

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 8th of July 2014 in Finmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Mike Kerford-Byrnes (MK) (Chairman), Kevin Ochel (KO), Mike Kirby (MK) and Stephen Trice (ST)

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO)

1. Apologies:-Apologies were received from County Councillor Catherine Fulljames (CF), Councillors Katherine Grimston (KG) (Vice Chair) and Amanda Hodgkins (AH)

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the PC meeting of 3rd of June 2014 and the APM of 10th of June 2014 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 **Obtaining a defibrillator** Nothing further has been heard yet. c/f
- 4.02 **Village Notice Boards** These have now been cleaned but need to be fitted with a lock and then are ready to be put in place. c/f
- 4.03 **Road Repairs** SC has talked with Cliff Monger, OCC Highways, and he assures her that the problems marked for attention by the inspector have been repaired. The inspector is due to come around Finmere again shortly and Cliff asks if SC could collate a list of any problems reported by councillors so that they can be specifically checked. This method has worked well in other parishes. Cliff also confirms that the 'jet patcher' has been booked for the Water Stratford Rd. c/f
- 4.04 **VAS Signs** MKB has been in touch with the Clerk of Caversfield PC who has confirmed that they have bases they do not want. At their 17th of July meeting they will circulate our request and sort out terms and conditions for any transfer to Finmere PC. Maurice Sheehan, OCC, has told MKB that Louise Wilson, OCC Highways, can advise on the placement of the bases in Finmere. c/f
- 4.05 **List of assets (the pond)** MKB is still to talk to Mr Tompkins. c/f
- 4.06 **Stiles** Nothing heard yet from OCC. KO reports that some work has been done on the footpath between Warren Farm and Finmere but as this has only been to cut down thick vegetation, nettles etc, which were blocking the path it has resulted in a very rough and uneven surface which is unpleasant to walk on. A new stile has been put in

place on the Orchard Barn property but the large and un-opening metal gate is still there. SC is to check who is responsible. AH has emailed concerning the stile on the footpath behind Stable Close, this is set to collapse and is one of the more dangerous around the village. SC is to pass on these concerns also. c/f

- 4.07 **Public Space in Chinalls Close** The TPO for the land transfer has now been prepared and agreed and needs to be signed by two Councillors with a resolution confirming their authority and returned. It is hereby resolved by Finmere PC that MKB and KO are empowered to sign the transfer deed for the area of public space in Chinalls Close, Finmere. Proposed ST, seconded, MK, carried unanimously. The documents are signed and are to be returned by SC. c/f
- 4.08 **Christmas light tree** This is still to be pruned but it is felt best that the PC form a working party as the lights are still in situ and could easily be damaged. c/f
- 4.09 **Printer** SC has still not had chance to look at printers again. The cheque written out to PC World for the printer which had its price changed has been destroyed. c/f
- 4.10 **Blocked gullies** SC has tried several times to speak to Gordon Kelman, OCC Highways, to whom she had been referred by Cliff Monger, finally a conversation with Highways on the phone revealed that no number had been assigned to this problem and it had never been properly entered onto the system. SC has now been given a number but as the recommended person for her to be referred to by Gordon Kelman is Cliff Monger it seems as though this saga may run on. SC has emailed details to CF. MKB is in Oxford on July 28th he will have a word with Gordon Kelman if possible. c/f
- 4.11 **Finmere House wall** CF has sent details of her correspondence with OCC Highways on this matter. It transpires that CDC, in the person of their listed building planning inspector, have visited the site and insisted that another two metres of the wall be replaced. Retrospective planning permission for the whole 3 metres must then be sought. There is concern also about the erosion of the grass verge at this point which makes the wall vulnerable. The renewed claim for insurance has been submitted and it is to be hoped that work can be completed relatively quickly. c/f
- 4.12 **Traffic speed in Mere Road** SC has had a reply from Croughton PC. The 20 mph zone was installed by Northamptonshire Highways under the Safer Routes to Schools Scheme. Croughton had for a number of years prior to that taken part in Community Speedwatch run by Northants Police and this had identified a speeding problem. The data collected enabled the PC to install to VAS devices at either end of their 30 mph zone. They do not know the costs involved. Coincidentally SC has received this month a letter from Thames Valley Police about establishing a Community Speedwatch in local villages. SC is to contact Safer Routes for Schools and also check with Community Speedwatch and get the police to the September meeting. c/f
- 4.13 **Cherwell Boundary Review** MKB explains that the boundary review means that Finmere will no longer be Barry Wood's ward. CDC has decided to go for much larger, three member wards. These will hold approx 7,700 electors rather than the present 2,000. There is 1 week to object to this decision. There will be all out elections in May 2016, following that the elections will be staggered with one member of the ward changing each year. To give some idea of the operation of this

system CF in her OCC ward has 96 PC meetings per year along with 18 parish meetings.

