

GREAT FINBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13th November 2023 in Pettward Hall

Present: Cllr James Spencer (chair) Cllr Simon Waspe Cllr Lee Morgan Cllr
John Barron Cllr Ant Mann Cllr Isabelle Campbell
Cllr Richard Burton
Paula Gladwell – Clerk Cllr Penny Otton (part)
Cllr John Matthissen (part)

12 members of public

2023/3135
2023/3136

Apologies for Absence – None

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 – Cllr Barron declared a pecuniary interest in Item 8a (Min no.2023/3142)

2023/3137

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting - It was proposed by Cllr Campbell, sec Cllr Barron that the minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting were approved, with all in favour. The Parish Council Meeting minutes of 16th October 2023 were signed as a true record.

2023/3138

Public Participation – Paul introduced himself and confirmed his offer to carry out maintenance jobs in the village when needed, he was thanked for coming forward to help. A request was confirmed for a grit bin in Willow Close

Concerns were expressed regarding the row of trees adjacent to Peartree Place, one of which fell into the road today and it is thought that others may be equally unsafe. The ownership of these trees is unknown and enquiries will be made as to who is responsible for them before a request is lodged that they are made safe as soon as possible.

Lengthy discussion took place around application DC/23/03967 with the council hearing from both the applicants and neighbours. It was noted that some of the concerns around this application had been addressed in the new submission however some things had not changed. The applicant confirmed that the wording of the description may also still be subject to change. It was confirmed that an application would be put forward in the near future to site a bus for residential living at Green Farm. Josh was thanked for coming along to the meeting to confirm that his application was now ready to be submitted.

James Sinclair distributed plans and gave information in pre application for a proposal to build a student accommodation block at Finborough Hall School and divert a public footpath together with the provision of community gains in the form of a trim trail and community orchard. It is understood that the proposal will include mature tree planting and new boundary hedging and fencing. Concerns were expressed that this site is outside the development boundary and very close to the reservoirs. James Sinclair confirmed that new fencing would be included to prevent access to the reservoir and that mature planting would screen the building from the view across Buxhall Vale and into the VIOS. This was countered by the fact that any screening would take years to mature and in seasons with no leaf the building would be visible. James was thanked for coming along to the meeting to explain his proposal in detail and answer any questions council had.

2023/3139

Clerks Report – It was confirmed that The Play Inspection Co. Did not recommend plastic or metal spikes on the swing frame to deter birds and therefore no bird deterrent would be installed at this time. It was confirmed that a decision was still awaited from Kompan regarding the anchor for the swing seat that has been removed.

Information regarding converting our VAS machines to solar was discussed. It was noted that the Radarlux VAS would need to be shipped to Germany should we wish to have it assessed for conversion and it was agreed this was not an option. The Westcotec machine would also need to be assessed for compatibility and if possible the cost to convert would be £975. If we wished to replace the unit with a similar new one it would be £4318, cost paid for the existing unit was £3150 back in 2019.

It was noted that the car park sign had been put back up.

The format for the Councillor Surgery was confirmed and it was agreed that District and County Councillors be invited to a future surgery.

Suffolk on Board Bus improvement funds - It was confirmed that an application had been submitted to reflect Cllr Matthissen's suggestions to meet the tight deadline. It was noted that

much more work would be needed to submit a workable and budgeted scheme if there was any chance that we could be successful in extending the bus service in Great Finborough.

It was confirmed that the Asset of Community Value listing for The Chestnut Horse expires on 21st May 2024. The owners of the pub, Admiral have confirmed that they are actively marketing the pub for a new tenant so at this time there is no suggestion of actioning the AVC. It was noted that any trigger of the moratorium in the event that the pub was listed for sale would give 6 weeks to decide if a community bid was possible and if so a further 4.5 months (total of 6 months) would be available to put together any bid.

2023/3140 **County Councillor Otton's Report** – Cllr Otton gave her report which had been circulated and a copy is attached to these minutes.

