

## FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2014 in Finmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Mike Kerford-Byrnes (MKB) (Chairman), Katherine Grimston (KG) (Vice Chairman), Kevin Ochel (KO), Stephen Trice (ST) and Amanda Hodgkins (AH)

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

1. Apologies:-Apologies were received from Councillor Mike Kirby (MK) and Amanda Hodgkins (AH) (for possible lateness)

### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the PC meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> of July 2014 were approved with corrections.

### 3. QUARRY LIAISON MEETING REPORT

A report was given to the meeting by Barbara Cunningham (BC) residents representative at the quarry liaison meeting. The meeting was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of July 2014, the attendees being Ben Wragg, Helen Beever and Richard Lucas of OPES, Chris Hodgkinson of OCC, Louise Greenwood of the EA, MKB of Finmere PC and BC the village representative. It was reported that the required investment was 'nearly there' with only HMRC approval for the investor being awaited. The filling of Cell 7 North is being finalised and Cell 7a is now being constructed. Planning permission variations, the extension to the Shelswell land and the footpath re-routing are all in place. This extension will not start until next year. Clay extraction is under way for the lining of Cell 7a. The MRF foundation is 10 metres too long but construction is continuing and this should be operational between December and January 2015 when it will be open from 7am – 6pm. The noise caused classes as 'white noise'. The power generator is operational. The extension to the North is on hold. The variation of permit has been submitted to the EA. On groundwater the leachate management is working within plan parameters, helped by the recent dryer weather. Cells 4, 5 and 8 are nearly there with CQA plan. Capping of the Northern Flank should start by July 29<sup>th</sup>. (MKB points out that Ben Wragg informed him on August 18<sup>th</sup> that finance was now confirmed, when asked about capping in a return email there was no reply. Given the deadline and the fact that the the work will take three to four weeks it should be underway. The plastic cap has to be in place by October 31<sup>st</sup> but this is the only date restriction, restoration of the bund is a different thing. A German company has been contracted to carry out the work. KO points out that the plastic membrane is very easily damaged or distorted if not held down by a layer of fine material covered with soil, it has been known for gases to build up under these coverings and cause them to blister and even split). There have been six complaints, one concerning the bridle-way bridge and the lorries going out with leachate. The slope of uncapped cell 7North is too steep. The site has now been classified as Band E due to the leachate escape enforcement. Louise Greenwood pointed out that the site will soon transfer to the care of the Waste Management team of EA. Dr Brighty has now retired. The monthly inspections will now be quarterly inspections. (The PC should consider writing to EA about this when the

new team is in place). OCC confirmed that the planning permission for the erection of a straw bale screening barrier had been approved. The three leachate tanks behind the offices need planning permission to be applied for. The MRF will be inspected before October. The PC was happy to note that the compactor had at last been moved! The next meeting is to be held on September 24<sup>th</sup> and providing this date is not postponed BC will attend.

MKB has now heard that Helen Beever has left OPES, at the end of August. OCC are hoping to get restoration within one year of capping not three. ST would like to seek clarification of this, is 1 year definite? It is possible that the EA will now be less effective, especially with the reducing of inspection frequency.

