

MEETING OF  
FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019 in Finmere Village Hall

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

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (SC) (Parish Clerk and RFO), Barbara Cunningham (BC) (Village Representative to the Quarry Liaison Committee), two representatives of Montpelier and one member of the public

1. APOLOGIES (19.31)

Apologies were received from County Councillor Ian Corkin (IC), Councillor Steve Trice (ST) and Councillor Peter Goss (PG).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT (19.32)

KG declared an involvement in issues involving the Church.

3. MINUTES (19.33)

The minutes of the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 were approved with corrections.

4. QUARRY LIAISON MEETING REPORT (19.34)

The report was delivered by Barbara Cunningham (BC), village representative. The meeting was held on June 11<sup>th</sup> 2019. Present were MKB (for the PC), BC (village representative), Danny Miller (OPES), Mike Nutting (AE Com), Rachael Pearce (AE Com), Kevin Broughton (OCC) and Sarah Kent (EA). Apologies were given by David Periam and Chris Hodgkinson (OCC) and Ian Corkin (County Councillor). The meeting was again quite disjointed, with no formal presentations.

Danny Miller reported that Cells 9 and 6 are now being capped with restoration soil. The mound on top has gone. There is now a plastic liner in Cell 3 and Cells 1 and 7 are undergoing CQA processing (Construction Quality Assessment). The authorisation has been received to install infrastructure to extract gas from Cell 7, this must be carried out within the next four weeks. A materials management plan is required for capping materials. The MRF is operating at two thirds capacity and currently employs 12 people. The ready-mix concrete is not being processed yet as sand is needed, which will come from Shelswell Park. In Cell 11a excavation of sand and gravel is almost completed and this has been stockpiled before washing. The various planning applications currently submitted have had their consideration extended to the July 22<sup>nd</sup> committee meeting, but this could also be extended to September.

The PC has objected to all these latest applications. Opes are ‘talking’ about future applications.

Kevin Broughton reported that there are six planning applications currently under consideration. David Periam will be returning; and Kevin Broughton will then head up the policy team. Chris Hodgkinson is currently long term off sick so there have been no monitoring visits and no OCC inspection since the last liaison meeting. BC points out that this is very worrying.

Sarah Kent reported that the EA had carried out three inspections since the last liaison meeting. Amanda Cornish is in charge of the MRF. Cell 11a has been rejected re the thickness of the plastic liner used and the fact that the drainage blanket may clog, this matter is under discussion. There have been odour issues reported and resulting onsite inspections. Leachate levels and ground water monitoring have not been completed on a quarterly basis. A CCS2 was issued and monitoring data is now completed. The gas management action plan has been submitted but the MRF fire prevention plan has not been submitted. BC points out that this is even more surprising when considering the catastrophic fire at the site that destroyed the previous MRF. The drainage plan for ground across the MRF is not accurate. The stockpile of waste material for recycling was found to be outside the boundary set for such storage. Due to an odour complaint from Cell 10 the site is currently on Band D.

The next liaison meeting will be held on September 10<sup>th</sup> at the Opes offices, preceded by a site visit at 10am when those present will tour the whole site.

There have been reports of waste lorries driving through the village on the Old Banbury Rd looking for the site access road. Signage is needed to tell vehicles to stay on the A421 and to make clear there is no site access through the village.

BC reminds everyone that after massive over-tipping for financial gain a notice was served on the then owners of the landfill who then appealed. The appeal was held in the village hall in September 2006, was postponed for legal submissions and later resumed in October of that year. The landfill owners lost the appeal, but the EA later said that the over-tip could not be removed for health risk reasons. A letter of apology was received by the PC from the Chief Executive of OCC and OCC was referred to the Scrutiny Committee. Cllr Michael Gibbard was delegated by the Scrutiny Committee to oversee the actions of OCC to make sure that there would never be a repetition of these mistakes. All this was in writing and all correspondence was given to the PC for future reference and safekeeping.

JB asks, given that the meeting raised various areas of concern, what would be BC’s biggest worry. BC explained that she was very worried about the refusal to discuss the current or future planning applications and their implications. MKB points out that the EA report shows that a number of compliances are needed, the operators are pushing the boundaries. BC points out that all the operators always have. MKB feels that when it comes to the physical operations on the ground, procedures for efficiency etc, these operators seem to know what they are doing at least.

MKB had an update from OCC on the staffing situation today. Chris Hodgkinson is likely to be off sick for some time to come. Kevin Broughton is now moving jobs and David Periam is moving to Bucks. OCC are recruiting and MKB is to brief a successor. It is possible some continuity could be maintained by involving David Periam in consultations, but the situation is far from ideal.

