

The Parish of **FINNINGHAM**

DRAFT

*Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on
Tuesday, 18th May, 2021
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), 4 members of the Parish Council (Mr. J. Black, Mrs. C. Winter, Mr. J. Miller & Mrs. L. Charter) and 4 members of the public.

1. Welcome & introduction by the Chairman

Apologies from Mr. N. Arthur, Mr. M. Walton & Mr. G. Atkins for being unable to attend the meeting. The Chairman welcomed and thanked the 4 members of the public for attending. He reminded the members 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 9th April 2019. The minutes were approved on 14th May 2019 during the Parish Council meeting.

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

Welcome everyone to our first Face to Face Meeting since 2019. We were unable to hold a meeting last year due to the Lock-down rules and Virtual Meetings were not held at that time.

First, I should like to take this opportunity to say a blated thank you to Ex Cllr Mary Webb who decided to retire from the Council after many years of dedicated service. Her dedication over the years is much appreciated by myself and other Councillors who have had the pleasure of working with her.

This is an opportune moment to welcome Lisa Charter and Nige Arthur, who answered our call for additional Councillors. We are sure they will be a valuable addition to our team and hope that they will enjoy their contribution to the village. We still have one vacancy, which we would love to fill soon.

- Over the last two years your Council have tried to improve the village in a number of ways.
- This includes cutting the grass on the Green and organising a rota of volunteers to cut the grass around the Church and in the Cemetery. Many thanks to those who take part.
- We have employed the services of a tree surgeon to make safe various trees on the Green and in the Churchyard.
- The fence around the Green has been replaced and a gate installed near the recreation area to prevent children running into the road.
- Additional play equipment was installed in the Green.
- A Vehicle Activated Sign was purchased and poles erected at all the entrance road into the village. Thanks to Andy Brownlie for maintaining that and providing the Council with the data. At his instigation, a meeting was held at the roadside near The White Horse attended by our MP, Members of Suffolk County Council Highways Department, our District Councillor, members of the Parish Council and the public. To our collective disappointment, nothing really constructive came out of that meeting to curb the speeding through the village. However, data from the VAS recordings seem to indicate that there has been an improvement.
- The Parish notice board, which was in danger for falling apart was replaced.
- Mid Suffolk Council are employed on a continuous basis to empty the litter and dog bins in and around the village.
- The Council has bought replacement Finningham Signs, some of which have been installed, the remained are waiting for additional or replacement poles.
- Recently, the Council has had the track around the Green resurfaced, as the potholes were getting out of hand.
- The Parish Council purchased and installed in the Churchyard a bench in memory of Jimmie Downie. He had been a Parish Councillor for many years and a regular benefactor to the Church.
- Current work in Progress is the production of a village footpath map, which will be installed at the beginning of the track arounds the Green. This will be supported by a QR code, linking the map to the Village Website. We thank Doug Aiken and Catherine Winter for all their hard work on this project. Hopefully, we shall see the fruits of their labour very shortly.

Particularly over this past Winter and early Spring, the village has been beset by flooding. The Parish Council has done its best to engage with the various Agencies to have the matter rectified. It has been an uphill battle and we have to thank both our District and County Councillors for helping us in this endeavour. We shall be continuing with this work, even though it is not a problem at the moment. We joined Mr Chris Goddard in his dialogue with Anglian Water regarding the inadequacies of the pumping station which led to flooding of Gislingham Road with raw sewage. We have been assured that situation has been resolved.

After a protracted Planning Application process, the Green Farmyard has now been sold to a developer (subject to contract) and site clearance will start as soon as that is finalised. A condition of granting Planning Permission is that the roads are to be kept clean during construction. Those who know the development along Westhorpe Road will know that this requirement was not complied with, adding to the flooding problem there.

When a new Planning Application is made, the Parish Council always discuss it in open meetings and put forward a submission based on the feelings of the meeting. If residents have strong views about a particular planning application, they should attend those meetings to put their points of view and it is vital that they too submit a comment to the Planning Department.

Following the recent County Council Elections, we have lost Jane Storey after many years as our representative. We thank her for all her hard work and support on behalf of the village. The successful candidate was Andy Mellen, who we know well as our District Councillor. He is now wearing two hats and we are sure that he will continue to support Finningham at County level, as he has done so at Mid Suffolk District.

I should also like to thank the rest of our Parish Councillors for the support they have given me and a particular thank you to Natalie for her hard and sometimes, frustrating work she does as our Parish Clerk.

They are all a great asset to the village.

The Chairman asked for any comments on his report, 1 member of the public mentioned the area on the Green hasn't been seeded. Someone had agreed to seed it, but they hadn't. The Chairman said he and another councillor will grass seed it. She also mentioned about the log run not turning. The Chairman said he's been in contact with Wicksteed and are waiting for their customer service dept to contact him, he's had to chase this as it's been some time he's been waiting.

Another member of the public asked, apart from the notice board, how else does the village know what the PC do? The Chairman said this has been an on-going problem. The litter pick, which was on the Sunday just gone, was only attended by 4 people and it seems people didn't know it was on. The big yellow banner is within the village at the crossroads, but not all villagers travel this part of the village. It was suggested to have smaller banners at different entrances and for each councillor to put them out. There hasn't been a newsletter for a long time. Details of the meeting were placed on the website and all the Facebook page the village has. A mailing list was suggested, which didn't get much response last time it was attempted. Andy Brownlie said he would put something on the Facebook page to email the clerk to say they are happy to go on the mailing list. There should be 2 newsletters this year, now we are slowly coming out of lockdown.

4. Other Reports:

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

a. Former County Councillor Cllr Jane Storey

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

Newly appointed County Councillor & District Councillor Cllr Andy Mellen

Cllr Andy Mellen was unable to attend due to being double booked with meetings. His report is on file and read out on his behalf.

b. Footpath Warden

Mr. D. Aiken report is on file, which he read out.

There's progress on the footpath sign project which Mr. Aiken reported on. The councillors thanked Mr. Aiken and Mrs. C. Winter for their hard work on this project.

c. Friends of Finningham (FoF)

The report is on file, as the Chairman Greg Aiken was unable to attend. The storage unit they are purchasing will be positioned next to the PC's storage unit.

d. Finningham Community Speed Watch

Mr. Brownlie mentioned about the new poles being installed for the VAS to attach to. The positioning of the poles were determined by Highways, with the initial input by the Parish Council and the CSW group. The VAS is moved every 2 weeks. Currently there is nothing on the back of the VAS and suggested whether to put some yellow on the back, to make it look doubled sided. Incoming traffic, i.e. traffic heading towards to sign, travel slower than traffic travelling away from the sign. The VAS is working to reduce the speed in the village. Figures from the VAS are posted on the Friends of Finningham Facebook page. It was suggested whether the wording under the displayed speed should say 'recording' or '3 points' as seen on other VAS signs in other villages.

Open Forum.

It was mentioned about a discussion on the FoF facebook page about an air cannon going off in the early hours of the morning in a field near the centre of the village. Air cannons have timers on or light sensors and should be pointing away from houses, it does seem to have angered some residents due to the positioning and times the air cannon goes off.

There were no other matters raised and the Chairman closed the meeting at 7:47pm.