#### 4. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

#### 5. MATTERS ARISING

- 5.01 **Obtaining a defibrillator** A letter has been received stating that the application has been approved. The PC contribution of £400 now needs to be sent. Proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously. c/f
- 5.02 **Village Notice Boards** c/f
- 5.03 **Road Repairs** SC did not receive any submissions for the inspection. The jet patcher has been along Water Stratford Road and conditions there are greatly improved. The PC will wait and see if this improvement is lasting. MKB confirms that the inspection is carried out every six months; 'road repairs list' is to be an item on the January and July agendas.
- 5.04 **VAS Signs** Caversfield PC are happy for Finmere PC to take the bases they have spare. Maurice Sheehan, OCC, knows about the constituents of the bases and will know what work is involved. Peter Egawhary, OCC Traffic Safety, can advise on the location. The PC is to organise a working party. Proposed KG, seconded ST, carried unanimously. c/f
- 5.05 **List of assets (the pond)** MKB is still to talk to Mr Tompkins. c/f
- 5.06 **Stiles** SC has received an email from Sarah Aldous, OCC Rights of Way Field Officer North East, explaining that with large schemes like East West Rail taking up much of her time she has been unable to progress the matter of the stiles in the village. However she is to meet shortly with a land agent concerning the path from Warren Farm. c/f
- 5.07 **Public Space in Chinalls Close** Malcolm Saunders, CDC legal, has written to confirm that the transfer of land from Somerlee Homes has been completed. The PC need to send a cheque for £40 made out to Land Registry to complete the registration of the transaction. Proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously.
- 5.08 **Christmas light tree** This is still to be pruned but MKB is hoping to acquire a cherry picker and it is felt best that the PC wait for this as the work would be much safer. c/f

- 5.09 **Printer** c/f
- 5.10 **Blocked gullies** SC has received an email from Gordon Kelman, (GK) OCC Highways. Overhead trees and grass cutting are likely to cause a lot of the problems (KG points out that straw from tractors during the harvest season causes a lot of problems too). GK enquires as to whether the road drains with kerb off-let pipes are the ones causing a problem; these are a very unusual design which he is to consult a colleague about. It is felt that these probably are the culprits. Also mentioned is one of the gully pots in Fulwell Rd, this has been scheduled for cleaning. GK requests confirmation of which pots so that a plan can be drawn up. The PC feels that it would be best to clean all the gullies now the harvest season is over. Two or three on the southern side of the Fulwell Road/Valley Road junction, on the bend, are the worst affected and water does pool there if they are not cleared. c/f
- 5.11 **Finnmere House wall** There has been a problem in getting builders to quote for this work as it is so exacting due to the listed status of the whole building and grounds. It was felt that the work could not be guaranteed if carried out in the original manner. However work has now started and retrospective planning permission is to come. Some few days ago more damage was done by a tractor but the builder was able to reinstate this area more easily.
- 5.12 **Traffic speed in Mere Road** SC has been playing 'phone tag with Chris Kidd of Cherwell Rural Neighbourhood Policing and has been unable to finalise a visit to the PC meeting to discuss Community Speedwatch schemes. This item had been placed on the agenda in case but SC is to try and definitely book a visit to the October meeting. From SC's investigations it appears that Oxfordshire do not subscribe to the Safer Route to School Scheme, unlike Northamptonshire who are committed to a 20 mph section beside each school in their county eventually. MKB suggests that SC check with Cllr Rodney Rose of OCC to make sure that there are no provisions available. c/f
- 5.13 **Trespassers** This is still to be a subject in the next newsletter. c/f
- 5.14 **Bins in Mere Rd** SC passes round the paper copy of the catalogue which has been circulated by email. It is decided to purchase the Topsy Royale litter bin at a cost of £145.00 plus VAT. Proposed ST, seconded AH, carried unanimously. SC is to order and is to enquire into fixings if they are necessary. c/f
- 5.15 **HS2 realigned access requirements letter** The additional documents are to arrive later in the month, SC has confirmed her availability for delivery. c/f
- 5.16 **Protecting Community Assets** This is to be discussed in October. c/f
- 5.17 **Verge at Stable Close** SC has passed on the photos to PC Caroline Brown and has received an email in reply. PC Brown explains that clarification will be needed from OCC Highways as to where the boundary ends and the road starts. If the verge forms part of the Highway then no offence has been committed. If the police take action on this matter they will have to target the whole of the village, they cannot cherry pick. SC is requested to obtain evidence of the boundary, usually in the form of a map. It is also suggested that a newsletter may be a good idea, to try and raise awareness of the problem and avoid action needing to be taken. SC is to contact Cliff Monger and this is to be an item for the next newsletter. c/f

