

The Parish of FINNINGHAM

*Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on
Tuesday, 9th April, 2019
in St. Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7.00pm.*

Chairman: Mr. A. Kilbee.

In attendance: Mr. A. Kilbee (Chairman), Miss N. Hill (Parish Clerk), 3 members of the Parish Council (Mrs. M. Webb, Mrs. C. Winter & Mr. J. Miller) Cllr. R. Barker and 1 member of the public.

1. Welcome & introduction by the Chairman

Apologies from Mrs. D. Sewell & Mr. J. Black for being unable to attend the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. He reminded the member of the public this meeting is their opportunity to give feedback on the activities within the Parish.

2. Minutes already approved of the Meeting held on 10th April 2017. The minutes were approved on 8th May 2018 during the Parish Council meeting.

3. Annual report from the Chairman of Finningham Parish Council.

It is with regret that I have to open this report by referring to the incidents of vandalism which seems to be endemic our village. For the second time one of the picnic tables has been damaged by mindless individuals. The first time it happened, the manufacturers were kind enough to replace the parts free of charge; this time however, we were not so lucky and had to pay for them. This is when vandalism really hurts, as the cost has to be borne by the Parish Council's funds. In other words, your money.

Thanks to the good work of our Recreation Area Working Group, we have been able to replace the slide on the Green. The majority of the funds for this came from a Tesco initiative where we won first place at the Stowmarket Store. A big thank you to everyone who collected the tokens to ensure our victory. There is still a little in the kitty so, we are actively looking for additional funding to enable us to provide more facilities for young and old. The Working Group invited the youngsters of the village to attend meeting in the Church to get some ideas on the way forward. It was thought that, by involving them, they would take ownership and perhaps, treat the equipment with respect. Unfortunately, this approach has only met limited success.

As you know, the Parish Council Meetings do not attract the hordes, but one meeting during the year which was well attended was to discuss the Planning Application for the development of Green Farmyard. This proved to be quite a lively meeting with over 16 residents attending. A representative of the Planning Department of the District Council visited to answer questions. This is an on-going issue, together with other plans for development within the village. The main bone of contention is the inadequacy of the present sewage system to accept a greater load from additional houses.

A large number of potholes in and around the village was reported to SCC Highways Department with a request that they be rectified in one concentrated project. This idea was turned down, but they were attended to over a period of time.

Last year, a couple of litter picks were organised and well attended. Unfortunately, the one held last Sunday was not well supported at all. Apart from two Councillors, we had just five people turn out to help. Hopefully, next Sunday's pick will be better attended. At the same time, the work was started to improve the surround to the new slide, as the soft landing does not meet current regulations. The incident when a white van crashed into the Pub caused widespread interest in the issue of speeding in through the village (although the accident was not due to speeding). Andy Brownlie managed to get our MP Jo Churchill to visit the village and witness some of the speeding issues at the cross roads. A number of promises were made to look into the matter but, as far as I am aware, nothing has transpired. A survey conducted by SCC Highways Department was a myth. Andy has since decided to give up his campaign against speeding through the village due to lack of interest. He has fallen foul of the issue that has blighted the Parish Council for as many years as I can remember and that is one of apathy. What can we do to rid the village of this curse? Any suggestions would be welcome!

One of the difficulties is communication with residents. A few people read the Parish Notice Board and more read the Finningham Newsletter but we have often heard the retort "but we didn't know about it!" Perhaps we should try and resurrect the village data base. Your thoughts please.

Finally, I should like to thank my fellow Councillors for their help and support during the past year. We are still one Councillor short but we believe that we have found an enthusiastic replacement. The local government election to be held on 2nd May will be uncontested in Finningham.

4. Other Reports:

The following had been invited to report, subject to availability:

County Councillor Cllr Jane Storey

Cllr Storey was unable to attend and the report (held on file) was read out on her behalf.

District Councillor Cllr Roy Barker

This is the last meeting Cllr Roy Barker will be attending as he is standing down after 16 years and is looking forward to his retirement.

A word of Thanks from the Parish Council were given to Cllr Barker for his work over the years.

Footpath Warden

Mr. D. Aiken was unable to attend but sent a report which was read out on his behalf which is on file. The Council are very grateful to the reports Mr. Aiken sends over.

It's believed the footpath sign by Knock O'Ronald is now again and could the Clerk make the footpath warden aware.

Friends of Finningham (FoF)

Mr. G. Atkins, chairman of FoF stated that funds are looking good and the secretary position is vacant with Beryl as treasurer but would like to step down as long as someone else takes the role on.

The village fete will be the next big thing in the village. The Christmas meal will continue and will be for everyone in the village. FoF are looking to do something on bonfire night.

The main way they communicate with the village is via the newsletter and would like to try different ways to communicate, whether via social media or using radio for big events.

FoF struggle with communicating with the village, similar to the parish council.

Open Forum.

Nothing was raised.

There were no other matters raised and the Chairman closed the meeting at 7:31pm.