

MEETING OF  
FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016 in Finmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Mike Kerford-Byrnes (MKB) (Chairman), Katherine Grimston (KG) (Vice Chairman), Steve Trice (ST) and Joanne Brooks (JB)

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO)

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

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

MKB declared an interest in planning application 16/01209/OUT (see Section 17)

At this point MKB handed the Chair of the meeting to KG and left the building. The planning application 16/01209/OUT was then discussed as KG had a family emergency and needed to leave urgently. This discussion is detailed in Section 17 below. MKB then re-entered the building and resumed the chair. KG then left the meeting.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2016 were approved with corrections.

4. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

No report was given as the County Councillor was unable to attend the meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING

5.01 **Electric Blanket Testing** As requested by Catherine Fulljames, County Councillor, SC has obtained copies of the only poster produced, an A5 black and white one, and placed them on the notice boards. As the testing is during October it will probably be too late to include it in the next newsletter.

5.02 **Chinalls Close Paving Slabs** SC drafted and circulated the letter which, after corrections, was delivered to residents on Saturday Oct 1<sup>st</sup> with a deadline of two weeks for replies. Two volunteers have so far come forward. MKB suggests that SC should ask Phillip Rushforth, resident, to encourage volunteers to come forward. The PC can then ask John Donaldson, grass cutting contractor, what to do as regards re-laying or re-seeding as a result. It may be that it is too late in the year to carry out the work now. c/f

- 5.03 **List of assets (the pond)** MKB brings in the letter and map which he has found. The map is really too small and unclear to decide on. SC is to contact OCC and CDC to see if they have a better map. If not SC is to contact Land Registry. c/f
- 5.04 **Public Protection and Development letter** c/f
- 5.05 **Christmas Lights** The lights will need to be mended before the switch on , December 2<sup>nd</sup> as shown below, but MKB's cherry picker is awaiting repair at the moment. c/f
- 5.06 **Letter from Little Tingewick resident about Mere Lane** SC has continued researching the minutes regarding the water companies activities in Mere Lane but has found no reference so far. c/f
- 5.07 **Risk Assessment Forms** The remaining sheets still need to be returned. c/f
- 5.08 **Parish Path Map** JB has obtained copies for those councillors who were interested and SC takes a copy for the parish records. The colour version is to be framed but JB has not found a reasonably priced frame of the right size yet. c/f
- 5.09 **Cross Tree Turf and Drainage Problems** MK has confirmed that the drain on the Cross Tree triangle has been cleared. He will keep an eye on it as a considerable amount of debris washes down the Water Stratford Rd at times of heavy rain. SC has reported the drain by the post box which is now scheduled to be cleared. It is felt that CF asking to be copied in to the correspondence has focussed matters. c/f
- 5.10 **Road Surface and Marking Problems** SC reported the problem with markings fading and old priority markings showing through to both OCC and Bucks CC. BCC have confirmed that they have had the works scheduled since June but that they are very weather dependent. ST points out that the weather since June has been good whereas the approaching winter will be a lot worse. Nothing has been heard from CF on this matter, presumably as it is not an OCC issue. This is very confusing as the fix-my-street map would seem to show the junction lies in Oxfordshire. SC is to chase this matter up with both Bucks and OCC. c/f
- 5.11 **Internal and External Audit – Signatory Forms** SC has obtained all the necessary signatures now and will present the forms and change the signatories before the November meeting. c/f
- 5.12 **Church Mower** SC is still waiting for a more detailed invoice for the PC records and is to chase this matter up. c/f
- 5.13 **Village Transport Survey** SC has obtained an electronic copy of the Comet scheme information and has passed this to Rev Goodall.
- 5.14 **Bottle Bank** No info has been received. c/f
- 5.15 **Overgrown Footpath** Sarah Aldous, OCC Footpaths Officer, has confirmed that the tarmac path running from the gated part of the Old Banbury Rd is the responsibility of OCC Highways and she has passed this matter to them. This is to be an item for review on the December agenda. c/f
- 5.16 **Stable Close Bund** This matter is ongoing. c/f

- 5.17 **Church Clock Invoice** This has been paid.
- 5.18 **Defibrillator Supplies Invoice** This has been paid.
- 5.19 **Operation Playground** SC has checked with the internal auditor and there is no problem with the PC applying for the grant. ST has been in touch with Grantscape and matters are ongoing. c/f
- 5.20 **OALC Housing Survey** This has been submitted online.
- 5.21 **Conclusion of External Audit** SC has posted the notice of conclusion and other paperwork on the notice boards and the web. SC has chosen dates for the display of inspection information and submission of accounts for 2017. Inspection will run from June 9<sup>th</sup> till July 20<sup>th</sup> and submission will be on June 12<sup>th</sup>.
- 5.22 **HS2 Posters** These have been put up.
- 5.23 **Local Enforcement Plan** SC has hand delivered the copies to MK and AH.
- 5.24 **Update on Playing Field Land Acquisition** MKB is to meet with Hugh Smith and Rebecca Ayres, Mixbury Trust Trustees, for negotiations when MKB will point out the need to define the boundary properly and also the imperative of vacant possession. c/f

## 6. FINANCIAL REPORT

The quarterly financial report was presented.