- 4.14 **Trespassers** This is still to be a subject in the next newsletter. c/f
- 4.15 **Bins in Mere Rd** SC has circulated the links for Glasdon and Broxap so that councillors can look at bins. These are to be re-sent. c/f
- 4.16 **HS2 realigned access requirements letter** An email has been received giving details of property consultation. Additional documents are to arrive between 10th and 12th of September. It is understood by MKB that more land may be required beside the quarry. SC is to forward any emails about HS2. c/f
- 4.17 **Protecting Community Assets** This is to be discussed in September. c/f
- 4.18 **Verge at Stable Close** This is confirmed by Cliff Monger as being a police matter as the parking if unsafe is an offence. It is to be an important item in the next newsletter. MK is to forward his photos to SC and these can be passed on to PC Caroline Brown. c/f
- 4.19 **Playing field problems** These are to be featured in the next newsletter. c/f
- 4.20 **Playing field bark invoice** SC has been unable to pay this by bacs as the relevant information was not on the invoice. A cheque is prepared for Phillip Rushforth, Village Hall and Playing Field Committee as was agreed at the last meeting.
- 4.21 **Meeting Dates for 2014/15** SC has emailed these to all councillors.
- 4.22 **Clerk's Contract of Employment** This has now been signed and dated.
- 4.23 **External Audit** The relevant documents have been submitted by registered post before June 10th.
- 4.24 **Financial Regulations** These are still to be displayed on the web as SC has not heard back from OALC. For compliance issues see the items below. c/f
- 4.25 **Parish Liaison Meeting** MKB was able to attend.
- 4.26 **Missing emails** SC forwarded all emails again to KG.
- 4.27 **Specific Councillor Roles** KO is to liaise with MKB on recovering the VAS base from Caversfield.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was reported that there was £4,854.40 in the Treasurer Account and £5,293.85 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid in:
1,521.00 from OCC for the grass cutting grant

The following had been paid out:
£925.00 to John Donaldson for grass cutting

£219.82 to Sharron Chalcraft for Clerk and RFO duties, internet costs and expenses
£168.56 to Arrow Accounting for the internal audit

A three month report of expenditure was produced for councillors to consider.

An invoice in the sum of £39.00 has been received from South Northants and CDC Shared Electoral Services for the uncontested parish election of May 22nd. This is to be paid, proposed MKB, seconded MK, carried unanimously.

An invoice in the sum of £112.32 has been received from John Hicks and Associates for the annual playing field inspection report. This is to be paid, proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously.

An invoice in the sum of £32.25 has been received from Beryl Smith for the flowers for the war memorial, this is a higher sum than usual but extra flowers were thought appropriate for this special memorial year. This is to be paid, proposed KO, seconded ST, 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

There was no quarry liaison meeting this month, it has been postponed till July 21st at 2p.m. Barbara Cunningham, former PC representative, is to be present to take notes at future meetings.

9. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS

This is still ongoing; MKB is yet to find a solicitor willing to do pro bono work on the matter.
c/f

10. PLAYING FIELD CONDITION

ST confirms that he has walked the field this month and found no significant hazards. There are a number of small rabbit holes which will need to be watched. It may be that a working party is required. This matter is to be passed on to the Village Hall and Playing Field Committee.

11. PLAYING FIELD INSPECTION REPORT

The report is considered, there are no urgent issues raised. However it is thought best that there should be a 'road test' of the Stable Close play area as it seems to be in need of some TLC. SC has received a call from a villager complaining that the path leading from the road to the playing field play area is overgrown with nettles. Councillors are sure this is no longer the case. Also the complainant had injured himself on some protruding nails in the gate. These were not mentioned in the inspection report but the Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee is to be asked to arrange a working party to deal with them.

12. UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITY ON THE PLAYING FIELD/PLAY AREA POSTERS

It is definitely felt that the shooting activity at the field which was reported to the police was not an official shoot by members of the football club, it took place at 4pm rather than in the hours of darkness and pellets were found both in the fence and even in the door of the village hall. Nothing has been heard back from the police on the matter. The Village Hall and Playing Field Committee would like the shooting arrangements agreed to be detailed in a formal letter and certainly they will need to be informed prior to any activity taking place so that on each occasion public safety can be ensured by the Committee as well as the football club.

MKB has received an email from Barbara Cunningham, former Councillor, about posters on the play area fence and on village notice boards. These posters were mentioned in the play area inspection report. They purport to be a child's effort to ask for more equipment and enlist other children in a campaign. They are however from a much 'older' perspective and mention obtaining equipment which is already in place. It is felt that they are probably a clever marketing ploy by an equipment supplier but MKB has made enquiries at the school, in case they are part of a project or initiative. The play area is to be talked about in the next newsletter, asking people to contact the PC directly with ideas and asking for volunteers.

13. WORK NEEDED ON STABLE CLOSE BUND TREES

An email has been received from a resident of Stable Close explaining that there are some problems with the trees on the bund there; they are becoming overgrown and leaning and in some cases are nearly touching the house roofs. John Donaldson has cut these trees back in the past and should be able to cut back or remove some himself. SC is to reply to the resident explaining that this matter will be looked into. MK and ST are to take a look at the situation and may talk to Alan Forbes, villager also. AH has emailed concerning debris which has been left on the footpath behind Stable Close and asks if this is due to work in progress. This is to be checked also.

14. VILLAGE HALL STORAGE

MKB has received an email from Phillip Rushforth, Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee, regarding the PC archives stored in the village hall committee room. The files

currently take up two filing cabinets and the committee would prefer if this could be reduced or if possible the archives removed. SC explains that some archive materials really need to be kept and as the village hall is the venue for any inspection of documents by members of the public the committee room is really the only place for them. However the current two filing cabinets are not necessary, things could be reduced and put into one. ST points out that not all the things currently stored, for instance copies of all historical planning applications going back to the 1960's, may need to be kept. SC is to check with OALC as to the best way to proceed with reducing the records.

15. ADDITIONAL PARISH COUNCILLOR

The PC still only has six out of its possible seven councillors and it is important to fill the space with co-option. MKB suggests approaching Joanne Brookes, former councillor, as her children are now more grownup and she may feel able to spare time for the PC once again. SC is to post notices asking the public to come forward.

16. PARISH CLERK HOURS DIARY

As requested SC presents a diary of the hours she has spent on PC business since April. There has been a considerable amount of extra work due to governance issues and also the internal and external audits have been completed during this period. However MKB feels that the resulting 105.25 hours, when the amount paid was 54.75, is excessive. He suggests that even though things will even out somewhat during the rest of the year it is unlikely that the hours will be as paid. SC is to pay herself for 25 hours per month for the next three months, this matter to be reviewed at the next quarterly report of hours, in order to bring things more in line. Proposed MKB, seconded ST, carried unanimously.

17. INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

The internal auditors report is read through. One point raised was that the risk assessment, part of the annual review of procedures, should be carried out as early in the financial year as possible. The item is on the agenda for this meeting, see below, and will be placed on the April agenda annually from now on. The only other matter raised was that of bacs transfers. It is recommended that at least 2 councillors approve each payment, with the RFO/Clerk preparing the initial payment requirement. This ensures the protection of all concerned. The internal auditor was satisfied with the security of the PC's electronic banking and as it defeats the entire object of bacs if a delay is required while the authorisation is signed it is felt that this recommendation will be left in abeyance at the present time but the situation will be monitored and any possible improvements implemented.

18. COMPLIANCE – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A model complaints procedure has been downloaded with accompanying explanatory notes. The wording is agreed, with insertion of specific times. Proposed ST, seconded MK, carried unanimously. This procedure is to be posted on the internet. One reference within the

document is to the Council's grievance and disciplinary procedures. SC is to circulate a model of these and this is to be an agenda item for adoption in September.

