

FINNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Draft

*Minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on
Tuesday 14th July 2020
A **virtual** meeting via Zoom, starting at 7:31pm*

Present: Mr. A. Kilbee, Mrs. M. Webb, Mrs. C. Winter, Mr. J. Miller and Mr. J. Black.

In attendance: Miss. N. Hill (Clerk), Cllr Andy Mellen and 3 members of the public.

20.36 Visiting speakers

Cllr Andy Mellen spoke about the joint Local Plan and there is a full council meeting next week. A lot of the council are continuing to work from home.

Cllr Jane Storey's and the footpath warden's report are on file.

20.37 Contribution by Members of the Public

Mr. R. Birch spoke about his letter to the Chairman, stating the benches in the Churchyard looking out of place. He reminded the Parish Council that they do not own the Churchyard and had no powers to do what they did. The Chairman responded stating the Rector did know about it and had given his agreement but hadn't asked the Diocese. It was mentioned by another Councillor that a faculty was not needed for a bench. Mr Birch said he didn't like the look of the benches in the Churchyard and looked into the rules afterwards. The Chairman apologised for not getting approval first and said he had heard more people liking them than not. The benches hadn't been concreted in, but tethered to the ground and slabs were placed in front of the benches to enable people to not have their feet on wet muddy grass and to aid anyone using the benches. It was mentioned, referring to the minutes, that the Council didn't officially agree to the slabs. Mr. Birch said he'd spoken to the Rector on 13th July and he said he hadn't been told about the benches. Mrs. C. Winter reminded everyone that at the core of this, there are 2 widows and remembering the service of their departed husbands. The Chairman asked the Councillors whether the slabs should be removed, 2 stated they should be, so the Chairman said he will remove them.

Mr. Birch said procedures hadn't been followed, but it is in the hands of the Diocese now. The Chairman confirmed if the Diocese did not give approval, then the benches will be moved. Mr. Birch stated the village is very dear to him. He then states there is no mention of Mr. J. Downie's first wife Rosemary and her service to the Church. Also, it was Mrs. M. Webb last meeting and he wanted to pay a tribute to Mrs. Webb, especially the work around the children's play equipment and he's sure she will be missed. The Chairman stated the bench was donated by the PC for Mr. J. Downie's contribution to the Council. It has been mentioned to the Church that they can add an additional plaque for Rosemary if they wish. Mr. Birch responded that one person is only allowed one memorial. Mr Birch was thanked for his contribution.

20.38 Apologies and approval of absence.

None as everyone present.

20.39 Approve minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 9th June 2020.

Mr. J. Miller proposed, seconded by Mr. J. Black and agreed that the minutes were a correct record and the Chairman then signed the minute book.

20.40 To receive any pecuniary or non-pecuniary declarations of interest from Members and any Gifts of Hospitality.

None

20.41 Matters arising from the meetings held on 9th June 2020.

41.01 An illustrated map of walks in Finningham, does fall within CIL expenditure. Are there people willing to take this project on if the Council approve of it?

Mrs. C. Winter is interested to help and work with Doug Aiken, the footpath warden, if he wishes to be involved.

- 41.02 Gislingham PC want to wait until they meet face to face to discuss whether they want to go halves on the installation of new poles which holds a Gislingham & Finningham road signs.
- 41.03 A mandate form is being completed by Mrs. C. Winter to add her as a signatory onto the Barclays bank accounts and to remove Mrs. M. Webb.

20.42 Chairman's Report

It seems that I owe the Parish Council an apology for my conduct, as I have been informed that my behaviour, brought about by enthusiasm and ignorance of the rules has brought the Parish Council into disrepute. For this I apologise and am willing to step down as Chairman, with immediate effect, if the Council requires it.

On other matters, thanks to James for helping me to install the Benches and to Nige for assisting with the removal of the old and installation of the new Parish Notice Board. I trust that, now it is installed, it meets the approval of the Councillors.

I am disappointed that Gislingham find it difficult to discuss the proposal put to them regarding the replacement of the Village signs at Rob Hall Corner. For some reason they are unable or unwilling to discuss the matter outside of a face-to-face meeting. Perhaps they have not really got to grips with Zoom! I do not know when they are likely to have a normal meeting.

I am pleased to report that the volunteer cutting of the Cemetery and Churchyard is going well and both areas are looking very tidy. Also, a number of people have been mowing the various triangles around the village. This makes them also very tidy and helps with traffic visibility.