It was reported that there was £4,727.63 in the Treasurer Account and £5,302.15 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The following had been paid in in September:  
£4,300.00 from CDC (Parish Precept)

The following had been paid out in September:

£160.00 to P A Meecham (S137 – village benefit – church clock maintenance)  
£50.82 to WelMedical (Running costs – replacement pads and pack for defibrillator)  
£287.50 to SC (general admin – for Clerk and RFO duties and internet costs)

## 7. S19/S137

No requests had been received.

## 8. URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business was carried out.

## 9. FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE

MKB has heard that the insurance company is to hold a meeting with the administrators, trustees and banks over the next few weeks. He has asked for a resumption of quarry liaison meetings but the administrators say there is no point as nothing is happening. ST points out that although not much activity is taking place there are still other matters such as leachate management, capping progress and flaring to keep an eye on. MKB agrees; ragwort is also a problem; he will press this with the administrators and seek to restart the meetings. If there is no movement on this the PC can ask CF to get involved.

## 10. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS AND CONDITION

The VHPFC has now registered as a new charity. MKB has spoken with the solicitor who needs details of this charity and needs to know whether it is a 'legal entity' or not. ST is not sure but will send the certification to MKB and the PC. Hopefully this will provide enough information. MKB is to meet with the solicitor to discuss formalising the agreement and will try to obtain a model agreement from OALC first.

MKB has walked the field this month and reports it to be in satisfactory condition.

## 11. NEW RESIDENTS NOTIFICATIONS

JB has delivered a welcome letter to the new residents in Water Stratford Rd; there are no other new residents this month.

## 12. PARISH CLERK HOUR'S DIARY

The total for the quarter was 58.75 hours. This is some 4 hours lower than the same quarter last year but overall the annual figures are in line with last year.

## 13. REMEMBRANCE WREATH

SC has checked into what went wrong last year and how the payment for the wreath was missed. Normally the memorial wreath is an agenda item and therefore always appears in Matters Arising on subsequent months, usually with a check that the wreath has arrived before payment is voted on. As the contribution is only a suggested donation there is no invoice reminder. Last year however the wreath had to be dealt with under urgent business and there was a debate about a static display in the Church. It was decided that no further action should be taken on the static display and somehow this resulted in the whole topic not appearing in Matters Arising and no payment was therefore voted on. It is decided to make an immediate payment for last year's wreath in the normal amount of £100. SC is to contact the British Legion representative and obtain information to make a bacs payment. Proposed MKB, seconded ST, carried unanimously. This year the PC will order a type G circular wreath as normal and will vote on payment of a contribution once the wreath has arrived as is usual. Proposed MKB, seconded JB, carried unanimously.

#### 14. CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

This is to be held on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Suggestions are sought for who is to turn on the lights. JB is to talk to Buzzy Leper with SC to send a formal invite if she is willing. MKB is to make the reading.

#### 15. A421 VERGE TO ROUNDABOUT

SC reported the problems with visibility on the Bucks CC website and has received a reply confirming that work is to start in the area from October 3<sup>rd</sup>. It is not certain that this work will include the whole verge from the roundabout to the Old Banbury Rd. JB points out that the verge is out of control, with scrubby grass, leaning trees, scattered rubbish and even a graffiti covered sign. ST volunteers to clean the graffiti from the sign. The PC will wait to see what exactly is cut before deciding how to proceed.

#### 16. PRECEPT REFERENDUM CONSULTATION

NALC have been in touch regarding a consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). This includes proposals to include parish councils in the council tax referendum principles. At the moment County and District Councils can only raise their council tax by 2% or less without holding a referendum. Many of these councils have been seeking to hand powers and services to parish councils which are not covered by this legislation. The government is mainly seeking only to include Town and large Parish Councils but is also considering including all councils. There are four questions on the consultation regarding the issue. The PC feels that the first two are not applicable in Finmere's case. They answer no to the question of whether referendum principles should be applied to all PC's and answer in the affirmative to the question of whether they have views on the practical implications. The view of the PC is that this could make things very difficult as 2% of the current precept is only £166. A one off event like a tree felling or a public enquiry could cost far more than this, meaning it would take years to recoup the loss to reserves. The PC currently holds a little below the minimum of one year's precept in reserve recommended as best practice by the auditors. SC is to reply as stated to the consultation. Proposed MKB, seconded JB, carried unanimously.

