

## FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2015 in Finmere Village Hall

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

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

1. Apologies:- Apologies were received from Councillors Mike Kirby (MK) and Amanda Hodgkins (AH)

### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2015 were approved with corrections.

### 3. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

### 4. FINMERE ANNUAL BONFIRE

Friends of Finmere School Association (FOFSA) have contacted the PC and asked to discuss the situation regarding the continuing of the annual Finmere Bonfire event. Carol Rose, Chair, and Claire Goodman, Secretary, explain that with the ever increasing burden of Health and Safety regulations, complaints from within the village and a difficulty with finding sufficient volunteers the future of this popular and long standing event is in jeopardy.

News has been received in the local papers that Fringford village is to discontinue their very popular fireworks event, due to problems with traffic and inaccessibility for emergency vehicles. Fringford will however still host a bonfire event. The PC point out that these can be very social gatherings with food and drink provided, perhaps some music, and a warming bonfire to top things off. After some discussion it is felt that the lack of fireworks would avoid any future complaints, would also make the health and safety burden a lot less and would mean that far fewer volunteers were needed to run the event with the resulting reduced security burden. A reduced return from the event due to no ticket prices would be offset by the saving on fireworks and event insurance.

The FOFSA representatives feel that this would be the best way forward and will hold a full committee meeting to arrange things, with a provisional date of November 7<sup>th</sup>. FOFSA are to contact MKB as soon as things are finalised and the PC will produce a newsletter to help spread news of the event.

## 5. QUARRY LIAISON MEETING AND FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE

Barbara Cunningham (BC), village representative, gives a report on the quarry liaison meeting which was held at the Village Hall on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Present were MKB for the PC, BC for the village, Ben Wragg and Colin Hart of Opes, Bill Stewart-Jones and David Periam of OCC and Louise Greenwood of the EA.

Cell 7a is now being tipped with Cell 7b to be tipped soon. The extension to the north is on hold. The MRF is still being commissioned and the contractors are now paying Opes penalties as they will not accept handover until the MRF is functioning properly. The turnover should be 46 tons per hour when operating at capacity and so far in trials only 30-35 tons per hour have been managed and that not for long. While the commissioning process is being carried out trial loads are being processed and the finished product, bales of waste for burning as fuel, is being produced. This needs to be removed from the site and so far loads have gone as far afield as Portugal, Sweden, Israel, Cyprus and Estonia. As BC points out this means that Opes are obtaining a profit from the MRF before the capping process is finished, this was not supposed to happen. When contractors bring waste to the site they pay landfill tax by weight at the weighbridge. Opes have to pay this tax to the government for any waste that goes into the landfill but they can keep the tax on anything that subsequently leaves the site after recycling. There is also a payment for the bales from the end user, this is less if the users collect from site but much more if Opes deliver the bales to them.

The first set of capping was due to be completed by the end of August and Opes almost made it. This section has now been completed. The next deadline for the next set of capping is the end of October when 30% of the plastic and top soil on the cap should be completed, Opes are working hard to meet this target. EA are to look at a report on the capping, they may need to revise their permit for Opes accordingly.

When completely up and running the MRF will employ 25 people. The design changes in the size and position applied for were granted on August 26<sup>th</sup>. Additional storage will be required for the bales and there may be a planning application soon regarding building these facilities. Opes' also want to extend the hours of operation of the MRF, from 7am-6pm at present to 7am-12midnight or even 1am. No lorries would be admitted after 4.30pm, as is the case now, but the MRF would then catch up with the loads delivered during the evening. This would definitely produce more noticeable noise and the PC will watch closely for an application to extend operation to be submitted. KO is to find out if any other operators run their MRF for these hours. Colnbrook is a large site near Heathrow which may operate out of normal hours but this is nowhere near any residential areas. Noise monitors have been set up around the village and so far no noise problem has been registered.

Opes have purchased a skip hire company and are planning to operate this business from the site, which may require more storage space. Skips are already being accepted into the landfill.

There is still a problem with the bore holes on site. A small number of these wells are now compliant but four bore holes have ammonium chloride present, some at fairly high levels and the cause cannot be found even by the EA. KO points out that such problems with bore holes are not unheard of and the EA should hardly be surprised by this. Opes are to drill more bore holes after capping is completed, they claim that the existing ones are from the 90's and may be giving a false reading. KO finds this argument hardly credible.

Complaints – there has been another groundwater breach, the bridleway was covered and also ragwort has been present. The EA received an odour complaint on July 17<sup>th</sup> but as BC agrees this may have been due to agricultural activity. The site is presently at the top end of Band C and will likely be at the bottom end of Band D by the end of the year. This is an improvement from their previous Band E position.