As you know, this is Mary's last meeting as a Parish Councillor. She is a long-time member of the Council and has contributed greatly to its work for the benefit of the village. I am sure that she will continue to report matters requiring our attention. We hope that she enjoys her "retirement" and thank her for her work and dedication in the past. From a personal point of view, I will add that she has been a very able Vice Chairman, one on whom I could rely to take over the reins, when required.

I have requested advice from our Rector regarding the use of the Church for future meeting of the Parish Council. He feels that it could be possible for the next one but I am waiting proper confirmation.

Mrs. C. Winter said she didn't feel the Chairman had brought the Parish Council into disrepute and Mr. J. Black agreed with the words of support Mrs. C. Winter gave. None of the councillors motioned for the Chairman to step down.

20.43 Should the Parish Council have a meeting in August 2020? Considering a meeting was missed in April, some items have been discussed a month later than normal. This could mean some meetings may take longer if a meeting isn't held in August.

No, as Mrs. C. Winter and Mr. A. Kilbee would be unable to attend a meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of August.

20.44 To approve the comments made during the internal audit, completed by Mr. A. Strickland. The internal audit report has been sent to all Councillors for their review. Does the reserves policy need changing again.

Mr. A. Kilbee proposed, seconded by Mrs. C. Winter and agreed in principle the comments. The exact details of the reserves policy need to be looked into further.

20.45 To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019-2020. The annual governance statement has been sent to all Councillors for their review.

Mr. J. Miller proposed, seconded by Mr. J. Black and agreed the annual governance statement 2019-2020.

20.46 To approve the Accounting Statements for 2019-2020. The annual accounting statements have been sent to all Councillors for their review.

Mr. J Miller proposed, seconded by Mrs. C. Winter and agreed the accounting statements for 2019-2020.

20.47 To retrospectively approve to pay for Zoom meetings at £11.99 a month excluding VAT. As experienced last month, the Zoom meeting stopped after 40 mins, as per the free service. The Council pay £15 per meeting for the hiring of the Church, which isn't being paid whilst face to face meetings are not taking place.

Mr. A. Kilbee proposed, seconded by Mrs. M. Webb and agreed to pay the cost of holding Zoom meetings.

20.48 To discuss and approve re-surfacing the footpath between the Church and the cemetery. The question has been asked whether CIL money can be used for this. What should the surface be? It has been wood chippings, but it can still get quite muddy. Would shingle be a better option?

Pea gravel or road planings were suggested. Before anything is done, the clerk needs to contact SCC to seek their approval of re-surfacing this footpath and also what can and can't be used.

