

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 10th May 2016

in Fimmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Mike Kerford-Byrnes (Chairman) (MKB), Katherine Grimston (Vice Chair) (KG), Kevin Ochel (KO), Mike Kirby (MK), Stephen Trice (ST), Joanne Brooks (JB), District Councillors Barry Wood (BW) and Ian Corkin (IC) and County Councillor Catherine Fulljames (CF)

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO) (SC), and 10 members of the public

1. Apologies Apologies were received from County Councillor Catherine Fulljames (CF), for possible lateness, District Councillor Barry Wood (BW), for possible lateness, Parish Councillor Amanda Hodgkins (AH), PC Caroline Brown, John and Barbara Cunningham, Hugh Smith, Illa Moss, Mike Geelan and Joan Grimwade.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 12th of May 2015 were circulated and approved.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

The PC officers for 2016/2017 having been appointed at the PC meeting on May 3rd 2016 these appointments were announced as follows:

Chairman Mike Kerford-Byrnes (having indicated his willingness to continue)
Proposed: Katherine Grimston
Seconded: Kevin Ochel
Carried unanimously

Vice Chair Katherine Grimston (having indicated her willingness to continue)
Proposed: Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Seconded: Steve Trice
Carried unanimously

RFO Sharron Chalcraft (having indicated her willingness to continue)
Proposed: Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Seconded: Mike Kirby
Carried unanimously

Parish Clerk Sharron Chalcraft (having indicated her willingness to continue)
Proposed: Steve Trice
Seconded: Kevin Ochel
Carried unanimously

At this point PC Shaun Sullivan gave a report for the Thames Valley Police which is detailed under Section 9 below.

4. THE FIRE SERVICE – MAJOR INCIDENTS AND MULTI AGENCY WORKING

Gary D'Anger of the Fire and Rescue Service gave a presentation which had been requested by the PC following the recent incident at the landfill site.

Since the 7/7 attacks in 2005 lessons have been learnt about working together; emergency services, local councils and the EA and other national agencies now all work in a very joined up way. Once a major incident has been declared special measures defined under the Civil Contingencies Act are brought into force. However all services still have slightly different criteria as to what constitutes a major incident.

The Fire Service (FS) usually refer to such events as air crashes, power station fires and other similar things as major incidents, the recent collapse of the Didcot power station in Oxford being one example. The County Council may declare a major incident for flooding, especially if vulnerable buildings like hospitals/care homes are affected. The NHS declares large road accidents as major incidents, this enables the use of helicopters, routing to different hospitals and the cancellation of leave etc to be organised.

There is a standard operating procedure to enable judgement of incidents. There is an initial assessment of the incident and then if necessary a 'Major Incident Declaration'. At this point local councillors and politicians are informed. Then a 'Methane Message' is generated.

M – major incident

E – exact location of incident

T – type of incident with all available details

H – hazards identified in association with the incident

A – access – including both access/egress and rendezvous points

N – number and type of casualties

E - emergency services present at the incident

There will be liaison between the responders, large incidents will have a liaison officer appointed, and the initial information for the report will be gathered. The imminent risks will be identified and addressed; the effectiveness of the current operation will be assessed; situational awareness will be maintained (preservation of evidence for future gathering etc); all relevant risk information will be communicated; safe access and egress will be established and maintained; rvp's will be established with a marshalling and strategic holding area (in the case of an incident in Finmere Buckingham Fire Station may well be used in this regard); a plan will be formed to deal with the developing situation and the possibility of acts of terrorism or crime will be considered.

There are four stages to an incident, the initial response, the consolidation phase, the recovery phase (usually when the situation is no longer an emergency, the FS has limited involvement and are handing the remaining risk over to other agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)) and the restoration of normality which can take some time, even months. The need for investigation can impose on these stages. Most incidents will end up being considered in a court of law and the responders need to be aware of that fact at all times. The

recovery phase can also often be carried out by the local authority and they then run the back to normality stage. The CDC Environmental Health Department – Emergency Planning would normally be the body involved.

The recent incident at the Finmere landfill site was not designated a major incident. The fire was first reported at 08.20 on Sunday 28th of February. A pre-determined attendance of three fire engines was sent to the incident which is standard for a confirmed fire in a commercial property. This included fire engines from Buckingham and Brackley, (Northants). The new mobilising computer system in Thames Valley Fire Control automatically despatches the fire engines that will arrive quickest regardless of area. The original incident commander requested that a further three fire engines be mobilised making the total attending six.

The fire was established, after forced entry, to be contained to the storage area of the recycling facility. This contained a large amount of recycled material bundles, containing paper, card, plastic, wood and metal. Four main (70mm) jets were used, utilising the open water supply present on the site. Most of the material and the building structure had already been destroyed. An assessment of the hazards and risk was carried out and since no persons were involved and much of the building had already been destroyed the Fire Service concentrated its efforts on securing and saving the remaining parts of the building and associated plant. Once under control and with the dangers of further fire spread gone the fire was allowed to burn out. This also reduced the risk of environmental pollution from ground water. A full structural survey was later carried out and the building was declared unsafe and in danger of imminent risk of collapse. The site was handed over on Monday Feb 29th.