19. COMPLIANCE – DEED STORAGE

MKB has checked the deeds in his possession and confirms that the deeds for both the playing field and Stable Close play area are in his safe. These will need to be placed in a safety deposit box eventually but as they will be needed for reference during the constitution of the new Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee and as their removal and replacement in the safety deposit attracts a fee every time it is felt that MKB's safe is perfectly adequate storage at the moment.

20. COMPLIANCE – CHECKING AND HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSESSMENT OF ASSETS

It is felt that the detailed check of assets could be undertaken at the spring clean, though if it is needed by the year end it will need to be carried out by a working party. SC is to find a format for such health and safety checks and circulate it before the September meeting. This is to be an agenda item.

21. REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

The annual review of procedures, risk assessment and review of the effectiveness of the internal audit is read out and discussed. Little has changed as the 2013/14 review was carried out at the end of the year under urgent business. Next year this review will take place in April. The PC is happy that they are compliant. Proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously.

22. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

14/00815/F – Land to SE of Chippings – construction of single storey dwelling with associated parking – KO and AH report that there were some objections from neighbours due to being overlooked by the development but as it is so small and single storey these were not really sufficient to warrant action by the PC. There are some concerns about over development as this is such a small space but MKB points out that there have been very few one bedroom houses built in Finmere over the last quarter of a century. The PC is not to object but will comment on the problem of over development.

23. CORRESPONDENCE

Amenity space Chinalls Close transfer deed – see Matters Arising above

Uncontested Parish Council election invoice – see Financial Report above

HS2 Notification of more documents/property consultation – see Matters Arising above

OCC letter about ‘Lights Out’ WWI commemorative event – to be placed on notice boards

Emails printed:

From KG about go-karting – see AOB below

From AH – about various issues – see various items above and AOB below

From Croughton PC about speed limit – see Matters Arising above

From Thames Valley Police about speed check – see Matters Arising above

From CF about the Finmere House wall – see Matters Arising above

From Barbara Cunningham, PCC, about the Christmas lights – BC is in the process of organising the Church Christmas draw and needs to put a date on the printed tickets, this draw is normally carried out on the evening of the Carol service and switching on of the lights. BC proposes Friday December 5th and this is acceptable to the PC.

From Cliff Monger, OCC Highways, regarding highway issues – see Matters Arising above

From James Kiernan, villager, about trees on the bund – see item 13 above

Emails forwarded:

OALC training update

Cherwell Local Plan suspension of hearings update

Empowering Parish Councils to sell electricity

A4421 Road Closure information

Usual reports

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Go-karts at Finmere Airfield In her email KG explains that several parishioners have made comments regarding go-kart activity on Finmere aerodrome recently. She asks if Tingewick PC have sent any information. SC confirms that nothing has come through from Tingewick PC. KO has been told that this event was just a one-off. These were ‘supalight’ lightweight karts and were certainly very loud. This was apparently one round of a championship. SC is to find an address for the venue, either through the car boot or the Tredwells, and ask if they can confirm that this event was a one-off and also if they can notify the PC of any such events in the future.

Dog fouling AH points out that an unacceptable amount of bagged waste is being discarded in the trees and bushes along the Banbury Road. She and her husband have removed many but more remain. This is actually a longer lasting problem than if the waste itself is thrown into the bushes. AH suggests that this matter could be addressed again in a newsletter and wonders if another bin placed along the Banbury Road between the Red Lion and the Old Kings Head would help matters. The bin at the gated road junction near Hill Leys is

disappearing in the undergrowth and needs to be made more prominent so that people have no excuse. The cost of an extra dog bin would have to be considered. The initial outlay and subsequent emptying costs are quite a commitment. MKB is to clear the undergrowth around the gated road bin.

Road signs The road signs giving directions need cleaning and repainting, not just the street name signs. This is to be looked at for the next spring clean.

Councillor profiles These need updating, Barbara Cunningham's profile needs to be removed. SC is to contact Paul Nash, website administrator.

25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 2nd of September.

The meeting closed at 11.02 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

J Parkers Wholesale Bulb Catalogue

Banbury Job Club Flyer

Clerks and Councils Direct July 2014

Weavley Arboretum Flyer