BC feels it is imperative that the PC should find out the 2006 correspondence from OCC, promising that there would be no recurrence, and remind them of it.

At this point Item 6 – below – was considered so that presenters could get away in good time.

## 5. VE DAY CELEBRATIONS (20.25)

The weekend of Friday 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 will be the official celebration date for VE Day 75. Friday 8<sup>th</sup> will be a Bank Holiday instead of Monday 11<sup>th</sup>.

On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> there will be a nationwide salute by pipers at 3pm and pubs will encourage customers to take part in the Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WWII. SC is to send a copy of the information on this to the landlord of the Red Lion. At 7pm there will be a nationwide ringing of church bells for peace. This will be followed by parties and celebrations in venues, in open spaces or in the streets.

These celebrations continue on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>. MKB will speak to the school and see if they would like to be involved in the celebrations. JB suggests a 'bring your own meat' barbecue might be a good plan as this involves no waste if numbers are low. This could be held in the churchyard or on the field or both. JB has access to three large bowl shaped 'brazier' bbq's that would be able to cope with the amounts involved.

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> there will be church services with the reading of the Tribute to the Millions written especially for the day and also the playing of the Last Post. MKB is to liaise with Revd Alice Goodall as well as the school.

There will need to be a newsletter informing villagers of the celebrations nearer the time but a newsletter item now asking people to get involved in preparations is important.

## 6. MONTPELIER ESTATES PRESENTATION (20.00)

The plans for the development of the land near the old Kings Head site have been revised following a pre-planning presentation to CDC. The proposal had been for smaller units suitable for young families, but the pre-application response was that there should be fewer, larger units in keeping with the surrounding development. There will now be five properties on the plot, one two bed and four three bed houses.

On looking at the plans MKB suggests there could be some alterations to the plan for the house nearest the neighbouring houses, to minimise intrusion. Montpelier are happy to adjust the layout of the parking area to take the house further from the existing properties. KG questions the drainage requirements of the site, as the village system is at capacity. Montpelier explain that planners often say that when actually there is still capacity but if it turns out that the drains cannot accommodate the extra properties then a system will be installed on the site. The planning application is to be presented in September.

MKB thanked Montpelier for their co-operation on behalf of the PC.

## 7. MATTERS ARISING (21.20)

- 7.01 **Fencing & Stile for Stable Close bund boundary** JB has spoken to the contractor and he is to carry out the work later in the summer. SC has reported the broken stile on the OCC footpaths site. This issue is to be on the October agenda.
- 7.02 **Sports Pavilion Issues** The reply from NALC solicitors has still not been received. MKB has sought further clarification over the status of the PC as custodian trustees, something which the PC feels they are not at the moment, as no lease of the hall or pavilion has been established. Once the reply has arrived this issue will need to be addressed under urgent business over the summer break. c/f
- 7.03 **Stable Close Fencing** ST has completed the works on the fence. MK wishes to record that he has done a fine job. Three spare posts are now housed in the mower container to be used for any future repairs. The invoice for wood has been paid. There will be a future invoice in the sum of £20 for the Postcrete used. SC is to pay this by bacs upon receipt, proposed MKB, seconded KG, carried unanimously. c/f
- 7.04 **Spinney Acquisition Funding** JB has again spoken with the Mixbury Trust Chairman Martin Ayres (MA). There has been a full meeting of the Trust and they have approved acceptance of the amount offered. This offer will now be submitted for approval to the Charities Commission. MKB has been investigating funding from CDC and has discovered that matching funding up to half the amount could be available in the New Year when the fund reopens as long as the Trust confirm they are happy to proceed by then. SC is to contact Cheryl Snudden, HS2, and ask for details of appropriate funding availability. There is also a chance that the Poores Plot or the landfill site will be able to help, MKB is to approach them. c/f
- 7.05 **Defibrillator Guardianship** Nobody has checked the site at night yet. There is to be some defibrillator training in the village, organised by a villager, which will help spread awareness. c/f
- 7.06 **CDC and Salvation Army Funding** SC has received a reply from CDC. There is only a small amount of money raised each year by the clothing bin of which at the moment the Salvation Army pay 50% to CDC. The PC can ask for this money and it is felt appropriate that the PC should ask for it and then donate it to the charity. c/f
- 7.07 **Preparation for the Death of a Senior National Figure** Nothing came from the parish liaison meeting as this issue was not discussed. SC is to carry on liaising with the Church over the summer break. c/f
- 7.08 **Loose Manhole Cover** SC has received a confirmatory email from OCC that the manhole cover has been listed for action, re-bedding. c/f
- 7.09 **Parish Footpath Warden** SC has answered the OCC request for information and explained that there are currently no volunteers for this position and asked if any list of volunteers who may be willing to visit the village and walk the paths is held. A list of currently reported faults and issues has been sent. This is checked against the

footpath map in the hall. Some issues have been addressed. SC is to notify OCC of this. MKB is to place a request for volunteers in the next newsletter. c/f