#### 17. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

16/01759/TPO – Town Farm, Fulwell Rd – 2 yew trees – reduce overhang by 2m away from property – subject to TPO 4/1998 – MKB does not have the paperwork with him and has had no chance to speak to the applicants. ST suggests that councillors should have more detail before deciding whether to comment or object. SC confirms that there is no rush to decide as she has spoken with CDC but it is decided to deal with this under urgent business. Councillors can check the application detail on line and take a look at the property.

16/01209/OUT – Heatherstone Lodge, Banbury Road – residential development and associated infrastructure – as detailed above MKB declared an interest, handed over the Chair and left the building for the duration of this discussion – the proposal is for 47 properties to

be built on land beside the gated section of the Old Banbury Road. A village meeting to sound out opinion was held in the village hall on the evening of September 30<sup>th</sup>. Of the 41 people attending 37 objected and 1 supported the application, the rest abstaining. At the time of the meeting the flood plan was not with the paperwork but ST has managed to download and print it from the website now. The area is classified as low risk. The PC is opposed to the plan on many grounds but can only comment on planning issues. ST has written a letter in his private capacity as a resident and raises some of the points which he addressed. After some discussion the salient points are:

The size and scale of the development which is out of character with the village, a massive increase in the size of the village percentage wise and will generally swamp the village.

The development is beyond the village envelope.

The drainage, sewage and surface water run-off services are already at capacity.

With reference to the local plan the development will be difficult to integrate and will not have easy access to sustainable local services with the bus service having been drastically cut and very few footpaths in or around the village.

The development will be in close proximity to the landfill site with all the risks of fire and pollution which that has raised not to mention the noise pollution of the MRF if it becomes operational and the unknown risks of the gasification process.

JB is to word the PC's objection and return by the consultation date. Proposed ST, seconded KG, carried unanimously.

## 18. CORRESPONDENCE

### **Correspondence for meeting –**

Letter from HM the Queen – a thank you for the birthday card sent by the PC

Proposal to temporarily divert part of Finmere Bridleway No. 4 at Finmere Quarry – the proposal to permanently divert the bridleway has fallen through and so the temporary diversion now needs to be extended. This will be on the agenda for November but will need to be dealt with under urgent business before then as the deadline is October 31<sup>st</sup>. No problems are envisaged.

Internal auditor letter of engagement – it is decided to employ Phil Hood of Arrow Accounting for the coming financial year and the letter is duly signed. Proposed MKB, seconded ST, carried unanimously.

### **Emails printed –**

From visitor to village about footpaths – see Section 19. AOB below

Neighbourhood planning bill letter – from Gavin Barwell MP about measures to strengthen neighbourhood planning

Proposed gypsy site news – correspondence has been sent to the website and a phone call made to MKB regarding a possible planning application for the land opposite the Red Lion pub. The applicant has been made aware that the land is in Buckinghamshire and directed to Tingewick PC.

Bucks CC about highway issues – see Sections 5 and 15 above.

MK about drains – see Section 5 above

From volunteers for working on the slabs – see Section 5 above

#### **Emails forwarded –**

Internal auditor approval of grant for play area application

Independent HS2 Construction Commissioner letter regarding appointment

Precept referendum technical consultation – see Section 16

News from Healthwatch Oxfordshire

Usual reports

#### 19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Mixbury to Fimere Footpath** SC has received an email from a frequent visitor to the village asking the PC to pursue improvements to the accessibility of this path. MKB has some signs, sent by Sarah Aldous, OCC, to waymark the path across his land and will have these put up. He is opposed to the fitting of dog gates to the stile though as other landowners have had a lot of problems with these being fixed open and stray or roaming dogs gaining access to livestock. SC is to ask the Fianders, local footpath wardens, to walk the path and report on the other issues raised. SC is to reply to the email with an explanation of measures being taken.

#### 20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> of November.

Meeting closed at 10.30 p.m.

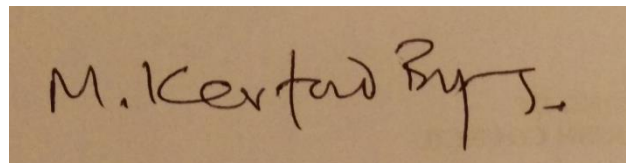
#### CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

Crisis Christmas Party letter

Glasdon booklet

Hags leaflet

J Parker Bulb Catalogue

A rectangular area containing a handwritten signature in dark ink on a light brown background. The signature reads "M. Kerford By J." with a flourish at the end.