The FS liaised with the EA, who are responsible for water risks, informing them of the pollution hazard to ground water, though this was minimal as the area was bunded. The FS also informed the Environmental Health Department of CDC, who are responsible for air pollution risks, of the continuing controlled burn. A fire investigation was initiated to report on why 6 engines were needed, workplace safety and responsibility etc. The FS continued to liaise with site management.

Ques – Ibbly Wood – Is the fire out now?

Ans – The site is no longer under our control.

Comment – MKB – The fire is not out yet; I phoned this morning to check. Two structural engineers have now inspected the building and are to give a report and a demolition company may need to be called in. The 30m cordon is still in place and the insurance assessors are preparing their report at which point the administrators will know whether the insurance company are willing to pay for the cleanup operation.

Ques – Do we know the cause of the incident?

Ans – Not conclusively. There have been similar incidents at sites processing waste when batteries, vaping sticks etc have caused a short out of equipment. There is no suspicion of arson although this cannot be decisively ruled out. There was a long time delay between the start of the fire and its being reported. The cause is not believed to be suspicious and the fire investigations as to the cause of the fire have so far been inconclusive.

Ques – Given that the waste included batteries, tins etc how were pollution levels assessed, who made the assessment?

Ans – The EHD at CDC would make the assessment. On Sunday the wind was blowing away from habitation and so no risk was present. On Monday the situation was reported to CDC.

Comment – Ibbby Wood – Friends of ours reported that their horses were badly affected by the smoke blowing across their fields, the animals were coughing.

Comment – Environmental Health toyed with the idea of doing an assessment when they were told.

Ans – CDC and OCC councillors were informed. The Emergency Planning Dept at CDC was informed. If they had deemed there to be a risk they can send texts and put warnings out on Radio Oxford. On Sunday and Monday no smoke was blowing toward the village so nobody deemed there to be a risk. There is of course nobody living at the site.

Comment – Ibbby Wood – BW did not get a call.

Comment – MKB – CF did get one, she confirmed that to me.

Ans – There are lessons to be learned from this incident. CDC not being fully informed is an issue; this will be fed back to the FS.

Comment – MKB – There was certainly a strong odour a few days later.

Comment – Sandra Kerford-Byrnes – We had a lot of smoke a few days later but we were unaffected.

Comment – Public Health England did get a call. But it was a struggle to find out what the advice was when the wind changed two days later.

Ans – It seems that the handover to the local authority on Monday may have slipped up. Feedback will be sent to the FS about this.

Comment – The EHD and PHE had questions about the burn duration.

Question – KO – I am involved with sites which produce recycled waste for burning. A detailed analysis has to be done and a lot of control is needed over disposal of this waste with many filters present at any incineration sites. There are bound to have been carcinogens in that smoke. Did the FS not check the levels when assessing whether it was safe to enter?

Ans – No, the assessment of risk was to do with the building collapsing.

Ques – JB – Was the site ever monitored? This was done at the Didcot incident and CDC did monitor after a similar incident at Bunsfield. Town centres have automatic monitoring for air pollution. If CDC Environmental Health were informed on Monday why did they not monitor? If the FS did not enter the building how did they know what was burning? Whatever it was you could smell it strongly even with the windows closed.

Ans – We were informed that it was metal, paper, card, plastic and wood.

Ques – Phillip Rushforth (PR) – Are you sure? What checks are actually in place that prove what has gone into the site?

Comment – MKB – On Tuesday afternoon there was an explosion, there were also two on Sunday afternoon, on phoning I was told it was probably gas canisters exploding. Material goes into the site in 20 ton lorry loads, surely it is very difficult to be absolutely certain what is in there.

Comment – Ibbly Wood – The pollution should have been monitored properly. The fact is that you don't know what was burning and we could have been breathing in anything. This is not good enough. Because of our location on the boundary people use many different NHS surgeries and no clear picture of any health effects will be picked up.

Ans – I will convey all your concerns in my feedback.

Comment – KO – If the smoke had been checked they would have found all sorts of pollutants for sure.

Comment – ST – This seems to have been a very loose, open and imprecise risk assessment. Apparently there is only air monitoring if there is a public outcry.

Comment – MKB – I contacted CDC to ask about monitoring and was told that they didn't have any equipment and would have had to borrow it from South Northants.

Comment - In an environmental risk assessment air can be worse than water in its effect. The FS handed this over to EA; they have power to enforce on sites. Although the EA is dealing with water and the CDC EH Dept is dealing with air the EA still handle licences for sites which could cause air pollution. They should have the equipment to monitor.

Comment – MKB – Yes they do, they had equipment based at the school for 30 days when there were concerns about hydrogen sulphide pollution from the site. I sent a request to EA on Sunday. On Wednesday when we had a brief liaison session the EA said that the FS had told them to keep out of the way.

Ans – Being Sunday I doubt they got your request. It is important to learn lessons from this though.

Comment – The site has now been burning for nearly three months. Test equipment would have put minds at rest, or indeed may have done the opposite!

Comment – It seems that if the risk is raised after the initial assessment there is no mechanism to address this.

Ans – This does all definitely need to be fed back to the FS and I will be doing just that.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The report is attached.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

The report is attached.

Copies of the receipts and payments account for 2015/16 were made available, the account is also attached.

7. REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR MRS CATHERINE FULLJAMES

CF has been a councillor now for 28 years. The landfill, or quarry as it then was, was one of the first issues for her to deal with in Finmere. The site has caused many problems and issues over the years, the fire being just one more.