- 5.18 **Playing field problems** These are to be featured in the next newsletter. c/f
- 5.19 **External Audit** SC has had an enquiry from the external auditor regarding the fact that a loan is not an asset but a debt. SC pointed out that the PC had made the loan, to the Sports Club, not taken it out.
- 5.20 **Financial Regulations** SC has exchanged emails with Jan Gosset (JG) of OALC on this matter. JG feels that the suspension of regulations is only to take place for one meeting at a time and cannot be a permanent arrangement. SC feels that the wording is open to interpretation but OALC are the experts and the PC's professional body and so any recommendations must be fully considered. JG recommends that the PC reinstate some of the suspensions but that other regulations can be deleted as appropriate. SC goes through each suspension point and it is agreed to reinstate some, with amended amounts, and delete others. This is to be an agenda item for October when the regulations in their new form will be adopted and can then be posted on the web. SC is to forward the reinstatements/amendments to all before the meeting. While reading the OALC emails another matter of compliance was raised, the PC has to keep a list of all bodies which it works with such as charities, lobby groups etc. When properly constituted the Village Hall and Playing Field Committee (VHPFC) will be a charity and a list will need to be established. MKB is to check with OALC whether the committee needs to be listed now. c/f
- 5.21 **Specific Councillor Roles** KO is still to liaise with MKB on recovering the VAS base from Caversfield. c/f
- 5.22 **Election costs** CDC's invoice has been paid.
- 5.23 **Playing Field Inspection Report** Mr Hick's invoice has been paid. ST had some concerns about asking the VHPFC to carry out the work on the gate as he was unsure of the precise nature of the relationship between the committee and the PC. MKB explained that the PC own the field, the Committee administer the field but the precise remit and terms of the committee are still to be finalised, see Playing Field Progress item below. At the moment the PC and the Committee are cooperating to keep things running. ST himself took a look at the gate but found no great problem. ST, MKB and AH are to visit the Stable Close play area and look at the problems of overgrowth mentioned in the report. Peter Hodgkins, resident, has offered to cut the area back.
- 5.24 **War Memorial Flowers** Mrs Smith's invoice has been paid.
- 5.25 **Unauthorised Activity on the Field** This is to be an item in the next newsletter. MKB is to provide SC with details of the official shooting arrangements in order that she can formally advise the VHPFC. c/f
- 5.26 **Village Hall Storage** SC has checked with OALC and obtained a document, NALC Legal Topic Note (LTN) 40, which gives details of how long to keep the different documents held by the PC. Some, like minutes, are to be held in perpetuity, but can be archived with the District Council, while others need only be held for a short time while still relevant. Planning applications are only kept until the building works have been completed with the exception of appeals; these should be held on to as they can be used as a precedent for future cases. SC is to go through the PC documents when she has a chance and get rid of any unnecessary paperwork. One interesting piece of

information in the document is that all materials published by the PC, such as the newsletters, are to have a copy forwarded to the British Library at the PC's expense. MKB has copies of all newsletters so this can be done.

- 5.27. **Additional Parish Councillor** Notices were put up and nobody has come forward. It is now possible for councillors to approach prospective candidates and MKB urges all to think of suitable people.
- 5.28 **'Lights Out' Event** This was posted on the notice boards.
- 5.29 **Go-karts at Fimmere Airfield** SC has contacted the Tredwells and they have confirmed that this event is to be an annual event but only on one day. SC has provided them with her contact details and they have agreed to give the PC warning of any events at the airfield which may cause villagers concerns
- 5.30 **Dog fouling** MKB is still to cut back the undergrowth around the dog bin at the gated road junction, the post of the gate has rotted and he has had to wedge it in place and will need to cut back considerable growth. This will also be an item in the next newsletter. c/f
- 5.31 **Councillor Profiles** ST has provided a profile and photo and SC has emailed Paul Nash, website administrator, to get the site updated.

