

GREAT FINBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th December 2023 in Pettward Hall

Present: Cllr James Spencer (chair) Cllr Simon Waspe Cllr Lee Morgan
Cllr John Barron Cllr Isabelle Campbell
Paula Gladwell – Clerk Cllr Penny Otton (part)
Cllr John Matthissen (part)
3 members of public

- 2023/3175 **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Richard Burton, Cllr Ant Mann. Council consented to accept the apologies given.
- 2023/3176 **To receive member’s declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registerable interests and non-registerable interests in accordance with the council’s Code of Conduct for the items on the agenda and to note any request and determination for dispensations relating to those interests** – None
- 2023/3177 **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting** - It was proposed by Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Barron that the minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting were approved, with all in favour. The Parish Council Meeting minutes of 13th November 2023 were signed as a true record.
- 2023/3178 **Public Participation** – No questions
- 2023/3179 **County Councillor Otton’s Report** – Deferred
- 2023/3180 **District Councillor Matthissen’s Report** - Deferred
- 2023/3181 **Clerks Report** – The road signs in need of repair or replacement have been collated and passed to Cllr Otton for action under by SCC.
It was noted that Community Action Suffolk have confirmed that the forwarders on councillors emails are meant only for forwarding, if a mail box is required to email out off them a charge will be applicable.
An application has been made to SCC to site a grit bin at Willow Close and funding for the bin is to be sought from Cllr Matthissen’s locality fund. *(post meeting this application has been rejected as the site suggested is not on the highway)*
It was noted that Orwell Housing have received no positive response from either landowner of the two preferred sites for Local Needs Housing projects. It was confirmed that as only these two sites have been supported by MSDC Planning officers this project will unfortunately now be put on hold.
Feedback from the recent Councillor Surgery showed very few people attended however for those that did it was positive. It was agreed to set a date for the next one at the Jan meeting.
It was noted that the landowner had been informed of the concerns expressed for the safety of the trees adjacent to The Chestnuts where one has already fallen into the road. It is hoped the landowner will carry out work to make the remaining ones safe.
Bus Improvement Plan – It was confirmed that in collaboration with Bildeston and Hitcham Parish Councils an expression of interest has been submitted for a share of the funding to provide additional bus services from Hadleigh to Stowmarket via Great Finborough. The service requested that will benefit Great Finborough is a Mon - Fri bus leaving Hadleigh at 7.30am getting to Stowmarket at 8.15 to meet the college bus and the first off peak London train with a return bus leaving Stowmarket at 4.35pm. Hadleigh Community Transport has agreed that they would be interested in providing this service and will input costings into our application. We wait to see if we will be successful.
It was agreed to keep the street lighting programme on the usual part night lighting over the Christmas and New Year period.
It was noted that several of the deferred items from the October agenda could be incorporated into the Environment and Biodiversity items going forward and that any remaining ones will be included on a future agenda.
- 2023/3182 **Planning** – There were no planning applications to consider.
- 2023/3183 The following MSDC decisions were noted – DC/23/04506 Discharge of Conditions Application DC/21/02077 Condition 12 (Contamination) East House, High Road APPROVED and DC/23/04306 Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/22/06092 – Condition 4 (Materials) Condition 5 (Surface Water Discharge) Condition 8 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy) and Condition 9 (Wildlife Sensitive Design Scheme) 4 Wash Lane Corner, Combs Lane – APPROVED and

DC/23/03826 Rewilding project including provision of woodland, construction of a wetland lake and angling lake and erection of anglers boat house/tractor shed, Valley Farm, Valley Lane - GRANTED