- 7.10 **Receipts Folder Invoice** SC has printed out a complete version of this invoice for records.
- 7.11 **New GDPR Policy** This has been finalised and placed on the web.
- 7.12 **Trailer towing training** An item for inclusion in the newsletter and a poster have been received. This is a private initiative but the problem with public awareness is real. SC is to place the poster on one of the noticeboards. MKB is to place the article in the next newsletter. c/f
- 7.13 **Website Access Requirements** SC has asked Paul Nash, former website administrator, for advice on this matter. He feels it will be very difficult to comply with all the requirements (users being able to change colours, fonts etc) but will look at this further over the summer. The deadline for compliance has now been released, September 2020. c/f
- 7.14 **Parish Liaison Meeting** As usual the meeting was very informative. One item which was raised was the new CDC Lottery. Organisations can set up a page on this lottery website and then publicise it. People who support the organisation then visit the page and purchase a lottery ticket through it. Some 60% of the money raised from each page goes to that organisation. The new planning team was introduced, and each gave a short statement about themselves. A telephone chart with direct phone numbers was given out. There was a promise to use more enforcement procedures on planning issues in the future. The PC will also be notified of the reasons involved in a decision that goes against a PC objection. SC has received an email about the lottery and is to circulate it.
- 7.15 **Risk Assessment Sheets** Most of these have now been returned. MKB has completed his but not brought them to the meeting. He will return them by email. The only sheet not accounted for is that for litter bins. SC is to circulate a blank sheet for litter bins and ask for volunteers to complete this over the summer. c/f
- 7.16 **Dangerous Fence** SC asked a friend of the family for the whereabouts of the owner and has now written to her and asked if the site can be made safe. c/f
- 7.17 **Future of the Church** JB explains that she has attended a PCC meeting. Falling congregations and a serious, longstanding shortfall in income are calling into question the future of the church. Though it is some way off, worryingly, it is entirely possible that the village could lose its church and see all or part of the building repurposed.

To bolster income, the PCC wish to promote the Parish Giving Scheme, a scheme by which people register a regular weekly, monthly or annual donation which is then a dependable and known source of income. There are also fundraising activities being planned. The Lepper's will be hosting 'Pimms in

the Parish' on July 21<sup>st</sup> at their farm and on August 24<sup>th</sup> there will be a fete at the church.

MKB suggests that it might be a good idea to see what sort of things churches have become in other villages. KG points out that even for those who are not regular churchgoers the church holds a central place in life, from cradle to grave the most important occasions of life are tied to it. The school also has a close relationship with the church as a C of E school.

The PC agreed to help publicise the seriousness of the situation through a newsletter and to encourage full participation in fundraising events. SC has circulated an email about possible uses for church buildings, which may be of some help in fundraising. The PC certainly feels that it is imperative to help to save such a fundamental part of village life as the church. c/f

## 8. FINANCIAL REPORT (22.00)

The quarterly financial report was presented.

It was reported that there was £8,967.42 in the Treasurer Account and £4,814.61 in the Business Money Manager Account.

The transactions for April and May were detailed at previous meetings. The following had been paid out during June:

£270.74 to Linnell – running costs – fence repair

£303.95 to SC (general admin – for Clerk and RFO duties and internet and website costs)

The bank reconciliation to June 30<sup>th</sup> was presented and signed. Proposed MKB, seconded KG, carried unanimously.

SC gives JB print outs of the June statements, the postal copies have not yet arrived, and the postal copies of the May statements, which will need to be returned for filing.

An invoice has been received in the sum of £78.00 for the April to September 2019 contribution to the Comet bus service. SC is to pay this by bacs, proposed MKB, seconded KG, carried unanimously.

## 9. S19/S137/URGENT BUSINESS (22.27)

No requests for funding had been received. No urgent business had been carried out.

#### 10. FINMERE LANDFILL SITE UPDATE (22.28)

This section has already been covered in Section 4 above.

#### 11. PLAYING FIELD PROGRESS AND CONDITION (22.29)

The sorting out of the leases is still ongoing.

MK confirms that he has walked the field this month and all is well.

#### 12. NEW RESIDENTS NOTIFICATIONS (22.30)

There are no new residents this month.

#### 13. PARISH CLERK HOUR'S DIARY (22.31)

The sheets were presented and agreed, proposed MKB, seconded MK, carried unanimously. The total for the quarter is only half an hour less than last year at 101.5 hours. This is a very busy quarter with both the internal and external audits and the APM. The next quarter should be considerably quieter, and SC is happy with the current hours allowed.