## 6. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was reported that there was £3,816.91 in the Treasurer Account and £5,293.85 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid in:

£192.54 from Aon insurance, a refund in error  
£279.64 from HMRC refund of VAT

The following had been paid out:

£197.50 to Phillip Rushforth for playing field play area bark  
£112.32 to John Hicks for the playing field inspection  
£32.25 to Beryl Smith for War Memorial flowers  
£39.00 to CDC for uncontested election expenses  
£192.54 to Aon for insurance payment, returning the refund  
£8.60 to e.on for electricity  
£370.00 to John Donaldson for grass cutting  
£557.46 to Sharron Chalcraft for Clerk and RFO duties and internet costs

An invoice in the sum of £270 has been received from CDC for the work carried out on the Chinalls Close transfer by the legal department. Proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously.

## 7. S19/S137

No requests have been received.

## 8. URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business has been carried out.

## 9. FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE

As pointed out in the quarry liaison meeting report above the finance for the site is now in place. MKB called Ben Wragg, Opes, recently when a pile of 'stuff' appeared on top of the mound, above cells 1, 2, 3 and 4. Ben did not know what this might be and has furnished no answer since that time.

## 10. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS

This is still ongoing; MKB is still trying to find a solicitor willing to do pro bono work on the matter, ST wonders if it might be worthwhile paying for a solicitor, MKB explains that given the nature of the work involved that could prove very expensive. c/f

## 11. PLAYING FIELD CONDITION

The field has recently been used for the Finmere festival and KO and ST confirm that holes were filled in and the ground checked before that event. SC is to check with the insurers whether signs warning of possible rabbit holes are necessary.

## 12. TREE SURGERY AND OTHER WORKS ON PC LAND

ST has visited the Chinalls close site with Phillip Rushforth and Mr Reason, residents. Mr Reason is unable to maintain his own hedge and fence properly because of the condition of the hedge now owned by the PC. The footpath across the amenity space is now covered by the hedge and several of the trees on the plot are in need of attention. The hedge can either be grubbed out completely and replaced or cut hard back. It is felt best to get it cut hard back and see if that is sufficient for now. On the bund at the back of Stable Close ST discovered very overgrown trees with the possibility that they could soon cause damage to the nearby houses if not reduced, there was also one tree leaning considerably. ST is to obtain quotes for the work on both sites for the next PC meeting which can be circulated under urgent business if thought necessary.

## 13. COMPLIANCE – GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

SC has obtained a copy of a model grievance and disciplinary procedure from the web. This has been in use by a parish council for some time and is modified from the ACAS Code of Practice 2009. It is decided to adopt this procedure, proposed MKB, seconded ST, carried

unanimously. SC is to forward this to Paul Nash, website administrator, for posting on the web.

#### 14. COMPLIANCE – CHECKING AND HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSESSMENT OF ASSETS

In order to conform to the regulations a risk assessment and a physical check should take place for each individual PC asset. At the meeting it must be decided which assets could pose a risk to the public; it is felt that all assets other than the sports club loan come into this category. A separate sheet must be prepared for each asset and the risk assessment updated annually. SC has obtained a template risk assessment sheet with an example of how it should be filled in. By the end of the year each item must have its sheet completed, SC is to keep them in a folder and any remedial actions recommended by the assessment must be carried out. SC is to produce a template sheet for each asset and share them out among the councillors. At the next meeting the assessments can be discussed and agreed and then the remedial action if any can be organised.

SC has this month received a query from another clerk, forwarded by SLCC, enquiring into maintenance contracts for street lights taken out with e.on. SC is to check with e.on about the cost of these contracts and ask whether at the time of bulb changing a visual inspection is carried out.

This is to be an agenda item in October.

#### 15. CONSULTATION ON OXFORDSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE STRATEGY

This is actually a consultation on how OCC should consult on the future minerals and waste strategy for the county. The documents can be viewed on the website and comments can be made until October 13<sup>th</sup> 2014. Councillors are to look at this document and this is to be an agenda item in October.