HS2 – OCC are now seriously concerned about the impact of the scheme but it is still rolling on and looks unstoppable. It is the construction phase of the project which is causing concern. CF is responsible for motorway junctions 9 and 10, both will be badly affected. At the moment with building development in Bicester the aggregate lorries are going through Wendlebury in a steady stream, HS2 will be much worse.

This is the now the sixth year of financial constraints with OCC having to save some £290 million between 2010 and 2018. Senior management has been cut by 40% but some sections are extremely difficult to cut back, children and adult social care now accounts for 50% of the remaining budget. Councillors are deeply sorry about the removal of subsidy to the bus services, this was one of those awful and horrible decisions, all but two of the councillors did vote for the cuts. Children's centres have also been looked at as have all services for 0 – 19 yr olds. There are 48 centres currently but these are to be reduced to 11 in the main population centres with outreach provision. Four big household waste sites in the area are being looked at. CF asks whether Ardley is used by the residents of Finmere.

Ans - Yes and also Buckingham.

Ardley is to remain open, Viridor the operators had wanted to shut it but have been asked to hold on for a while.

OCC received a surprise in February when four districts (South and Vale, Cherwell, West Oxon and Oxford City) made a bid to be unitary authorities. No information had been sent to OCC and both the districts and OCC are now commissioning separate consultations. CF feels that it is only common sense to have one authority which can coordinate direction and planning over highways, Fire Services etc.

One piece of good news on the landfill is that at the last council meeting CF met a possible buyer for the site.

Comment – Ibbly Wood – OCC has done Finmere no favours, they allowed the over tip at the landfill by not monitoring properly, they failed to support the village in its fight against HS2, although CF herself of course tried, and nothing gets done about potholes. Would CF please ask about potholes. The Water Stratford Rd is now dangerous, some holes have been filled but more are developing. Road markings are also faded. There has also been flooding and Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire CC's simply pass the buck. The Fulwell Rd is also bad, that is a main cycling route and also used by horse riders, children and dog walkers.

Ans – Highways now have a new device called the 'dragon' which fires out the hole before refilling which makes a longer lasting repair. There are many areas with worse potholes but CF will chase up the Water Stratford Rd. OCC did consider HS2 as a council but boundary changes eroded support against it at first and CF was very isolated in her objections.

Comment – Ibbly Wood – This makes a good argument for unitary authorities which would be closer on local issues.

Ans – Even when I was a District Councillor I was often isolated on issues.

Comment – Sandra Kerford-Byrnes – The County Council is too big. Central OCC ignore us, one central unitary authority is not good.

Comment – MKB – CDC asked to address OCC on this matter some two and a half years ago, but OCC didn't want to listen then.

Ans – It was more like 18 months ago.

Comment – Ibbly Wood – Smaller model district unitaries are more responsible to the people.

Ans – This can work both ways, a lot of District Councillors are only concerned with Banbury or Bicester, not rural areas.

Comment – MKB – There is always an element of that at any level.

Comment – SC - On the matter of potholes, I have written and reported these on Fix my street and discussed them with the Highways Officer.

Comment – ST – Perhaps we could have the Water Stratford Road declared a failed road, these are usually fully resurfaced as opposed to simply having holes filled in.

Comment – MKB – In HS2 mitigation we did make an application for local roads to be resurfaced, as the HS2 construction traffic will cause considerable wear and tear, the request was swept aside.

MKB thanked CF for her work for the village through the year.

8. REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MR BARRY WOOD

BW introduced Ian Corkin (IC) who, along with James McNamara, has been elected under the new multi-representation system to represent the Finmere ward. There can be an

advantage in having more than one representative. Working together they have recently been involved in rebuffing a plan for 5,000 new homes in Lower Heyford. BW reiterates that anyone who has a problem is welcome to knock on his door.

CDC has made no reductions to services again this year despite the money from central government being greatly reduced, it will stop altogether soon. Austerity need not mean cuts however. The key is sharing officers and amalgamating public services with South Northants Council. Customer satisfaction has actually risen to 80%. CDC are seeking to expand their targets with reduced planning application processing times, more efficient phone answering etc.

The devolution debate has been triggered by central government wanting to devolve more government to a local level. The 'Northern Powerhouse' idea is the forerunner of this and of course democracy means that what one area is offered must be offered to all. Seven local authorities, the 5 Oxfordshire areas plus South Northants and Cotswold (based in Gloucestershire) feel they can offer a better unitary model. Consultations will be presented; BW genuinely believes that District Unitary Authorities offer the best option. A decision will be announced by late summer or early autumn.

BW explains that he really wants to represent villages; village life is good and can be protected and enhanced in the future. BW then invites IC to say a few words. IC explains that he has spent 12 year as a Parish Councillor so understands the problems that the PC faces. He has also spent a year at the District Council and he is also passionate about sustainable rural communities. Villages are for living in not just for sleeping in, but it is easy for villages to slip into being just dormitory villages. IC is at present working on the budget planning and personnel for the Craven Hill development of self-build and custom built houses, the largest such development in Europe. There are significant cost benefits in the scheme. On the Queen's birthday weekend there is a 'Build it Live' event at Bicester Heritage showcasing the skills that are going into the development. IC is very much looking forward to working locally, he wants to make the district a better place to work and live.