OCC – the excess tipping on Cells 3 and 2 has not been completely cleared yet. Bill Stewart-Jones is becoming much more robust in his approach to Opes, which is a good thing. He has pointed out to Opes that any further storage for the skip service will need a planning application. The MRF storage plans are still too small.

PC – it was confirmed that ragwort had been allowed to spread and a report had been made.

There will be another quarry liaison meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

To sum up MKB pointed out that Opes were still discussing using the gasification method for the MRF in the future, despite the fact that the contractors are now paying liquidated damages for the failure to make this conventional MRF run properly. KO cannot see that the gasification process will ever work here. He also points out that if the contractors begin to lose too much money they may walk away and leave the equipment to Opes as is. One other point is the standard of fuel being produced. The main reason that the bales are being disposed of in such far flung places is that they do not meet the rigorous standards for fuel in this country.

SC read out an email from County Councillor Catherine Fulljames (CF) – following a meeting with the PC CF, BC and her husband John Cunningham met together with an Assistant Director and Planning Officer from OCC to discuss problems with the Opes site past and present. CF, the Assistant Director and the Planning Officer then reported back to the OCC Chief Executive. She requested that they went to Opes and talked matters through with them. This proved very helpful; the officers were given a conducted tour of the site. There was mention of HS2 going across the landfill land and also Opes possibly providing materials, this will need to be watched.

## 6. MATTERS ARISING

- 6.01 **Obtaining a defibrillator** As KG has been unable to finalise matters with Alan Gibbons, villager, she has approached Roger Blake, villager, who has given a quote of £100 to fit the case to certified standards. It is felt this is very good value for money and KG is to arrange for the case to be fitted, proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously. SC has emailed Dick Tracey, SWAS, twice but has not heard back regarding registering the ownership of the machine. SC is to chase this up. c/f
- 6.02 **Village Notice Boards** The firm which carried out the work on the village hall car park, CJM Fencing, has been instructed and the work is to be carried out imminently. c/f
- 6.03 **VAS Signs** c/f
- 6.04 **List of assets (the pond)** c/f

- 6.05 **Traffic speed in Mere Road** MKB explains that Peter Egawhary needs a formal request in writing which he can submit to get the work carried out. SC is to write requesting the work. c/f
- 6.06 **Additional Parish Councillor** c/f
- 6.07 **Paving slabs on Chinalls Close PC land/H&S Compliance** ST is to find out from Phillip what has been decided by the residents and chase this up.
- 6.08 **Drain Covers** SC has emailed Katie Walther three times and received no reply. ST has tried phoning OCC and received no answer as services were suspended due to an emergency. Both are to try and pursue this matter with urgency before the next meeting. SC is to google 'read and receipt' of emails for aol as she has been unable to set this facility so far. c/f
- 6.09 **Public Protection and Development letter** c/f
- 6.10 **Parish Precept Review** SC has informed Phil Hood, internal auditor, of the discussions as agreed last month.
- 6.11 **Parish Liaison meeting-Cherwell Local Plan** At the very last moment a challenge to the plan was lodged. This was over a technicality and will not affect the overall plan even if it is upheld. The application for 95 houses in Bodicote has gone through and will count against the required total.
- 6.12 **Flooding Problems on Mere Rd/Valley Rd** KG declares an interest as this investigation was prompted by a connected planning application. SC has now heard from Gordon Kelman, OCC, who has confirmed with Gordon Hunt, OCC, who was in charge before him that no problems with flooding have been reported since the drainage works carried out in 2008/9.
- 6.13 **Road Repairs** SC has heard back from both Kathryn Gash and 'Fix my Street' regarding the reported potholes:
- The potholes at the start of the Fulwell Road have been looked at; only one defect reached the investigatory level. This section of road will be kept an eye on.
- The pothole on Fulwell Rd near High Acre does not reach the investigatory level. This section of road will be kept an eye on.
- The pothole on the Water Stratford Road at the start of the Church track has been repaired.
- The potholes on the Fulwell Rd near the Lepper's farm have been repaired.
- An email to OCC from John Cunningham, villager, complaining about the persistent poor state of the village roads has been forwarded to MKB for the PC's information. The email mentions a large pothole in Mere Road in the vicinity of 15 Town Close which ST has also noticed. SC is to report this on 'Fix my Street'. c/f
- 6.14 **Household Waste Recycling Strategy Consultation** SC has submitted the PC's comments.

