

GREAT FINBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th January 2024 in Pettward Hall

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

11 members of public

- 2023/3205 **Apologies for Absence** - None
- 2023/3206 **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 8c (min no. 2023/3215)
- 2023/3207 **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting** - It was proposed by Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Mann that the minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting were approved, with all in favour. The Parish Council Meeting minutes of 11th December 2023 were signed as a true record.
- 2023/3208 **Public Participation** – No questions
- 2023/3209 **County Councillor Otton's Report** – Deferred
- 2023/3210 **District Councillor Matthissen's Report** - Deferred
- 2023/3211 **Clerks Report** – The application made to SCC to site a grit bin at Willow Close has been rejected as the site suggested is not on the highway. It was suggested that an alternative site be found close by that is on the highway and a further application then be submitted. It was noted that Cllr Matthissen had agreed the grit bin could be funded from his locality budget. It was noted that the application by the owners of the chip van to trade from Middlefield Car Park had been withdrawn now that the future of the pub is known. The expression of interest submitted to "Plug in Suffolk" has been acknowledged and further information is promised soon. SCC have confirmed that they will repair the broken kerb in Church Road with a 20 day lead time. The application for additional bus services submitted to the Bus Improvement Fund has been returned requesting further information. Cllr Morgan and the Clerk have instigated a poll via Facebook and the Website to seek view on whether the additional service would be welcomed by residents. This data can then be fed into the application. Bildeston are to seek costings from Hadleigh Community Transport which should help the application. It was confirmed that Mid Suffolk DC had launched its Call for Sites as part of the new Joint Local Plan. This process should be monitored closely for any sites put forward in Great Finborough. It was confirmed that the next Village Work Party is set for 13th January 2024 and will concentrate on litter picking.
- 2023/3212 **District Councillor Matthissen's Report** – Cllr Matthissen gave his report which had been circulated and a copy is attached to these minutes.
- Item 9e brought forward.
- 2023/3213 Comments were acknowledged from members of the public with an interest in this item. The report from the Pre Application public site visit at Finborough Hall School was noted. It was confirmed that a further public meeting would be arranged by the School to ensure all residents had a chance to view the plans and have any questions answered by the applicants.
- 2023/3214 **County Councillor Otton's Report** – Cllr Otton gave her report which had been circulated and a copy is attached to these minutes. The numerous and deep potholes in Combs Lane that are now visible since the water levels have dropped were brought to Cllr Otton's attention. Cllr Spencer agreed to collate and report them.
- Item 9c brought forward
Cllr Barron left the meeting
- 2023/3215 **Planning** – Comments were acknowledged from members of the public with an interest in this application. It was RESOLVED to submit the following comment to Re-consultation of application DC/23/03967 Erection of replacement buildings 7 and 9 (following demolition of buildings 6,7,8 and 9) (Retention of) and use of building 7 for sui generis (electrical work and storage) (Retention of) and building 9 for sui generis (electrical work and storage); change of use of

building 11 from agricultural to sui generis (personal storage for Mr Lee) (Retention of) and change of use of building 12 from agricultural to sui generis (timber storage) (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 Mann, sec Cllr Morgan with a majority in favour.

Cllr Barron returned to meeting

2023/3216 It was RESOLVED to submit the following comments to; DC/23/05706 Erection of front extension (following removal of canopy) Ashgrove, High Road – *"Great Finborough Parish Council have NO OBJECTION to this application based on the information available"* and

2023/3217 DC/23/05772 Listed Consent and DC/23/05771 Erection of single storey side/rear extension. Demolition of porch, conservatory and rear canopy. Replacement windows and render, Bridge farm, Valley Lane - *"Great Finborough Parish Council have NO OBJECTION to this application based on the information available"*

2023/3218 It was noted that the validation by Mid Suffolk District Council for DC/23/05918 Application for a non-material amendment relating to DC/23/04506 – change of position of gateway, Land at Valley Lane had been WITHDRAWN.

2023/3219 The following MSDC decisions were noted; DC/23/05102 Erection of like for like replacement chimney stack (following removal of existing stack) Pettward Hall, High Road – GRANTED and DC/23/04507 Discharge of conditions Application for DC/22/04867 – Condition 7 (Surface water Discharge Prevention) and Condition 10 (Agreement of Materials) East House, High Road – APPROVED and

DC/23/04385 Demolition of existing detached garage, erection of new pitched roof detached garage and change of use of land to residential curtilage. Three Gables, High Road – GRANTED and DC/23/05850 Discharge of Conditions Application DC/22/04246 – Condition 3 (Landscaping Scheme) Condition 7 (Foul Drainage) and Condition 8 (Illumination Restriction) Land at Valley Lane – APPROVED

2023/3220 **Finance** – The Finance report for January 2024 was approved.

2023/3221 The following payments were approved. Prop Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Barron with all in favour, Staff salaries for December.

