric blanket testing service will be starting soon. SC has not yet received a poster and is to chase this up; details will be on the OCC website. This is also to be an item in the next newsletter.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- 5.01 **Chinalls Close Paving Slabs** SC has spoken to Zurich, PC insurers, who advise that signs are not a good idea as they do not protect from liability. There are no technical specifications for what constitutes a risk as regards paving slab irregularities. Zurich suggest that the PC have a builder look at the slabs as they are more experienced at knowing what is acceptable. ST feels this is not good advice for the PC to adopt, as anyone raising a civil claim against the PC for damage to possessions or injury would cite legal precedent, and there are clearly such precedents established, with trip hazards expressed as measurements. ST also points out that in any event the PC has effectively been advised by a professional landscaper and ground maintenance contractor that the slabs are sufficiently uneven and have gaps that warrant action, which we would not be able to deny if such a claim resulted. ST feels that the best course of action is to remove the slabs as this would remove the trip hazard risk, the increased risks associated with a hard potentially slippery surface and the need for ongoing inspections and maintenance; if the slabs were replaced with grass the area could still be used by children to play safely, and for residents barbecues etc. In the circumstances though, as there appears to be such a strong desire by some residents to retain the slabs, ST proposes that the PC accept John Donaldson's quote to level and relay the slabs as this was a much more reasonable sum than the original quote presented to MKB by the other contractor, and it would at least make the area safe, and represent a way forward. Once the slabs are reasonably level it would be fine for a group of residents to maintain the slabs as long as they were registered as volunteers on the PC insurance policy and a councillor inspected on a regular basis. This does not need to be monthly as with the field. It is suggested that the PC should make certain of this 'group of volunteers' before deciding as without residents participation the ongoing maintenance would be prohibitively expensive. A letter is to be sent out to the residents of Chinalls Close and also, at the suggestion of Phillip Rushforth, resident, those houses in Valley Rd which back onto the open space, asking for volunteers to register their interest. If insufficient numbers are forthcoming the slabs will have to be removed. SC is to draft and circulate this letter to councillors. c/f
- 5.02 **Village Notice Boards** The rail has been replaced.
- 5.03 **List of assets (the pond)** MKB has obtained a letter written to the Tompkins, co-owners, from Dick Crabtree, co-owner, in the 1990's which has a diagram showing the division of the pond. c/f
- 5.04 **Public Protection and Development letter** c/f
- 5.05 **Carol Service/Christmas Lights** The lights are still to be mended or replaced. c/f

- 5.06 **Letter from Little Tingewick resident about Mere Lane** SC has started researching the minutes regarding the water companies activities in Mere Lane but has found no reference so far. c/f
- 5.07 **Risk Assessment Forms** The remaining sheets still need to be returned. c/f
- 5.08 **Parish Path Warden** MKB brings in the map. JB takes it to have copies made for the files and for individual councillors. The original should be framed and hung in the village hall. c/f
- 5.09 **Cross Tree Turf and Drainage Problems** As mentioned in item 4 above SC has heard from fix-my-street that the reported drains have been cleared but there are still issues, with more than one drain still blocked. SC has reported the drain in the Cross Tree triangle and will also report the drain by the post box. c/f
- 5.10 **Road Surface and Marking Problems** The map arrived and SC has reported this matter to Bucks CC and informed Tingewick PC who have replied that Bucks CC are to be addressing issues from the end of July, with road markings a priority. The map is not terribly clear but shows the boundary as running along the point of the Old Banbury Rd which now adjoins the A421 and ST points out that the markings at this junction are also unclear; JB confirms that the old priority markings are now showing through which is causing confusion. SC is to report this to fix-my-street and CF will also chase this up.
- 5.11 **Internal and External Audit – Signatory Forms** SC has obtained forms from HSBC Banbury branch. All signatories need to be renewed. Everyone present fills in the form but SC will not return it until MK and AH have also signed. PC standing orders need to be included with the form. c/f
- 5.12 **Oxfordshire Together** SC has received an email from OCC detailing the summer grass cutting programme.
- 5.13 **Queen’s Birthday Expenses** The invoice has been paid. SC has checked but the deadline to apply for grants was May 27th.
- 5.14 **Church Mower** The invoice has been paid. SC is waiting for a more detailed invoice for the PC records.
- 5.15 **Playing Field Report** The invoice has been paid.
- 5.16 **Road Repairs** As mentioned in Item 4 above. Other ponding issues are to be addressed and some potholes on Water Stratford Rd have been filled.
- 5.17 **Possible Valley Road Traffic Restrictions** SC has heard from Howard Jones, owner, and has talked to OCC Highways. It is acknowledged that there is no easy or complete solution to this issue, indeed more damage has occurred since the July meeting. There is to be a double kerb put in place along the length of the grass verge to protect it from erosion. Extra signage is being considered and ‘village access only’ signs have been added to the possible choices. Mr Jones is happy that some definite action has been decided. At the moment closure of the road or the addition of double yellow lines are not measures that are being considered.

