

FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END



MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held at Finchingfield Hall Village Hall, on Tuesday 31st January 2023 commencing at 7:30pm.

Present:

Cllr Martin Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Duffin
Cllr Denman
Cllr A Stanger
Cllr R Stanger
Cllr Gordon
Cllr Coverdale
Cllr Strange
Cllr Peter Tattersley (BDC)
Kate Raymond (Clerk)

In Attendance: Members of the Public:17

23/135

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr G Butland (BDC) and Cllr Hammond

23/136

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None

23/137

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2022, signed by the Chairman.

Carried forward as outstanding.

- Hill Group Donation – Hill group have suggested they will make a donation, however it is unclear on how far this has progressed.

From the minutes of November 2022

‘The Parish Council also asked for a donation to recompense all the upheaval to the village hall. The Hills Group confirmed that this seemed a reasonable request and would look further into that’

- Tree removal around the housing development.

From the minutes of November 2022

The Hills Group confirmed that ECC requested this as they restricted the view to the entrance of the site. The Parish Council asked if this could be raised again with ECC as they disagreed. The Hills Group advised that ECC will not agree due to the road speed limit is 60mph and they pose a visibility issue. The Parish Council requested the trees are left in place and the Parish Council would liaise further with ECC. The Hills Group confirmed this but by March 2023 latest as bird nesting season commences.

ECC have advised that the road will remain a 60mph speed limit and Cllr Denman asked if the Parish Council could work with The Hills Group on a TOR to reduce the speed limit. The Hills Group advised they will start the lead on that and that they will liaise with Cllr Denman further on it.

Cllr Denman has not heard anything further from the Hills Group. At the last meeting there was agreement on having a SPOC for the bridge, this was Cllr. Roger Duffin but will now be Cllr David Coverdale. Banners for '20 is plenty' have been purchased.

No other additions to the minutes.

23/138

TEMPORARY CLERK & RFO

Donna Roder is taking sick leave due to long Covid. Kate Raymond has temporarily taken on the Clerk role. Cllr Bob Stanger has taken on the RFO role on a temporary basis. The Parish Council are looking for a full time bookkeeper and would welcome suggestions from the public.

23/139

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Michael Staines - standing as a candidate for Braintree District Council (independent) for May elections. Noted how important the bridge is and what it supports locally. Conflict of interest of the work required, road and maintenance budgets slashed, in conflict with national policies and impact on economic growth (wider than Finchingfield) up to 14/15 parishes impacted. Heritage issues, failures by ECC to scope for consultation.

Jane Welsh – it remains unproven that the bridge needs to be taken down / rebuilt and doing so would lead to a building site on the green. Short time on

the consultation, needs to be proved that the bridge needs to be rebuilt not just focussing on a temporary bridge.

Mark Ault - Properties in the village green, these couldn't be changed (due to being listed) why / how can a bridge be changed?

Cllr Martin-Smith – Cllr. Roger Duffin will be the lead for the PC and the bridge. There was a Zoom meeting with Essex Council in August 2022 including Highways and Cllr. Graham Butland. Several questions were posed which were then answered, a link to which is on the PC website. There have been a number of meetings in the past about the 'need' to rebuild - it is accepted the current bridge gets damaged regularly. It is understood that the temporary bridge is a must.

Mary Turley - has Essex stated the bridge is too weak? And needs to be replaced due to this?

Unknown member of public - Evidence has been put on the Essex site about why it needs to be replaced and its state of repair.

Cllr Stanger - Essex have known about issues of repair since 1995, Essex haven't put a weight sign restriction on the bridge.

Cllr. Martin-Smith - there will be meeting with the Guild and residents in the next 3 days as chaired by Cllr Martin Smith.

Cllr Stanger – remains unclear what the evidence is that it needs to be knocked down and rebuilt now.

Unknown member of the public – the work proposed is between 23rd April - 23rd December requested by Essex CC for use of village green. Do the PC have control of this (in terms of the granting of access). Cllr Duffin The PC are looking to get penalty clauses inserted for overruns. Looking into de-registration of the green and land in the Pightle and what the PC might have in using this.

Mark Ault - Otters have now been seen in the pond, will that stop the bridge work going ahead?

Julia Dimmock – Following local research and questionnaire's, stated that 263 people employed locally, and the bridge closing will affect over 40 businesses - we would like to submit these documents to the PC for the impact on the bridge closing.

Cllr Martin Smith - A final decision on the bridge being rebuilt is going to take place hasn't been made yet.

Colin Ehren – The walls of the bridge need to be reinforced due to it regularly being hit by lorries, these need to be reinforced and to do this you need to rebuild the bridge, it needs to be widened to prevent it being hit.

Helen Turner - Have we had an independent survey of the bridge?

23/140

REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Peter Tattersley Braintree District Council – Cllr Tattersley explained that the council are trying to come up with savings options due to the district having financial problems, 1 - 1.5 million savings needed in the next year. Lots of schemes have been put forward, final decision 20/02/23. No pay increase for councillors, car parking charges increasing, hard copies of calendars for recycling now being stopped from being delivered. Verge cutting will be reduced, CAB and museum contributions to be reduced.

Cllr Graham Butland (County Council) update from Cllr Tattersley. There are currently financial problems and issue within a social care. Cllr Tattersley stated that Cllr Graham Butland is unclear of the Parish Council's views on the bridge, advised to make this clear in the minutes of the next Parish Council meeting. Cllr Duffin stated the Parish Council wanted a temporary bridge and has had e-mail contact with Cllr Butland previously about this, and that Cllr Butland stated he would support a temporary bridge.