9. REPORTS OF VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

Police – PC Shaun Sullivan presented a report – see Section 3 above - Crime has plummeted over the last year. Other than domestic crimes or online fraud which are not detailed there were only 3 crimes reported in Finmere; 2 cases of theft from a motor vehicle and 1 burglary of a dwelling. Despite covering 38 villages in all PC Sullivan often passes through the village twice a day which helps.

Although there are to be cutbacks in policing generally Neighbourhood Policing of rural areas will still be at the forefront of future plans. It is considered a great benefit that through close contact the police can identify key problems and often problem solve within the villages themselves.

The main problems raised by the public are parking, speeding and anti-social behaviour. PC Sullivan urges villagers to report any other issues of concern.

Comment – PR – We do have a problem with cars doing wheelies on the new gravel surface of the village hall car park.

PC Sullivan asks that PR or any other villager notify him of this and he will then attend. PC Sullivan leaves a supply of his contact cards with the PC. There is also the 101 number which can be used to report issues like door to door selling, parking problems, obstruction of the path etc and these messages are then passed on to PC Sullivan. His email is on the contact cards provided. It is stressed that if any member of the public has information with regard to a crime in progress or a possible crime they should still call 999.

Church – The report is attached.

School – No formal report was received this year; the school is currently without a Headteacher and is in the middle of SATS week.

Poors Plot Charity – The report is attached.

Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee – The report is attached.

Beavers/Cubs/Scouts – No report was received this year.

Football Club – Mr Jon How was unable to attend but sent a report after the meeting, this report is attached.

Cricket Club – The report is attached.

Brackley and Buckingham Districts Dog Training Club – No report was given this year.

Dog Scent Training Club – Heather Donnelly (HD) gave a report on the Club's activities.

The club was started in January 2015 offering scent work training for pets, something which is very big in the US. At first the club ran fortnightly on Thursday afternoons attracting members from Bicester and other local villages as well as Finmere. In July members entered a competition and medical detection dogs gave a demonstration.

HD set up Scent Work UK last year. They held their first trials in November. The club is going from strength to strength with 3 groups now running as well as other clubs sending people to the 'train the trainers' sessions. People have come from as far afield as Scotland and Wales. HD actually judged an event in Chippenham last year and will be going to The Pet Show and Just Dogs Live at Peterborough later this year; she is off to Scotland next week.

It would be nice to have more villagers involved. The club teaches good practice, including the picking up of all dog mess and more. HD stresses that no illegal scents are used in the training. Several different search area simulations are used. Office – with furniture, storage – with boxes stacked, vehicle – inside and out and exterior – usually in the immediate vicinity of the hall. The difficulty level at the moment has increased to lvl 4 but will go up to lvl 8 in the future. Interestingly scenting for petrol at fire sites is one of the skills that dogs can be trained in.

CEROC Bucks – No report was submitted this year, it is possible that Rachel Pears and Marc Foster were again demonstrating dance abroad.

Drama Group – No report was received this year.

Finmere Festival – PR asked to give a report on behalf of the Finmere Festival organisers. There have now been 5 consecutive festivals, the first in May 2011. Over the years more than £16k has been raised, most being spent on the village or on various outside charities chosen each year. For the first four years there were mainly the same people and the same format but there were some new faces and changes last year.

Unfortunately it has been a struggle to get things done this year. There was a mail shot in January but there was little response and there are simply not enough people to get all the jobs done. With regret the decision was taken on April 19th to cancel the event for this year. All were notified that this was to be the case and given 7 days to commit and save the event but this didn't happen in sufficient numbers. You literally need to start work on the next event the week after the last one has taken place and it was felt better to bow out on a high after last year's successful day.

There is to be a 'glitz and glamour' night at the school on the Queen's 90th birthday weekend. It is possible that the same team may do something else in a year or two but they have organised events in the village for the Church, the Hall and for the Church clock fund for 30 years now, the average age of the group is 65. Not all are retired, PR works two jobs, but for now they are retiring from fundraising.

Comment – MKB – This is a shame, seems a sad way to end.

Comment – IC – Would a beer festival be a possibility?

There has been a beer tent as part of the festival for the last few years now. Beer festivals themselves have been somewhat 'done to death' in surrounding villages.

Comment – MKB – This has always been such a good village, we have all pulled together against things like the landfill and the proposed car storage at the airfield. This village is better than this. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations were wonderful. There is an aging demographic and no young volunteers are coming forward.

Comment – KG – So many young couples both work full time and don't feel they have time to commit.

Comment – MKB – Well at least the PC now has a younger average age.

Comment – Revd Goodall – Sometimes a thing needs to die before it can start again.

That does seem to be part of it, part of the natural round of things. The Church Fete is good news and my son in law is still organising the 5k fun run. The Festival has always been well attended; hopefully people will miss it and give some thought to its future.

Comment – BW – I hear what PR is saying here. I commend the courage of this decision. Hopefully it will be a catalyst for another generation to step up. There certainly has been a core of people in this village for many years, I would like to express everyone's deep and heartfelt thanks for all the work they have done and assure them that it has never been unremarked on or unnoticed.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Memories of the Queen KG explains that at the service to be held to commemorate the Queen's 90th birthday it is felt that it would be nice to decorate the church with memories of the Queen. If anyone has any photos of the Queen on local visits or when they have met her elsewhere could they loan them for the day? SC suggests that the school may have some photos.