2023/3141 **District Councillor Matthissen's Report** – Cllr Matthissen gave his report which had been circulated and a copy is attached to these minutes. Cllr Matthissen confirmed that he has locality money available for applications.

Cllr Barron left the meeting.

2023/3142 **Planning** – It was RESOLVED to submit the following comment to application DC/23/03967 Erection of replacement buildings 7 and 9 with B2 and E(g) use (following demolition of buildings 6,7,8 and 9 which have been completely demolished) Change of use from agricultural to B1 use for buildings 11 and 12 (retention of)(amended scheme to DC/23/01379 Green Farm, City Lane – *"Great Finborough Parish Council OBJECT to this application"* (additional comments are attached to these minutes as Appendix A) Proposed Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Morgan with a majority in favour.

Cllr Barron returned to the meeting.

2023/3143 DC/23/05102 Prior Approval for proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to dwelling house (C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for conversion. Town and Country Planning (general Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q – Conversion of buildings to form 4 no. Dwellings. Poplar Farm, High Road – *"Great Finborough Parish Council have NO OBJECTION to this application based on the information available"* Proposed Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Morgan with all in favour.

2023/3144 DC/23/05102 Erection of replacement chimney stack (following demolition of existing stack) Pettward Hall, High Road – *"Great Finborough Parish Council are custodian trustees of Pettward Hall and SUPPORT this application to make the chimney safe whilst rebuilding in a manner that will retain the buildings authenticity."*

2023/3145 DC/23/04385 Demolition of existing detached garage and erection of new pitched roof detached garage, Three Gables, High Road – *"Great Finborough Parish Council have NO OBJECTION to this application based on the information available"* Prop Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Morgan with all in favour.

2023/3146 The following MSDC decisions were noted – DC/23/04111 Listed Building Consent – Replace existing blown render to front elevation with lime render and repairs to existing windows and doors, render to existing brick extension, 4 The Green, Church Road – GRANTED

2023/3147 **Finance** – The Finance report for November 2023 was approved.

2023/3148 The following payments were approved. Prop Cllr Spencer, with all in favour, Staff salaries for October.

2023/3149 Gipping Press £223.00

2023/3150 Top Garden grass cutting £1152.00 and tree work £1200.00

2023/3151 It was RESOLVED to approve the Wildflower Meadow cut by Top Garden for £120.00 Proposed Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Morgan with all in favour.

2023/3152 It was RESOLVED to purchase the Finborough Hall Estate Sale book to be stored by the History Recorder at a cost of £20.00 Proposed Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Morgan with all in favour.

2023/3153 It was RESOLVED to purchase no parking signs for Middlefield Drive grass verges at a cost of approx £20.00 Proposed by Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Mann with all in favour. Cllr Mann will arrange purchase and installation of these.

2023/3154 Following a resident request for a grit bin in Willow Close it was agreed that funding for this would be requested from Cllr Matthissen's locality budget and Suffolk County Council would be asked to assess and approve the site.

2023/3155 It was noted that the Budget Working Party meeting had been cancelled as not quorate. It was agreed that Cllr Campbell join this group and another meeting date be fixed to ensure any recommendations for the 2024/2025 budget could come to full council at the December meeting.

2023/3156 **Tree & Hedge Management Working Group** – The minutes from the recent meeting of the working group were noted. The recommendation to apply for free trees and hedges packs was approved. Cllr Morgan will source these and consideration of planting sites will be taken. It was noted that any not found a home this autumn could be planted in a nursery plot to be transplanted next year. It was agreed that hedging whips be used to fill the gap left by the recent felling of the Maple tree. The next meeting of the Working Group will carry out a complete survey of trees and hedges in the parish and consider new planting sites.