#### 14. NEW VAT LEGAL NOTE (22.34)

SC has asked the internal auditor for advice on this issue and supplied him with a copy of NALC Legal Note 21 which covers PC's giving help to village halls. Section 7 deals with reclaiming VAT and it is the opinion of the internal auditor, agreed by the PC after consideration, that section 7.c. means that the PC cannot reclaim VAT if it receives a contribution toward the cost of an invoice for the village hall. This would apply in the case of the mower to invoices for petrol, servicing and purchasing a replacement as the mower is being operated by the Village Hall Management Committee. This legal note was only produced in May. No VAT has been reclaimed since then.

It is decided that the grass cutting contribution from the Sports Club does not constitute a donation for the village hall or mower, it is a payment for the service of grass cutting. However, a contribution for half of petrol costs from the VHMC would break the rules, as would a contribution toward the purchase of a replacement mower. SC is unlikely to reclaim any VAT before September. ST is not present to give an insight into the thoughts of the VHMC. The PC are to consider over the summer break the best way to proceed in this matter. This is to be an agenda item in September.

## 15. ROAD REPAIRS (22.40)

MKB reports a pothole at the apex of the Cross Tree triangle. SC is to report it on fix-my-street.

## 16. PLANNING APPLICATIONS (22.41)

19/01079/F – Five Gables, Fulwell Rd – new roof over existing front offshoot and raising of the existing eaves and ridge heights to form accommodation above; open porch to front – it does not seem that this will be a problematic application. JB is to visit the neighbours and circulate comments under urgent business.

19/00649/TPO – The Oaks, Mere Lane - T1 – Oak, Large Oak – carry out 20-30% reduction to suitable growth points, equating to approx. 2-3.5m from extremities, with potential for 30-40% on large limb over house and T2 Oak, Smaller Oak – reduce canopy by approx. 30%, field side to remain ‘as is’ and garden side reduced to match, resulting in uniformed shape – Subject to TPO 20/99 – permission subject to conditions

## 17. CORRESPONDENCE (22.50)

### **Correspondence for meeting –**

John Hicks playing field inspection report and invoice – SC is to pay the invoice by bacs, proposed MKB, seconded JB, carried unanimously. The only outstanding issue is the matter of protecting the base of the equipment posts from strimmer damage. ST has emailed that the VHMC are looking into this.

Play area checklist – John Hicks has supplied a model template from another PC. This is to be adapted and MK agrees to carry out the weekly checks.

Citizens Advice – a thank you letter for the PC’s contribution and a request for help in finding volunteer drivers. SC is to put the leaflet on a noticeboard.

Parish Business Survey – the PC is invited to submit business names for inclusion in the ongoing industrial strategy. There are GDPR concerns in responding without permission. It is not felt that it is appropriate to nominate any businesses at this time.

Vegetation overgrowth – an email from a resident concerned with issues of overgrowth in the village – The footpath at the western end of Banbury Rd – the PC will keep an eye on this area, it is not too overgrown at the moment. The vision splay to the right of the Chinalls Close entrance, looking right from the Close into Valley Rd. There are shrubs encroaching on the verge. SC is to contact ST about this, it may be that this issue has arisen before. The vision splay at the eastern end of Old Banbury Rd, turning onto Sandpit Hill toward the A421 roundabout. MKB cut this back last year, he will do so again this year. The grass can be cut now but hedges will have to be left till the right time of year.

**Emails printed –**

Concerning issues above

**Emails forwarded –**

OALC June update – giving a date on compliance with website access requirements

Church building use seminar notice – see Section 7.17 above – this is to be re-circulated

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (22.57)

**Mixbury Chicken Farm Application** MKB explains that this has been refused and having spoken to the applicant it seems unlikely there will be an appeal.

**Grass on the bund** PG had been asked by a resident of Stable Close to get the grass on the bund cut. ST has spoken to the resident, John Donaldson, grass cutting contractor, will cut the grass once the very hot weather has passed.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING (22.59)

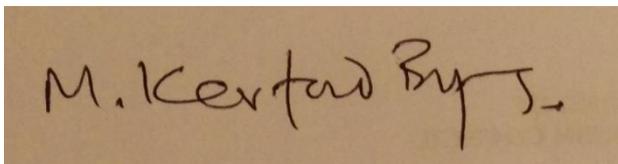
The date of the next meeting is September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Meeting closed at 23.00.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED

Seton catalogue

Parkers Bulbs catalogue

A rectangular photograph of a piece of light brown paper with a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "M. Kerford By J." in a cursive, slightly slanted script.