

## FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2015 in Finmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Katherine Grimston (KG) (Acting Chairman), Kevin Ochel (KO), Mike Kirby (MK), Steve Trice (ST) and Amanda Hodgkins (AH)

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO) and 17 members of the public

1. Apologies:- Apologies were received from Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes (MKB) (Chairman)

### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the PC meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2015 were approved with corrections.

The minutes of the APM of 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2015 are to be reviewed at next month's meeting as the reports are incomplete. Proposed KG, seconded KO, carried unanimously.

### 3. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

### 4. MATTERS ARISING

- 4.01 **Obtaining a defibrillator** KG is still liaising on this matter, currently an electrician is being arranged to fit the wiring for the case as there needs to be a guaranteed supply in order for the number pad to allow access to the machine. c/f
- 4.02 **Village Notice Boards** The working party decided not to move the Valley Road and School notice boards as they were firmly placed, instead they were cleaned and varnished. After discussions the remaining board is to be fitted at the entrance to the village hall car park rather than at Warren Farm, proposed ST, seconded MK, carried unanimously. The car park is currently being resurfaced and the notice board is temporarily being stored in the committee room. ST and KO are to liaise on placing posts for the board. c/f
- 4.03 **VAS Signs** MKB has now ordered keys for the speed signs and awaits delivery. c/f
- 4.04 **List of assets (the pond)** c/f
- 4.05 **Traffic speed in Mere Road** SC has still heard nothing. c/f
- 4.06 **Bin in Mere Rd** This has been installed.
- 4.07 **Additional Parish Councillor** c/f

- 4.08 **Tree surgery and other works on PC land** See compliance – Section 5.13 below.
- 4.09 **Underpass Gullies** These have been cleared.
- 4.10 **Drain Covers** Still nothing has been heard. SC is to chase this up with both OCC and the water company. c/f
- 4.11 **Public Protection and Development letter** c/f
- 4.12 **Dogbin** The councillor's working party fitted the dog bin in its new location.
- 4.13 **Compliance – Health and Safety Assessment of Assets** ST is to talk to residents about the Chinalls Close open space paving, if they are happy to have it removed and the ground seeded with grass that would seem to be the best way to proceed, proposed ST, seconded KO, carried unanimously. Phillip Rushforth, resident, offers to talk to the other original residents of the close and see whether the path was a later addition anyway. c/f
- 4.14 **Parish Precept Review** SC has informed the internal auditor of the error at the CDC precept setting meeting and although this does not strictly fall within the remit of the internal audit his financial advice is that the matter needs to be clarified and the amount of precept corrected and confirmed in order to fulfil standards. This is felt to be the correct course, proposed KG, seconded MK, carried unanimously. SC is to approach CDC.
- 4.15 **Responsibility for Mere Lane** SC has received an email in reply to her letters. Apparently the residents of Mere Lane should have an indemnity insurance to guarantee their right of access should an owner of the lane ever appear, but at the moment the lane is without an owner and is un-adopted. Some efforts have been made by some residents to organise a refurbishment of the lane with the cost shared by all residents but these attempts have so far been unsuccessful. It is felt that whilst the PC accepts no responsibility for the situation it would be in the interests of villagers if this cooperation could take place and SC is to write a letter to residents and forward this to Tingewick PC for their residents encouraging such an action. SC is to forward this letter to the PC for approval first. c/f
- 4.16 **ROAR Meeting** SC has still not received the minutes. c/f
- 4.17 **Finnere and Little Tingewick Facebook** It is felt that it is not up to the PC to monitor the activity on an essentially private facebook page, proposed ST, seconded KG, carried unanimously
- 4.18 **Red Tarmac Path at end of Old Banbury Road** SC has provided PR with the information.
- 4.19 **Meeting dates for 2015/16** MKB has submitted a list of the meeting dates he would like changed in order for him to be able to attend - October 6<sup>th</sup> to September 29<sup>th</sup>, November 3<sup>rd</sup> to October 27<sup>th</sup>, December 1<sup>st</sup> to November 24<sup>th</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 8<sup>th</sup>. These changes do not result in an inappropriate gap between meetings although there may be some issues with regard to the financial report as they do not all occur after a month end. It is felt best to change the dates, proposed MK, seconded AH, carried

unanimously. SC is to circulate the new date list and also send it to Phillip Rushforth (PR), Village Hall and Playing Field Committee.