- 2023/3157 **Hosting a Bee Hive** – Deferred
- 2023/3158 **Village Maintenance** – The success of the recent Village Maintenance working group was noted with plans to have another one agreed. A date of January 13th 2024 was fixed, the group will concentrate efforts on litter picking this time and this will be advertised on all media.
- 2023/3159 It was RESOLVED to engage Robinson Arnold to carry out the maintenance work to the buffer zone at the quoted £620.00. It was noted that £250 had been received towards this work from the Pride in Your Place grant and the balance would be requested from Cllr Matthissen’s Locality Budget. Proposed Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Mann with all in favour.
- 2023/3160 The clerk will report the blocked drain outside South Lodge to Suffolk County Council.
- 2023/3161 **Middlefield Drive Play Park Risk Assessment** – The October report from Ben Oxley was noted. Highlighted issues; Overhanging trees, these have been cut back. Tarmac cracking, this will be monitored. Uneven surface between grass and path, this will be addressed at next work party. Fencing bolt missing and fence wobbles advise tighten all nuts and bolts, Cllr Mann will replace the bolt and tighten all fixings. Padlock missing, contractors will be asked to check if they have this.
- 2023/3162 Thanks were extended to Finborough Hall School staff for cutting the hedge alongside the footpath and for edging back the skirting along the High Road pavement towards Hitcham.
- 2023/3163 Brick plinth for village sign – With no updates for this, further consideration was deferred.
- 2023/3164 **Balance of Lottery grant** – A quote has been received for ongoing maintenance to the buffer zone going forward for five years. This has been used in an application to The National Lottery Community Fund for the balance of the grant to be transferred to a revenue pot for this purpose. A response is awaited.
- 2023/3165 **Footpaths** – It was noted that two bridges dislodged in the flooding have been repaired. Photos are still awaited of FP45 in order to request that duck boarding or a raised platform be considered to alleviate the boggy area. The clerk will request some spare finger posts.
- 2023/3166 **Correspondence** – There were no comments to tabled correspondence.
- 2023/3167 **Suffolk County Council Library Consultation** – It was agreed to submit a response to SCC urging them to prioritize the continuation of the mobile library service. *(submitted comments are attached to these minutes as Appendix B)*
- 2023/3168 **Flooding Action Group** – It was agreed that inter parish liaison would help in formulating a plan to look at actions that might alleviate flooding of the River Rat. It was resolved to create a Flooding Working Group whose remit would be to make contact with neighbouring parish councils who may also be affected by recent flooding and together engage with Suffolk County Council and Environment Agency to create some form of flood management scheme for River Rat. Terms of Reference for the working group will be drafted, membership will be all councillors at this time. The date of the first working group meeting is tbc.
- 2023/3169 **Public Participation Policy** – It was RESOLVED to adopt the draft Protocols for Public Participation in Council Meetings with the addition of overall time of 10 minutes for reports and no other amendments. Proposed Cllr Spencer with all in favour.
- 2023/3170 **Matters to be brought to the attention of the council** – The pothole in Combs Lane can be reported with photo evidence, Cllr Campbell will photograph and send to the clerk. Cllr Mann suggested that the new emails were not working correctly and he would explain how they needed to be set up.
- 2023/3171 **Motion to exclude temporarily the Public and Press** - It was resolved to exclude the Public and Press pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed concerning staff contracts of employment.
- 2023/3172 **Review of Staff Contracts** – Cllr Morgan declared a pecuniary interest in Item 21 and took no part in the discussion regarding the Litter Picker review. It was agreed that amendments be made to the litter picker hourly rate. Proposed by Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Burton with all in favour.
- 2023/3173 It was agreed that amendments be made to the clerks scale point and hours. Proposed Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Burton with all in favour.
- 2023/3174 The recently agreed 2023/2024 National Salary Awards by the Joint Council for Local Government Services were noted and it was RESOLVED to apply the changes to the Clerks salary in line with the Contract of Employment. Proposed by Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Burton with all in favour.

Next meeting will be held in Pettward Hall on Monday 11th December 2023 at 7.30pm