2023/3222 HMRC Q3 Payment

2023/3223 Wave £13.76

2023/3224 Hall Hire £96.00

2023/3225 The Budget Working Group put forward their final draft of the budget for 2024/2025. Discussion took place around various options on how to cover the increase in the costs of emptying litter and dog bins going forward now that MSDC had increased the cost by 25% for next year with a further increase the following year and the intention to eventually cease supplementing this service going forward. It was noted that the various options altered dependant on the amount used from reserves to cover the increased costs. A proposal to approve a budget that increased the precept by 12.5% Option 2 was put forward. Proposed Cllr Spencer, sec Cllr Burton. Motion failed 2 votes for, 5 against.

A proposal to approve the budget that increased the precept by 11% Option 1 was put forward. Proposed by Cllr Barron, sec Cllr Morgan. It was RESOLVED to approve Option 1 of the Budget for 2024/25 with all in favour.

2023/3226 It was noted that the precept requirement raised by the budget process of £16342 will result in an 11% increase in the Parish Council part of residents Council Tax based on a Band D property for the year. This equates to an increase in monetary value of £4.81 for the year, from £43.75 to £48.56. It was RESOLVED to set the precept for 2024/2025 at £16342 and the request forms were completed and signed. Proposed Cllr Barron, sec Cllr Morgan with all in favour.

2023/3227 Consideration took place on the awarding of charity grants for this year. It was noted that no letters of application had been received. It was agreed that no awards be made at this time.

2023/3228 **Tree & Hedge Management Working Group** – It was noted that 40 plus trees and hedging whips had been planted as per the plan agreed and that further planting would be needed for the remaining whips. The next meeting of the Working Group was set for Thursday 8th February.

2023/3229 **Councillor Surgery** – The next Councillor Surgery was fixed for Saturday 16th March 2024. It was agreed that PC Stefan Henriksen our community engagement officer be invited.

2023/3230 **Biodiversity, Climate and Environment** – It was RESOLVED to adopt the Biodiversity Policy as drafted. Proposed Cllr Spencer with all in favour.

2023/3231 Discussion took place around how to audit the existing biodiversity in the parish. It was suggested that engaging professional ecologists was not a financially viable option and that help should be sought from residents who might have experience of this type of review. Further information gathering of other biodiversity plans in place in the local area would be carried out.

- 2023/3232 An action plan of what more the council can do and how else it can support other local biodiversity plans will be drafted and this will be reviewed by the Tree and Hedge Working Group with any recommendations brought to the next full council meeting.
- 2023/3233 **Village Maintenance** – It was noted that the next Work Party priority was litter picking however an assessment of the drainage issues raised by Woodpecker Hill Group would be done and ditch clearing at Valley Lane would be looked at too.
- 2023/3234 Middlefield Drive Play Park Risk Assessment – Completed actions from the October report were noted; the overhanging trees had been cut back. It was noted that the second gate had no padlock as this was a disabled access point. The missing bolt and tightening of fence fixings had not yet been actioned by Cllr Mann, this will be carried out as soon as possible. The November report highlighted some tarmac cracking and uneven surfacing adjacent to the path with a recommendation to monitor these for further deterioration.
- 2023/3235 The Tree and Hedge Working Group will assess the Red Chestnut in Church Road to establish if any work required is for safety concerns or for health and aesthetic reasons before a decision is made on any spending for this tree.
- 2023/3236 Designs for a brick plinth for the village sign were considered with the two tier option thought to be the most suitable. It was noted that two options for free labour had been received. The costs for materials would be sought before consideration of how these would be funded. Suggestions included sponsorship or a District Councillor locality grant. Cllr Morgan will liaise with the builders offering to carry out the work.
- 2023/3237 It was agreed that 10 posts were needed to replace the failed ones around the greens. These would be purchased as per the agreed budget and installed by the next Working Group.
- 2023/3238 It was agreed that the tree stump adjacent to Valley Lane, which remains from the recent felling, was not causing any concern or obstruction and would be left in situ for biodiversity gain.
- 2023/3239 **Footpaths** – Cllr Campbell had nothing new to report.
- 2023/3240 **Correspondence** – There were no comments to tabled correspondence.
- 2023/3241 **Flooding Working Group** – It was confirmed that invitations to the meeting for Monday 19th February had been sent to Rattlesden, Hitcham, Buxhall and Combs Parish Councils. Matt Williams, Flood and Water Manager at Suffolk County Council had also been asked to attend however has declined stating that SCC could not offer officer time to this as it didn't meet their criteria for 5 or more houses flooded. Matt did offer some links to further information. Cllr Morgan will invite Matt Hullis, his contact at SCC who is their Head of Environment Strategy. Cllr Spencer will invite his contacts SCC Cllr Jessica Fleming and David Card. Cllr Mann confirmed he would arrange a walk around with his contact Helen George from Environment Agency prior to the meeting and invite her to report on any findings from their site visit.
- 2023/3242 **Matters to be brought to the attention of the council** – Concerns were expressed that HGVs were being parked at Cagman Farm which is a private residential house. There is a possible Operators Licence application forthcoming and this should be monitored.
- 2023/3243 **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 staffing.
- 2023/3244 It was agreed to offer the existing litter pickers the opportunity to increase their picking areas from April before any advertising of a vacancy in light of the resignation of one of our litter pickers.

Next meeting will be held in Pettiward Hall on Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.30pm