#### 16. COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

SC has attempted to arrange a visit by Chris Kidd for this evening but he has not responded in the negative or attended. This is to be an agenda item in October.

#### 17. REMEMBRANCE DAY WREATH

A gentleman named Hugo Brown has taken over from Robert Drummond-Hay as the Poppy Appeal Organiser for the Fringford District. He has sent a catalogue by email giving details of the various wreaths available in this WWI centenary year. SC has circulated this and councillors have had a chance to choose. It is decided to order a type G Civic Wreath, proposed ST, seconded KO, carried unanimously. This wreath has a suggested donation of £50. It is decided to pay £100 in keeping with previous years, in view of the exceptional

drain on Royal British Legion funds at present, proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously. SC is to order the wreath.

## 18. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

14/00815/F – Land to SE of Chippings – Construction of single storey dwelling with associated parking – permission subject to conditions - (SC realises that not all the conditions imposed are actually included on this document. A copy of the full conditions is to be obtained for PC records).

## 19. CORRESPONDENCE

Arrow Accounting letter of engagement 2014/15 – it is decided to engage the same internal auditor for this year, proposed KO, seconded MKB, carried unanimously. MKB and SC sign the letter. SC is to photocopy and return it.

Invoice from CDC for work on Chinalls Close land – see financial report

Info on a training course for Openness of Local Government – This is to be held in Didcot on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. SC feels it may be worthwhile attending as it deals with the recording of delegated decision making, which encompasses the urgent business procedure. The cost is £35 plus VAT. It is decided that SC shall attend the course, proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously. SC is to book the course.

Emails printed –

News on stiles – see Matters Arising

Chinalls Close land news – see Matters Arising

OCC reply on gullies – see Matters Arising

PC Caroline Brown info request – see Matters Arising

Consultation on Draft revised Oxfordshire Statement of Community Involvement – see agenda above

Poppy appeal news – see agenda above

Emails forwarded –

OCC Planning Ref MW.0079/14 consultation news – to be on the agenda for October

Tingewick planning application 14/01958/AOP – forwarded by Tingewick, it is not felt that any objection can be made by Finmere PC on planning grounds

WWI Commemoration Service invitation from Revd Christobel Hargraves. Unfortunately MKB was unable to attend as he was taking someone to hospital, other councillors were also engaged. Phillip Rushforth, villager, the member of the public present explains that the event went very well with some 70 attendees and was very moving.

Poppy appeal information and catalogue – see agenda above



Annual Parish Survey Info – this dealt with emergency preparedness. SC has filled in and returned the contact form, giving herself as the 24hr emergency contact and MKB as the second working hours contact. KG takes the information and will try to run with it, resurrecting the efforts to form an emergency plan if possible

Usual reports

## 20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Gullies** ST points out that the gullies in the underpass leading to the aerodrome are blocked and water is standing in the tunnel. SC is to report this to Tingewick PC as it is under the jurisdiction of Bucks CC.

**Drain Covers** ST points out that three drain covers in the village are rusted through. Two of these are in Captain's Lane and the third on the Mere Road verge near Woodlea. SC is to report this matter to Cliff Monger.

**Rubbish on Roundabout** AH points out that bottles and cans have been left on the grass verge near the roundabout approach to the village. This comes under the jurisdiction of Bucks CC, SC is to inform them.

**Building Plans** MKB explains that the revised local plan means that the area has to build more houses. These are to be in developments of up to about ten houses, infill or conversions. Finmere is a central village in this plan with several satellite villages that will share the amount allocated. These will be built according to the ability of each village to accommodate them, taking into account such things as drainage capacity. One area which is additional to those already listed is the land to the west of the Old Kings Head development. The covenant preventing any further development on that land is due to expire.

## 21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> of October.

KO explains that he may be away. MKB confirms that he will be late.

The meeting closed at 11.15 p.m.

## CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

Glasdon leaflet