- 5.18 **Village Transport Survey** Information has been received on the Comet scheme, which utilises council vehicles to run an on demand service during their down time. Posters have been put up around the village and Rev Goodall has requested an electronic copy to pass on to other parishes in the benefice.
- 5.19 **War Memorial Flowers Invoice** This has been paid.
- 5.20 **Bottle Bank** Phillip Rushforth (PR), Village Hall Fixtures Secretary, is to find another hall user to keep an eye on this. c/f
- 5.21 **Overgrown Footpath** This has been reported. c/f
- 5.22 **Stable Close Bund** PR has given advice and the matter is ongoing. c/f

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was reported that there was £925.95 in the Treasurer Account and £5,301.22 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid out in July and August:

£12.95 to e.on (running costs – electricity)
 £30.00 to Beryl Smith (S144 – encourage visitors – war memorial flowers)
 £300.00 to Berrys (general admin – valuation fee)
 £112.32 to John Hicks (running costs – playing fields)
 £740.00 to John Donaldson (running costs – grass cutting)
 £575.00 to SC (general admin – for Clerk and RFO duties and internet costs)
 £949.00 to PCC (S137 – village benefit – PCC churchyard mower)
 £45.00 to Village Hall Management (S137 – village benefit – Queen’s birthday celebration)

7. S19/S137

An invoice has been received from PA Meecham for the annual maintenance of the Church clock in the sum of £160.00. This is to be paid, proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

The defibrillator was deployed during August and replaced using the spare pads and starter kit. It was decided unanimously under urgent business to order replacement spare pads and starter kit at a cost of £50.82. The invoice has been received and is to be duly paid.

9. FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE

Other than the matters discussed in item 4 above and the planning application variation request detailed below in item 15 there has been no change; there is nothing to report.

10. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS AND CONDITION

MKB has been in touch with a solicitor recommended by OALC and it is necessary to clarify the points discussed and agreed by the PC over the preceding months.

1. The PC confirms that they wish to lease the playing field to the newly constituted charity and allow them to sublet to the Finmere Sports Association.
2. The PC gives MKB the authority to obtain detailed heads of terms to bring back to the PC for consultation and negotiation.

Proposed ST, seconded KG, carried unanimously.

MKB has walked the field this month and confirms that there are no problems with its condition although there are a lot of rabbits present.

11. NEW RESIDENTS NOTIFICATIONS

There are new residents in Water Stratford Rd; JB is to give them a welcoming letter.

12. OPERATION PLAYGROUND UPDATE

Trudy and Emily, group members, attend to give an update on proceedings. The group has successfully claimed a grant from 'The Landfill Operator' (Opes Industries) in the sum of £36,500. The conditions are that it must be spent within 12 months and the group must raise £4,170 to cover the costs involved in Grantscape's (Landfill Tax Administrators) administration. They have 6 months to raise this money. With all possible monies gathered in the group currently has £1,930. There is to be a Christmas Fair event, there is a fundraising box on the bar in the pub and also an Amazon fundraising has been set up. This scheme allows money to be given to the group whenever their code is quoted by Amazon customers. Obviously to be successful this needs to be known about and the group ask that the PC put details in their next newsletter. KG suggests that a door to door campaign may work well but due to the no cold calling rules the group need to check with trading standards first. The group enquires about the PC status regarding VAT, at 20% this will be a considerable drain on the scope of the funds gathered.