- 6.15 **OCC meeting on Public Services** KG was unable to attend.
- 6.16 **Parish Liaison Meeting Consultation** SC has submitted the PC's comments.
- 6.17 **Carol Service** Val Bennett, villager, was unable to turn on the lights and MKB asked all for suggestions. KO has suggested Charlie Knibbs, villager, who for many years played Father Christmas for the village school. He is felt to be an excellent choice, proposed MKB, seconded KO, carried unanimously. KO is to ask him. c/f
- 6.18 **Advanced notification of footway resurfacing in Chinalls Close** This was forwarded by SC to MKB and Phillip Rushforth, resident.

## 7. S19/S137

MKB has received an invoice in the sum of £160.00 for the Church clock servicing, which the PC has agreed to pay. SC is to pay this sum.

MKB has also received a receipt for flowers for the war memorial in the sum of £30.00 from Beryl Smith. This is to be paid by SC, proposed MKB, seconded KG, carried unanimously.

## 8. URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business has been carried out.

## 9. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS AND CONDITION

There is no further progress to report. ST has walked on the field this month and there are no new problems. An email has been received from Katy Whitton, Secretary of the Football Club, detailing their concerns over the dog mess and rabbit holes on the field. SC has replied confirming that there is a dog bin on the field and that signs have been discussed in the past. It is felt that signs would be a good idea, although some of the mess may well be from foxes which are rife in the area and attracted by the rabbits on the field. SC is to contact the Dog Warden and request some signs. The PC will again mention the danger and problem of dog mess in the next newsletter. SC is to thank the football club for their wise precautions in walking the field and filling in any rabbit holes, the PC will step up their checks in the future. Importantly there is mention of someone allowing their dog to foul the pitch during the half time break. SC is to encourage the club to have members speak out if such an incident occurs again.

## 10. NEW RESIDENTS NOTIFICATIONS

KO has posted a welcome letter to the new tenants at Warren Farm. KG reports there are works being carried on at the old Post Office and she is to drop in a welcome letter once the house is occupied.

## 11. COMPLETION OF THE EXTERNAL AUDIT

The annual return is presented to the meeting and approved and accepted, proposed MKB, seconded ST, carried unanimously.

The issues arising report is presented to the meeting and approved and accepted, proposed ST, seconded KO, carried unanimously. No action plan is required.

An invoice in the sum of £120.00 has been received for the audit as the PC's outgoings exceeded £10,000 for the year. This is to be paid by bacs, proposed MKB, seconded ST, carried unanimously.

The notice of conclusion of audit, with access to the annual return, has been posted by SC and will need to remain on display for 14 days.

A range of dates for the RFO to choose from for the next audit is included. SC is to liaise with Phil Hood, Internal Auditor, and decide on one of these.

## 12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

15/00828/F – 15 Town Close, Mere Road – erection of detached single garage to front of dwelling – permission refused

## 13. CORRESPONDENCE

### **Correspondence for meeting –**

Oxfordshire Association for the Blind funding request – it is not felt that the PC can help at this time as there would be no direct benefit to the village

Gambling Act consultation letter/Licensing Act consultation letter – SC is to forward the link for these consultations, comments can be entered by councillors until Tuesday November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Emails printed –**

Email from Gordon Kelman about flooding – see Matters Arising above

Emails from Kathryn Gash and Fix my Street about potholes – see Matters Arising above

Email from John Cunningham about potholes – see Matters Arising above

Email from Katy Whitton about the playing field – see Playing Field Progress and Condition above

Email from County Councillor Catherine Fulljames about the landfill – see Quarry Liaison Meeting and Finmere Landfill Site Update above

Email from Thames Valley Police about a meeting in 2016 – MKB will be attending and can represent the PC also - SC is to notify the Police by return

**Emails forwarded –**

Playing field email from Katy Whitton

Public Protection and Development Management meeting notice and cancellation notice

HS2 Autumn Update

Usual reports

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Street light** A street light located near Cyprus Cottage and Oak Tree House is continuously burning. SC is to notify CDC.

**Defibrillator Insurance** KG points out that as the defibrillator is soon to be fitted insurance must be confirmed. SC is to pursue this matter urgently with Dick Tracey, SWAS, as detailed above under Matters Arising.

**Fritwell Emergency Plan** The village of Fritwell has now published their Emergency Plan on their website. The plan comprises several sections and it would be useful for councillors to have a look and see if any of the ideas can be used in Finmere.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> of October.

The meeting closed at 10.00 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

Wicksteed leaflets

Glasdon special offers brochure