MKB thanked those attending on behalf of the PC.

The public meeting closed at 22.12.

Members of the PC present then discussed planning application 16/00656/F – Lark Rise, Mere Road – demolition of existing bungalow and detached garage; construction of a four bedroom dwelling with detached garage, off-street parking and gardens, under urgent business. JB had visited neighbours who had raised various concerns over loss of light, being overlooked and the general dominance of the street scene by such a large building. The PC is not to make a formal objection but is to make comments to this effect. JB is to submit. Proposed MKB, seconded JB, carried unanimously.

2016 05 10 Chairman's report

Thank you all for attending. I am pleased to report on the activities of Finmere PC over the past year.

As always, I must start by acknowledging the support and assistance that I have received from the volunteer Parish councillors this past 12 months. Without them, the PC would cease to function.

Likewise to Sharron Chalcraft, in her dual role as Clerk and responsible financial officer. As such she is responsible for ensuring that we act properly and with due diligence, especially where finances are involved. As the accounts show, the burden of increased governance, imposed upon us from afar, has significantly increased the work load of all parish officers.

Thank you all. Very much.

In addition, we acknowledge the efforts made on our behalf by our District and County Councillors, Barry Wood and Catherine Fulljames. Their tireless work often goes unacknowledged. So I will put that right by thanking them for all they do for us.

This year, we have had a full complement of Parish Councillors. Mrs Joanne Brooks is now a member. Our term of office lasts until May 2018, at which point elections may or may not be necessary.

Over the past year, we have become involved with a number of activities.

Most visibly, we have installed a Speed sign on Banbury Road. It is programmed to indicate when vehicle speed exceeds 30 mph (when the battery is adequately charged). Currently we do not automatically replace the battery when it expires, preferring a degree of randomness to prevail.

We also installed the defibrillator at the school, as was notified in a PC newsletter, along with an offer of training to anyone who wished to see it at first hand. To date, no-one has made any inquiries.

We organised a village meeting and co-ordinated a village response to the proposed development to the South of Stable Close. The application was

subsequently withdrawn and did not progress to the Cherwell planning committee. Of course, it can always return, in the same or different form. As can any application for any development anywhere in the area. That is democracy. The PC will always consider each application individually, and will involve the village should it be of any significance to Finmere and its residents.

We had a very successful village clean up in March. Nineteen villagers joined in on a very sunny day, collecting a surprising amount of rubbish. As usual, a lot of it was dog mess, wrapped in plastic bags, which makes it even more unpleasant. Despite this, a good time was had by all. The doughnuts and Jammy Dodgers may have helped

Having acquired the land at Chinalls Close, as reported to you last year, we have the responsibility for its maintenance. There are over 180 2 foot square paving slabs along the top, and some of them are not in the best condition – or alignment. We discussed this at a PC meeting earlier this year, and we are seeking quotes for the various options open to us for its continued usage. We have to strike a balance between the desire to retain what was originally laid down against any safety issues that might arise. All this against a background of the cost of repair, replacement and maintenance. When we have all the information, we will bring it to a PC meeting, and encourage the views of residents.

The playing field, its size and governance, still occupy our time. We are working on two fronts, albeit not as fast as we would like. We are in the process of obtaining valuations of the part of the playing field still owned by the Mixbury Trust, with a view to starting the process of its acquisition for the village. As yet, we have no idea of the valuation we will see.

The governance of the Playing Field and Village Hall is still retained under the previously existing arrangements. We have now arranged a meeting with a solicitor next week to discuss the steps we need to take to bring the whole entity under a common structure.

The landfill site still occupies our time and energy. In the past year, we have dealt with two planning applications. The first related to the constraints imposed upon OPES such that they could not operate their new recycling facility until they had completed the capping of the North side of the mound.

The second related to a change in the working hours of the recycling facility in order for it to be able to process the amount of waste for which it had a licence.

It is good to report that the capping (and grassing) of the north side of the mound is now complete (albeit much later than we all desired).

It is not good to report that the rest is of no consequence (at least for now) since the major fire at the site in March. As of today, the position is as follows:

- There is still a small amount of waste smouldering in the Building.
- As a result there is still a 30-metre exclusion zone around the building which has been declared structurally unsafe. The recycling operation is unusable at present.
- OPES have appointed administrators who are seeking the best way forward for the operation.
- The Insurance assessors have now gathered sufficient information to complete the assessment and this is expected in the next 2-3 months.
- Once the assessors have given an indication of the insurance settlement, only then will the administrators be able to determine the best way forward.
- The administrators are aware of the outstanding planning conditions and regulatory responsibilities on the Site, which will be part of their assessment of the way forward.

All in all, the situation is uncertain and speculation is largely futile. The PC is maintaining a watchful eye on events, and will react accordingly when the need arises.

The PC tried to generate some momentum for a village event to celebrate the 90th birthday of Her Majesty the Queen. We held two meetings but the number in attendance were so low (and the average age so high) that those present felt that they could not, unaided, take the responsibility for the organisation. So Finmere will be a village that does not join in with the festivities. There are several other villages nearby which are having some celebrations. Perhaps we should have offered doughnuts and Jammy Dodgers at our meetings.....