- 2023/3184 **County Councillor Otton's Report** – Cllr Otton gave her report which had been circulated and a copy is attached to these minutes.
- 2023/3185 **District Councillor Matthissen's Report** – Cllr Matthissen gave his report which had been circulated and a copy is attached to these minutes.
- 2023/3186 **Finance** – The Finance report for December 2023 was approved.
- 2023/3187 The following payments were approved. Prop Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Barron with all in favour, Staff salaries for November.
- 2023/3188 Gipping Press £204.00
- 2023/3189 P Chapman - Bank retainer £240.00
- 2023/3190 J Firmin - Tree felling £660.00
- 2023/3191 SALC - Training £92.40
- 2023/3192 Top Garden - Wildflower Cut £216.00
- 2023/3193 The report from the Budget Working Group for the 2024/25 budget was noted. Cllr Barron explained the considerations behind various budget headings and the concerns around the proposed 60% plus increase in the cost for emptying litter and dog bins. This indicative budget proposal, without the increase in bin emptying, would require a 10% increase in the precept as well as significant spending from reserves to keep any increase manageable for residents. It was agreed that further consideration and possible amendment of the budget would be deferred until the January meeting and a confirmed figure is received for bin emptying.
- 2023/3194 **Tree & Hedge Management Working Group** – The minutes from the recent meeting of the working group were noted. It was RESOLVED to approve recommendations 1 – 5 and 7 – 15 of the Inspection report (copy attached) Proposed by Cllr Morgan, sec Cllr Campbell with all in favour. Cllr Matthissen agreed to source 3 x larger, more mature Oaks for Recommendation 15.
- 2023/3195 **Hosting a Bee Hive** – Cllr Campbell explained her proposal for keeping bees on parish council land and reported on various feedback she had received regarding the pros and cons for this. Cllr Campbell suggested that the wildflower meadow might not be the best location for managed bee hives at this time and explained that she hoped residents or farmers might come forward to host a hive on private land. Various other suggestions for increased biodiversity in favour of native bees were discussed including the creation of natural homes and planting of native hedgerows. It was agreed that hosting of a hive on parish land would not go ahead at this time however Council was supportive of the other projects to help native bees.
- 2023/3196 **Biodiversity Policy** – It was agreed to create a Biodiversity Policy and carry out a review of biodiversity plans in place and create an action plan of what more the council can do and how else it can support other local biodiversity plans. It was noted that any Climate Awareness and Environmental policies, recycling plans and PROW improvements can be fed into this review.
- 2023/3197 **Village Maintenance** – It was noted that there are several wobbly posts around the greens. Discussion took place around replacement of these with hedging and whether to introduce posts around the greens at the entrance to Middlefield Drive to prevent parking on the verges. It was agreed to survey the posts at the next Village Maintenance Working Group to establish how many replacements were needed. It was RESOLVED to set a budget of a maximum £100 for new posts, Prop Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Morgan with all in favour. Costs will be sought for timber with an alternative for recycled materials.
- 2023/3198 It was noted that the Red Chestnut tree in Church Road required some remedial work to straighten it now that the Ash had been removed. A price for this work will be sought by Cllr Mann.
- 2023/3199 It was noted that the November risk assessment for Middlefield Drive Play Park had not been received to date.
- 2023/3200 Consideration of the provision of a brick plinth for the village sign was deferred as no further information was available.
- 2023/3201 **Footpaths** – It was agreed that monitoring of all the footpaths in the village on a regular basis should be split between councillors to make it more manageable for Cllr Campbell to assess them all. Photos are still awaited of FP45 in order to request that duck boarding or a raised platform be considered to alleviate the boggy area however concerns were expressed that this could cause problems for farm machinery in this area.
- 2023/3202 **Correspondence** – There were no comments to tabled correspondence.
- 2023/3203 **Flooding Action Group** – It was agreed that an initial meeting be fixed for Monday 19th February 2024 with invitations to be sent to Rattlesden, Hitcham, Buxhall and Combs Parish Councils together with the SCC flood team and the contacts in environment departments that

Cllrs Mann and Morgan have made. Flood maps will be sourced from Cllr Matthissen for projector use at the meeting. It was noted that the aim of the group would be to establish whether neighbouring parishes had the same concerns and to explore practical solutions to improve the resilience of our communities against future flood events. It was noted that there were two known properties that had water ingress into the home during the recent storms with others experiencing water to within a few inches of doors and ingress into sewage treatment plants and outbuildings.

2023/3204

Matters to be brought to the attention of the council – It was noted that Cllr Mann had yet to deal with the broken branch in Woodpecker Hill Wood.

Next meeting will be held in Pettward Hall on Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.30pm