MKB confirms that Somerton, one of his District Councillor areas, has successfully reclaimed VAT on a similar scheme and he will try and find out details. SC confirms that the PC can only reclaim VAT on its own money. It is possible that the grant could be made to and administered by the PC in order to qualify. SC is to check with the internal auditor. MKB congratulates the group on behalf of the PC. They are doing wonderfully well and it is good to see all this effort on behalf of the village.

13. OALC CAPACITY AND HOUSING SURVEYS

The capacity survey was to be filled in by Clerk's and SC has done so. The housing survey has been printed off and the PC fills it in. SC is to submit it electronically.

14. CONCLUSION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT

The audit has been returned with no issues arising. The PC accepts the conclusions, proposed MKB, seconded ST, carried unanimously. SC is to post notice of conclusion on the notice boards and the web.

15. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

16/01003/F – Rowan House, Banbury Rd – single storey rear extension – permission subject to conditions.

16/00656/F – Lark Rise, Mere Road – demolition of existing bungalow and detached garage: erection of 1 four bedroom dwelling, off-street parking and gardens – permission subject to conditions

Section 73 application – Finmere Quarry – for planning permission to continue development without complying with conditions A1, A3 and A33 of planning permission reference 10/01516/CM to provide for an extension of the life of the development, the removal of the requirement for straw bale screening along the SE site boundary and north of the site – with the screening provided instead by soil storage bunds – since the bushes and trees have matured there is very little need for the straw bales and the extension to the life of the site is not significant, but, as discussed in item 4 above, MKB is to approach the administrators and ask for the recommencement of quarry liaison meetings. The PC makes no objection but wishes to comment: to ask that OCC ensures adequate safety protection for the neighbouring bridleway during excavation. Proposed MKB, seconded ST, carried unanimously.

16. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence for meeting –

HS2 posters – SC is to put these up

Letter of thanks from PCC for mower payment

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act Adoption Statement

Local Enforcement Plan – MK and AH copies kept by SC for next meeting

Street map from OCC – see Item 5 above

Conclusion of external audit – see Item 14 above

Emails printed –

Tingewick PC email about road markings – see Item 5 above

Emails regarding Finmere House wall – see Item 5 above

Correspondence regarding wreath – SC has realised that no S137 contribution was recorded last year for the wreath and, having been contacted about this year's wreath, has obtained

proof that the PC omitted to send a contribution last year. This is to be an agenda item next month and the PC will look to correcting the situation by making a payment now for last year and paying for this year's wreath after receipt.

Emails forwarded –

July OALC update

August OALC update

Usual reports

17. MOTION TO EXCLUDE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM ITEM 18 (COMMERCIAL SENSITIVITY)

The motion was proposed by MKB, seconded by KO and carried unanimously.

18. UPDATE ON PLAYING FIELD LAND ACQUISITION

This item is exempt from inclusion in the minutes.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A421 Section to roundabout - This is very untidy and letting down the entrance to the village. The grass has not been cut at all and villagers have mentioned the difficulty of seeing clearly when pulling out onto the roundabout from the village section. SC is to raise the matter with OCC. It is possible that village businesses would chip in to the extra cost of having John Donaldson do the work. This is to be an agenda item at the next meeting.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

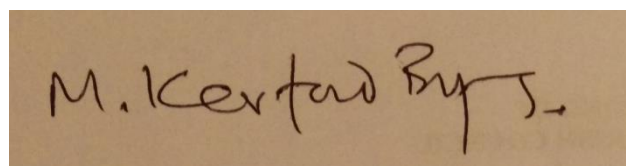
The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 4th of October.

KO gives apologies for that meeting.

Meeting closed at 11.05 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

Clerks and Councils Direct September 2016

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in dark ink. The signature appears to read "M. Kerford By J.".