In the meantime, we still cut the grass, empty the dog bins, complain (bitterly) about the potholes and support the village wherever it is needed.

This coming year we will continue as we have done. In particular, we would look to progress the acquisition of the balance of the Playing field and the resolution of the governance issues.

In addition we will be dealing with 'Oxfordshire together'. This is a scheme whereby Oxfordshire CC offers Parish councils to opportunity to take on some of the tasks they perform. They will not pay us (except for some grass cutting – perhaps) and if we do not take them on, it will not be done. We are naturally quite sceptical about this, and will not be looking to incur extra costs unnecessarily.

Finally, we shall have to deal with any fall out from the 'devolution' agenda whereby central government offloads some of the work it does to lower levels of government – an amalgam/redistribution of County/District councils called 'Unitary' bodies. Barry Wood will tell you more of this in his presentation.

On behalf of the PC, I wish to thank you all for your support over the past year. We will strive to continue the work for the next 12 months

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL RFO'S REPORT 2015 – 2016

Income this year was higher than last by some £650 despite the fact that the grass cutting allowance was halved and there was no insurance cancellation refund or anonymous donation. This was due to the rise in precept compared with the 2014-15 period of £1,800.

Outgoings this year were lower than last by some £1,200. This was partly due to a drop in spending on the playing field which lowered running costs by some £400 although general admin costs rose by some £470 due to the increased wages of the Clerk being payable for the whole 12 month period and also further legal fees from CDC to do with the acquisition of the Chinalls Close open space. There was no capital expenditure this year or any S142 spending but the main reduction was in S137 spending which dropped by some £1,300.

S137 is a pot of money, currently some £2,900 worked out by multiplying the allowable amount per head by the population. This sum can be spent on benefitting the village; for example uses this year have been the donation to the Village Hall and Playing Field Committee for new bark for the play area and a payment for maintenance of the church clock. If unspent this money is carried over into reserves. Full expenditure of S137 would have cost a further £2,530.

The income over expenditure balance for the year is £320.89 (this compares to an expenditure over income balance for the previous year of some £1,600) which has come about as so little was spent this year on S137. The balance carried forward is still below the recommended amount of one year's precept in reserve; this is because the precept rose this year and it will take some time for the PC to build up reserves to equal the new amount.

The total fixed assets on the PC register have increased by £1,000, mostly due to the addition of the defibrillator, this was originally not going to be a PC asset but rather a village asset however as no emergency committee exists the PC have registered it. Another addition was a new litter bin costing some £150 but the Sports Club loan amount is lowered by £200 due to their annual repayment.

The PC was given strong indications that the grass cutting grant would fully disappear for the 2016/17 year and there would definitely be no payment from CDC over changes in the precept base calculation. The view that the precept should go up by a greater amount to allow for full S137 spending if necessary was expressed. After discussion the majority view was that the precept should be put up by an amount to make up for the probable loss of revenue, leaving a reduced amount available for S137 again in the coming year. The precept was raised to £8,600.

This is perhaps a good time to remind everyone that the monthly financial report, given at the PC meeting and detailed in the minutes is available to view online, following transparency changes the draft minutes are now published within a week of the meeting on both the website and notice boards. Anyone wishing to apply for S137 monies can contact the Clerk or approach any of the Councillors who can explain the criteria for eligibility.

Finmere Parish Council

Receipts and Payments Account – Year Ended 31 March 2016

| 2014 - 2015 | Transactions Receipts | 2015 - 2016 |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| £6,050.00 | Precept | £7,500.00 |
| £0.00 | Council grant | £350.00 |
| £279.64 | VAT Refund | £284.20 |
| £3.68 | Bank Interest | £3.68 |
| £1,521.51 | CDC Grass Cutting Allowance | £760.76 |
| £200.00 | Sports Club Loan Repayment | £200.00 |
| £192.54 | Insurance cancellation | £0.00 |
| <u>£192.00</u> | <u>Anonymous donation</u> | <u>£0.00</u> |
| <u>£8,439.37</u> | TOTAL RECEIPTS | <u>£9,098.64</u> |

| Transactions Payments | | |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| £4,159.84 | Running costs | £3,757.23 |
| £4,146.13 | General administration | £1,263.52 |
| | General admin - salaries | £3,357.00 |
| £1,691.72 | S137 (LG Act 1972) Vllge Benefit | £370.00 |
| £49.41 | S144 (LG Act 1972) Enc Visitors | £30.00 |
| £40.00 | Capital expenditure | £0.00 |
| <u>£19.81</u> | <u>S142 (LG Act 1972) Info & advice</u> | <u>£0.00</u> |
| <u>£10,106.91</u> | TOTAL PAYMENTS | <u>£8,777.75</u> |

| Summary Receipts / Payments | 2014 - 2015 | 2015 - 2016 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Balance brought forward | £8,177.51 | £6,509.97 |
| Add Total Receipts | £8,439.37 | £9,098.64 |
| Less Total Payments | <u>-£10,106.91</u> | <u>-£8,777.75</u> |
| Balance Carried Forward | <u>£6,509.97</u> | <u>£6,830.86</u> |

These cumulative funds represented by:-

| | 31-Mar-15 | 31-Mar-16 |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Community Account: Balance | £1,213.36 | £1,530.57 |
| Money Manager: General Funds | £5,296.61 | £5,300.29 |
| | <u>£6,509.97</u> | <u>£6,830.86</u> |

(Chairman) -----

(Finance Officer) -----

| |
|---------------|
| Audit opinion |
|---------------|

Finnere Church

Joe and I arrived in January. We have felt very welcomed, have settled well into the Rectory and have enjoyed getting to know the villages in the Shelswell Benefice.