- 4.20 **Receipts and payments accounts and bank reconciliation** These sheets have now been shown to the internal auditor and signed for submission to the external auditor.
- 4.21 **Insurance renewal** The renewal has been paid, payment acknowledged and the full schedule is to follow.
- 4.22 **Parish Liaison meeting** MKB's place has been booked.

## 5. FINANCIAL REPORT

It was reported that there was £3,588.98 in the Treasurer Account and £5,296.61 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid out:

£370.00 to John Donaldson (running costs – grass cutting)

£192.54 to Aon (general administration – insurance)

£284.75 to Sharron Chalcraft (general admin - for Clerk and RFO duties, internet costs)

The internal audit was passed on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

## 6. S19/S137

There were no requests for S19/S137 this month.

## 7. URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business was carried out this month.

## 8. FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE

MKB has sent information that there will be a quarry liaison meeting on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. The landfill site permission to vary conditions was approved at the OCC meeting with conditions that matched the PC's requests. Work is continuing on the capping of the mound.

## 9. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS

MKB is attempting to arrange a meeting with the solicitor in the third week of June. Phillip Rushforth, who is to attend, is unavailable that week. SC is to inform MKB.

## 10. PLAYING FIELD CONDITION

MK has walked the field this month and is happy with the condition. The football season is now over so the grass can recover. The large branch has been moved by Phillip Rushforth, but only into the nettles at the edge of the field.

## 11. COMPLETION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR 2014/15

The PC reviews the figures in Section 1 of the Return form. These are correct, proposed KO, seconded ST, carried unanimously, and signed by the RFO and Chairman of the Meeting. The PC reviews the statements in Section 2, the annual governance statement, and the answers are filled in, proposed ST, seconded AH, carried unanimously and signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Meeting. SC is to return the form to BDO Stoy Hayward for completion of the external audit.

## 12. POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 35 DWELLINGS OFF VALLEY ROAD

This item was actually addressed after item 3. of the agenda and at the time KG handed Chairmanship of the meeting over to MK and left the room as she had to declare a prejudicial interest.

Simon Jenkins of Edward Ware Homes gave an explanatory presentation about the possibility of a development of 35 homes on land off Valley Rd, running parallel to Mere Road. There is as yet no planning application or even a pending proposal, the village is simply being sounded out, though drawings have been produced to show a possible layout. This would be a joint venture with the landowner.

Mr Jenkins explained that the land presents a suitable location for sustainable development within the village. The current Conservative government has committed to building 200k houses and only 140k have been provided for so far. NPPF and NPPG are two legislative measures that the government have which address the matter of demand exceeding supply. Local councils must have a 5 year land supply in place; this is not the same as the land bank which all councils hold. They can be penalised if they fall short of this target. Localism is being encouraged in the form of Neighbourhood Plans which the village could set up. CDC is a failing authority and the penalty is that they need to have even more housing supply available, which they have not demonstrated; therefore planning applications are difficult to turn down.

This interpretation of the situation was strongly argued against by the PC who pointed out that the large developments already in progress in other villages mean that the 750 houses which have to be built between some 16 villages in Cherwell will be in the vast majority found places for elsewhere, in addition to the fact that recent developments in Finmere count toward this total. Also the land in question has always been regarded as sacrosanct under the Local Plan. Many of the planning issues raised had been covered in full at last week's village meeting about another large development proposal off the Old Banbury Road.

The floor was then opened for questions and comments.

Comment: Many of the buildings adjoining the land on Mere Rd are single storey houses and with the slope to the land they would be very overshadowed by the development.

Ques: Are the trees on the boundary of the site to be removed, they do not feature on the plan?

Ans: The plan is only to give an idea of the possible layout and does not give details of the existing features at the 'no man's land' edge of the land.

Comment: John Cunningham (JC), resident, pointed out that the trees at the boundary of his property were certainly not 'in no man's land', as he and his wife have cared for them for over 30 years and the trees are theirs.

Ques: What about the fact that the land floods frequently?

Ans: Any flooding issues will be dealt with.

Comment: (JC) Could it be minuted that the flooding issues 'will be dealt with', this is something that no one has been able to accomplish in many years.