- 20.49 To discuss the continued flooding along Westhorpe Road. The clerk has reported it via Highways on their website. It is not just recently it happens, it happens every single year. What else can be done?**
The clerk to make the County Councillor, Jane Storey aware of this ongoing issue, especially as drivers are having to drive on the pavement to avoid the flooding.
- 20.50 To approve the purchase of 3 Finningham signs. Last month, in principle it was agreed to purchase 3 signs but there wasn't a current quote. The cost of these, including delivery and VAT is £268.72. The cost per sign is the same as when they were ordered last year.**
Mrs. C. Winter proposed, seconded by Mr. J. Black and agreed to purchase these signs.
- 20.51 To discuss and approve the state of one of the Ash trees on the Green and next steps to dealing with it. It seems that one of the Ash trees on the Green near the pathway isn't in good health.**
After discussing, Mr. J. Miller proposed, seconded by Mr. J. Black and agreed to get a quote from the tree surgeon the Council normally uses and to take his advice on whether the dead parts of the tree are removed or whether the whole tree needs removing.
- 20.52 To approve the increase in cost of the internal audit from £25 to £30 as of next year.**
Mr. J. Miller proposed, seconded by Mrs. M. Webb and agreed this increase.
- 20.53 To discuss and approve a Walks of Finningham map, to be mounted somewhere in the village. The idea was suggested last month and it has since been confirmed CIL money can be used for this.**
Mrs. C. Winter proposed, seconded by Mr. J. Black and agreed to produce a Walks of Finningham map.
- 20.54 To retrospectively approve the renewal of electricity contract with E.on. The renewal letter arrived after the last meeting and needed accepting by 8th July. Current standing charge 27p per day and renewal offer 39.3p per day with a variable price plan rate of 44.64p per day if renewal offer was not accepted. Looking at other prices with other companies, the lowest standing charge was 50p per day, therefore the renewal offer was accepted, which is a 1 year offer**
Mr. A. Kilbee proposed, seconded by Mr. J. Black and agreed to authorise the renewal of the electricity contract with E.on.
- 20.55 To discuss and approve the VAS machine to purchase. Radarlux have been chosen to supply the VAS as they have come recommended by a lot of the surrounding villages. Starting model (230M) with mounting bracket, battery and battery charger, software, delivery and VAT is 2,628.71 EUR (£2,354.20). Grants obtained for the VAS project total £3,500, £500 of which is for the installation of additional poles, £2000 is from Cllr Jane Storey, but hasn't been received yet. The quote with optional items and different VAS models has been emailed to Councillors.**
Carry over to the next meeting to ensure Highways approve the locations of the poles first and to check whether the VAT can be claimed back, as the order is from a German company and tax is included in the quote. It has been agreed the 230si model is the model to purchase.
- 20.56 Correspondence Received**
- 56.01 The clerk received a copy of a letter, for information, addressed to the Chairman raising a concern about the two memorial benches recently placed in the Churchyard. The person also questions whether permission was obtained to put the 2 benches in the Churchyard. Also, the tethers holding the benches down seem to have either been pulled out or have come out somehow.
- 56.02 The clerk has politely reminded Mr Negus of his offer to grass seed an area near the slide. He stated a bird net would need to be used to protect the seed. Notices have been placed around the area asking people to keep off.
- 56.03 SALC has reminded clerks about the website accessibility regulations that come into effect from 23rd September 2020.
- 56.04 Mrs. M. Webb noticed whilst walking along Gislingham Road a fridge dumped in the ditch. She has asked if someone with a trailer could collect it and put on the Green to be added to the rubbish collected during the litter pick.
- 56.05 Mrs. M. Webb has met with Nige Arthur on the Green to go through the risk assessment and other duties she completes on the Green.
- 56.06 Gislingham PC contacted the clerk asking whether Finningham was suffering from anti-social behaviour on the Green/play area and additional littering, as they are experiencing that more in Gislingham recently.
- 20.57 Finance**
- 57.01 Clerk's report –
Previous meeting, last balance reported was from 29/05/2020
Current account £24,093.44 (£1,125.80 still unrepresented, once presented, then balance is £22,967.64)

Deposit account £3,328.35

Balances as of 29/06/2020

Current account £20,190.46 (£1,670.00 still unrepresented, once presented, then balance is £18,520.46)
£539.94 is from March for Technix rubbing matting, even though they have confirmed back in May they had received the cheque.

Receipts since 29/05/20 –

Payments since 29/05/20 - £3,902.98 - (invoices approved at previous meeting)

Deposit account £3,329.24 – 0.89 interest

57.02 Requests for payment

Mr. A. Kilbee proposed, seconded by Mr. J. Miller and agreed to authorise the following payments.

E:on - £7.73 – June's bill paid via DD

MISS. N. HILL – £430.61 – clerk's salary

NEST - £39.65 – pension contribution for clerk

HMRC - £113.20 – PAYE

MISS. N. HILL – 52.74 – expenses including zoom & magnets for new notice board

THE CHURCH NOTICE BOARD COMPANY - £537.00 – remaining payment now notice board has been delivered.

J. LAWES - £52.30 – Slabs and postmix to fix benches into Churchyard

MORELOCK - £268.72 – 3 Finningham road signs

FINNINGHAM PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL - £25 – internal audit fee

FRIENDS OF FINNINGHAM - £100 – use of website and newsletter

MR. A. KILBEE - £21.40 – expenses for mileage to Harleston for hedge trimmer assessment and also plywood for the Green information sign.

20.58 Planning

58.01 To consider applications.

58.02 Decisions & to consider planning matters coming forth.

20.59 Questions to Chairman

None.

20.60 Items to be discussed at the next meeting and included in the September's agenda.

Vice chairman needs to be appointed.

Items that have been carried over from July's meeting.

Is Nige Arthur becoming a Councillor in September.

Mrs. M. Webb said she would like a copy of the minutes from July's meeting and she will keep all copies of minutes she has since being a Councillor.

The Chairman then closed the meeting at 9.14pm