St Michael's and All Angels held its Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 14th March.

- 26 on the electoral roll.
- Church attendance fell during the vacancy, although I think more to people passing on or moving away. However Christmas and Remembrance were well supported; and it is lovely to see Finnere School in church for their end of term services.
- There were 7 funerals and 3 baptisms in 2015.
- Fundraising was a bit of a struggle in 2015 without a Safari supper or Harvest Supper. However people were very generous during the Gift week appeal, the Christmas bazaar and the Christmas Draw, and we were very grateful to the Finnere Festival for their kind donation.
- The church building itself is generally in good order, and all urgent maintenance work has been done. With the exception of the clock which continues to be problematic.

We are looking forward this year to a special service on 12th June in honour of the Queen's 90th birthday, followed by a glass of something and some nibbles, before we repair to the village hall with our picnics. Please do come along and support us. And we are also excited to be hosting three weddings in Finnere Church this summer.

Having hosted the monthly coffee morning during the vacancy, Jan Shelley is continuing to do this, and new folk are always welcome. And having been nobbled very early in, I have resurrected Pic a Flic within the Rectory.

We will be having a number of events over the coming year, including:

- Gift week in June
- Buzzy Lepper will be opening up her garden in July
- It is a shame that the Festival isn't happening, but instead we will have a small Summer Fayre on 3rd September
- And given it was such a great occasion last year, we will be having another Christmas Bazaar on 12th November

Finnere is, of course, part of the larger Shelswell Benefice and as such is able to participate in things like Shelswell by the sea, our holiday at home scheme. I am concerned to explore the impact of the proposed discontinuation of various of the bus services on people living in the Benefice and will be inviting representatives from the various parish councils in the benefice to meet and consider what, if anything, we can do about this.

Can I thank the Parish Council for all the work they put in that helps make this village a good place to live. Thank you.

Alice Goodall, Rector, Shelswell Benefice (10th May 2016)

POOR'S PLOT CHARITY

Annual Report 2015/16

to Fimere Parish Meeting, 10 th May 2016

The Poor's Plot trustees make their report to the Parish Meeting as follows.

We are very pleased to welcome Sandy Tresise onto the committee, so that the trustees comprised Anita Bilbo (secretary), Hugh Smith (chairman), Paul Nash, Phillip Rushforth and Sandy Tresise.

Activities and Financial Position

The charity holds the 12 acre Poor's Plot field which it lets out on agricultural rent. It also administers the village allotment area, which is kindly made available by Mr Peter Lepper who plays such an active part in running it. There are 24 allotment plots which are let for a small fee. As normal, a number of these changed hands over the year. All are currently in use and are, apart from two, in good order.

During the year a concerted effort was made to improve the tidiness of the allotment area, particularly by the removal of debris and rubbish left by a number of people who had relinquished their plots. A large skip was hired, and through the efforts of some allotment holders and the committee members a great deal of debris was disposed of.

We have continued to rebuild the charity's financial position from a previous operating deficit in earlier years. In the year to February 2016 the charity made a small surplus:

| | |
|----------|----------------|
| Income | £930.00 |
| Expenses | <u>£517.93</u> |
| Surplus | £412.07 |

Expenses in the year were for insurance premium, and payment for the rubbish skip.

Outlook

Any village resident who is interested in taking an allotment should please register their interest with the Secretary, Anita Bilbo who will advise them when a plot becomes vacant.

The trustees have recently resolved (a) to arrange a further rubbish skip in 2016, and (b) to make a grant available, in an offer which will be open until April 2017, towards the overall cost of replacing the churchyard mower, on condition that nominated people may use it for mowing the common areas around the Poor's Plot allotments.

The trustees continue to discuss options for the further application of Poor's Plot funds, and welcome any viable suggestions that Fimere residents may wish to make in this regard.

Hugh Smith, Chairman

5th May 2016

Chairman's Report on Village Hall and Playing Fields 2016

Principle activities in pursuit of our objectives

The hall continues to be used by a variety of people, Beavers, Cubs and dog training.

The hall also hosts annual events such as the Finmere Festival. We have bookings for parties for children of varying ages, wedding parties and we have seen an increase in hire for such events. The hall is also used as a polling station. The village hall and playing fields require maintenance like any other building and grassy area. Our thanks go to Alan & Trevor Jones who spend many hours each summer looking after the playing field, Alan also looks after the interior of the hall.

Funding strategy and reserves policy

Our strategy is to maintain the revenue budget on a self-financing basis i.e. lettings and hires. Currently we have sufficient reserves for day to day expenses and it is our aim to keep it up. Management Committee approval is needed for any expenditure from the reserve fund.

Volunteer contributions, grants and fundraising

The village hall and playing fields require maintenance like any other building and grassy area. The costs of maintenance are minimised through use of the time and commitment of the committee members, namely Alan Jones, Trevor Jones, Paul Nash, Phillip Rushforth, Steve Trice and Pat White. Our thanks go to all the members and especially to Alan & Trevor Jones who spend many hours each summer looking after the playing field, Alan also looks after the interior of the hall.