Comment: The entrance will certainly be an issue; a truck got stuck recently when trying to enter the field.

Comment: Pipes are a problem in the area with the gullies and ditches often blocking resulting in standing water in the gardens of some Mere Road properties. OCC and EA vehicles have to park on the road and try to jet through as they are not allowed onto the land.

Comment: Mr and Mrs Horwood of 16 Valley Road point out that they have a lot of problems with drainage near their property also.

Comment: PR asks if these problems started as long as 25 years ago. The school bonfire was always organised to take place on this piece of land and in return for the permission the parents used to carry out cleaning work on the gullies and burn the wood removed. The bonfire was moved from the land to the playing field some 25 years ago.

Comment: This spot would be a lake without these gullies; it is the lowest point of Finmere and is needed to act as flood plain.

SC is to raise the matter of drainage of the land with OCC.

KG re-enters the room and resumes the Chair of the meeting.

### 13. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Proposed Diversion of part of Finmere Bridleway No 4 – this application is to permanently divert a section of the footpath – the PC has no objection and makes no comment

15/00828/F – 15 Town Close – erection of detached single garage to front of dwelling – though not sure if an objection can be made on planning grounds it is suggested that a comment should be made about the PC's concern that a precedent may be set for building beyond the building line. MK

takes the application in order to consult with neighbours and is to circulate any issues under urgent business before submitting comments.

15/00685/F – Finch Hattons, Fulwell Road – Demolition of existing garages and single storey side extension. Erection of two storey front extension and attached double garage to side featuring living accommodation in roof space. Installation of front dormer and fenestration alterations – the PC has no objections on planning grounds but it is felt that a note should be dropped into the Stone House as there may be objections from villagers. KG is to circulate the plans with neighbours and circulate any comments under urgent business before returning the form.

15/00552/OUT – Land West of Chinalls Close Adj to Banbury Road – residential development together with access and associated infrastructure and public open space – this was considered at a full village meeting arranged on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May at the village hall. Although unable to comment as he is on the CDC planning committee MKB has prepared a list of the points raised at the meeting. The public vote on the application at the meeting was 72 against, 4 in favour. The PC consider the points on the list.

PR has submitted an objection quoting paragraphs of the Cherwell Local Plan. SC is to take any planning points from the list of points raised and prepare an objection with references to the Cherwell Local Plan. This is to be circulated for consideration before submission.

SC is also to ensure that the points from the list are on the website along with links so that villagers can submit their own comments.

#### 14. CORRESPONDENCE

##### **Correspondence for meeting –**

Planning app 15/00478/F – Fuzz Field, Fulwell Road – erection of general purpose agricultural building. Improvements to existing access track – permission subject to conditions – this arrived too late for inclusion on the agenda and will be on the agenda for July

Planning app 15/00593/F – 3 Warren Farm Cottages – erection of two storey side/front extension – amended proposal – this arrived too late for inclusion on the agenda and will be on the agenda for July

OCC grass cutting grant cheque in the sum of £760.76 – this has just arrived and SC is to bank as soon as possible.

Map of spinney – The Mixbury Trust have sent MKB a map of the land already sold and that remaining for sale adjoining the playing field. This will need to be an agenda item in future.

##### **Emails printed –**

Emails about Mere Lane condition and ownership – see Section 4.15

Email about October meeting from PC Caroline Brown - having been unable to attend the APM PC Brown would like to attend the October meeting. SC has confirmed that she will be welcome. SC is to notify PC Brown of the change in date to the October meeting.

Email from PR about welcome pack – PR has forwarded a copy of the most recent ‘Welcome Pack’ he could find, this is dated 2009 and is therefore very out of date. SC is to overhaul this sheet and forward the revised version to all councillors for consideration.

**Emails forwarded –**

ORCC community survey – councillors can fill this in individually if they wish

The Public Sector Show free offer – no-one is able to attend

Usual reports

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Communication** KG points out that it is vital that there is no breakdown in communication as happened this month when she had no idea that she was chairing the meeting until her arrival. Electronic communication is not sufficient. SC is to phone KG if this situation arises again.

**18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> of July.

The meeting closed at 10.40 p.m.

**CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED**

Glasdon leaflet

HAGS SMP leaflet