2015 has seen the completion of the refurbishing of the hall. The first grant from OPES for refurbishing of the hall was received in 2013 and it has taken almost two and half years to finish the refurbishing of the hall. Thanks to Steve, Paul, Phillip, Trevor and Allen for their sheer hard work and long hours dedicated to the project and the on going maintenance of the village hall. Thanks also to Pat for attending the meetings, taking part in the decision making and help in cleaning and clearing the hall.

Peter our long standing committee member recently died and the committee would like to extend our thank you and sympathies to Joan, Peter's wife. Peter was a valued member of the committee and despite increasing difficulties with his mobility; he always attended our regular meetings, helped with the refurbishing of the hall and played an active role in decision making. He will be sadly missed.

The Village Hall Management Committee is still continuing to operate under an informal authority of the Parish Council. I believe a meeting has been arranged by Mike Kerford-Byrnes with the solicitors to identify the steps to be taken to come to a regulatory and formal agreement between the Parish Council and the Village Hall and Playing Field Committee.

Our main fundraising plan for this year is a repeat of the Quiz night in November and we aim to organise more events.

Our future plans

Our core purpose is to continue to provide a sustainable, safe and high quality community building for the use and benefit of the local community in line with our charitable objectives. We have been in a steady, sound and well established state throughout the past year and will continue to manage and run the hall, ensuring that we can meet the following priorities:

- The hall is properly and fully maintained.
- Running costs continue to be met.
- Build up reserves to cover future repairs.
- Continue to have a strong and dedicated management committee that continuously reviews, updates and improves our management process.
- Monitor and react to the needs of users and the wider community.
- Promoting the hall for use by the local community.

Illa Moss

Chairman

10/05/2016

Finmere Football club 2015/16 Season

Finmere football club has continued in the 15/16 season to play in the Banbury and Lord Jersey league with two teams. The league is structured into 4 divisions (Premier, Div 1, 2 and 3). The first team compete in Division One and the Reserves in Division 3.

Finmere had 37 players signed on for the year.

Duncan Geary managed the first Team initially before he stepped aside for Craig Lynes to run to the end of season. The first team finished in 8th place out of 11 teams.

Ian Whitton and Darren King have continued to manage the reserve team and finished the season 11th out of 14.

The club has an active committee who meet monthly in the Royal Oak at Tingewick for Committee meetings, Committee is made up of myself Chairman, Kate Whitton club secretary, Robert How, Treasurer, Events Secretary Megan Welsh and members Dan Whitbread, Darren King and Liam Aldridge. The club has a number of fund raising events throughout the year with Bingo and end of season BBQ being popular. The club runs a small surplus and continues to raise funds to finance the Shower extension.

The Club is intending to continue in 2016/17 in the same league still with two teams.

The Club still plans to erect two small shower rooms onto the back of the Pavilion, which it shares with Finmere Cricket club. Planning permission has yet to be sort, but drawing plan has been schemed.

The Club continues to experience problems with dog mess on the field, but does have the support of the Parish Council in finding a resolution.

In Jan 2016 the Club experienced the sad loss of Tony Diston long time supporter, linesman and fund raiser for the club. Tony had contributed massively to the club over a number of years. Tony was also Landlord of the Royal Oak in Tingewick, which the club continues to use for after match drinks and buffet.

Jon How 16/06/16

Finmere Cricket Club



Oxfordshire England

2015 Season in Review/Prospect 2016 Season

For the Love of the Game

In 2015 the cricket club continued to focus on “serious friendly” Sunday fixtures, all played at Finmere. As per last year, the club was well supported by the village - both in terms of providing players but also with respect to back-room help from the players’ families. Once again we were lucky with the weather and the only match cancelled was due to the opposition not being able to raise a team.

In terms of results, we won every Sunday game but one – that loss being against Buckingham Cricket Club whose 14-year old leg spinner destroyed us by taking the last 6 wickets for no runs in just 2 overs. May saw a repeat of the 20:20 fixture against one of the club’s sponsors, Lloyd Woodworking of Brackley, which again we won. As with last season the high point was the fantastic progress made by our youth section. Miles Hermon and Travis Stone from Finmere, and Morgan Blane and Jack Lloyd from Tingewick all contributed with the bat and ball. With all of these one year older this seasons we can look forward to building a strong back-bone to the team for the future. Player of the Season was Luke Tory, Most Improved was Dave Oswald and Young Player was Travis Stone.

The Club remains in good financial health thanks to an ambitious and very successful fundraising programme co-ordinated by Steph Chafor and her team – over £500 was raised through a single raffle competition! Thanks are due to Alan and Trevor Jones for continuing to prepare such excellent pitches and for delivering us a square and outfield that any league side would envy.

For this 2016 season we have another series of Sunday friendlies scheduled to include – for the first time – a tour match away to March Gibbon. Everyone in the village is more than welcome to come up and watch our games (matches start at 2.00pm prompt) or to join the club as a playing member. We are always on the look-out for new talent – whatever your age. Contact details below for those who might be interested.

Michael Geelan

or

David Lloyd

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

michael.geelan@eurospangroup.com

finmerecricketclub@hotmail.com