23/141

FINCHINGFIELD BRIDGE REFURBISHMENT

A Final decision on whether the bridge must be re-built is yet to be made, current public consultation runs until 9th February.

The Parish Council will take every means at their disposal to prevent the bridge refurbishment if a temporary bridge is not put in place for the duration of the work.

There remains concern and potentially unanswered questions around the visibility, validity and independence of the surveys undertaken to replace the bridge

The Parish Council will be making a formal response to the current consultation.

Cllr Martin Smith (Chair) to Chair a meeting on Friday 3rd February regarding urgent bridge matters and requesting an extension on the planning application.

23/142

FINANCE

RFO (Cllr B Stanger) provided details of January PC payments and reconciled payments from December 2022.

Cllr Coverdale – All costs have increased over the last year. The pre-cept needs to go up to cover this with a 31% proposed increase. A 1% increase is approx. £700 - we need to raise the money as related to band D of the council tax. PC don't have a full set of accounts due to issues with Clerk / RFO over the last year, reductions in grants, Sluice gates repair took up 60% of the budget, 10% contribution of the pre-cept to fight the prison WASC membership.

Cllr Gordon raised concern over CHE budget submitted to the Clerk not being featured (due to Clerks illness)

Cllr Gordon to re-send e-mails to Cllr Coverdale regarding what is needed - CHE budget.

Cllr Stanger proposed, Cllr Duffin seconded – passed unanimously

23/143

WETHERSFIELD AIRBASE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Update from Cllr. Duffin

Research has been completed on planning, impact on the environment and rural communities. An article has been published in the Daily Telegraph also in the Sun newspaper, and the Daily Mail. Further tests around pollution are taking place in regard to the future building on this site which could be impactful.

BDC have previously been ambivalent regarding the prison but are supportive. Cllr. Butland has now written to MOJ to ask about submitting the planning and stopping the waiting for what will happen. If / when it goes to planning, it will be down to individual councillors to make a decision, and this will be on public record.

23/144

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr Duffin - There remains an intention for Finchingfield to join forces with other PC's including Wethersfield, Sible Hedingham and Blackmore End. Cllr Duffin recently attended Toppesfield Parish meeting, they were initially involved in this but there are now some potential issues with this due to the progress they have already made in establishing their plan.

23/145

CHE SPECIFIC

Speed and Noise Survey

Update from Cllr Denman – further to the CHE speed and noise survey the working party have the following recommendations:

1. Install Auto Speed Watch camera and sign approx. cost of £600. These will need to be on Highways land, so Highways need to be approached first.

Proposed Cllr Denman, Seconded Cllr A Stanger – passed unanimously.

Action: Cllr Denman to contact Cllr Butland about the best person in Highways to discuss this with.

2. For chicanes in CHE to be considered and discussed by the Local Highways Panel to help reduce speeding into the village.

Proposed Cllr Denman, Seconded Cllr T Gordon – passed unanimously.

Action: Cllr Denman to contact Cllr Butland about best person in Highways to discuss this with.

Defibrillator

CHE defibrillator discussion about moving from the Horse & Groom pub to Village hall.

CHE Request

Cllr Strange requested money for maintenance of CHE village hall. Discussion confirmed that there were enough funds in the CHE village hall to pay for this.

23/146

FINCHINGFIELD NOISE AND SPEEDING

Cllr Denman raised concern that he is still waiting for proposed meeting with PFCC Roger Hirst regarding speeding and noise to be arranged by Cllr Butland.

Further to the Parish Council writing to other local Parishes there was response from 8 stating that speeding and noise was an issue for them, there may have been further PC responses but due to Clerks illness this might not yet have been processed. It is quite clear that speed and noise impacts across the County and Finchingfield is a ‘honey pot’ in attracting noisy vehicles.

Cllr Denman spoke to Kensington and Chelsea borough council who placed noise cameras in their borough. These were placed in 8 locations and generate fixed penalty notices for offenders. These were not installed as part of the national roll out of these cameras but rather under anti-social behaviour legislation – Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs). Kensington and Chelsea borough council consider this has been a success and other boroughs in UK and abroad are now using similar technology. Cllr Denman proposed that this needs to be discussed at Essex County Council and seeks representation from Cllr Butland to discuss this with that council.

Proposed Cllr Denman, Seconded Cllr A Stanger – pass unanimously.

The PFCC have £333k of grants for community safety projects (£20,000 per grant), these need to be linked to Police and Crime plan priorities. Cllr Denman proposed that installing the acoustic noise cameras (as per the Kensington and Chelsea model) requires funding (approx. £15,000 per camera) and this impacts the ‘improving safety on our roads’ and ‘increasing collaboration’ priorities. Cllr Denman proposed making an application for a grant which needs to be made by 17th February 2023.

Proposed Cllr Denman, Seconded Cllr A Stanger – pass unanimously.

23/147

FINCHINGFIELD VILLAGE SIGN

Cllr Strange updated that a new CHE sign would cost £5478. Cllr Coverdale advised that the Finchingfield sign was a donation. The PC received a new much reduced quote from local resident regarding the re-painting of the Finchingfield sign, this was discussed and proposed by Cllr A Stanger and seconded by Cllr Coverdale. However, it was agreed this would be put on hold pending the bridge / temporary bridge work which would move the sign if it went ahead.

23/148

CORONATION MAY 6th

There is a budget of £1000 for Finchingfield and CHE.

Finchingfield is likely to celebrate with a Saturday lunch time, picnic on the green. CHE are planning music with an approach similar to a Spring Fete.

Proposal to use CHE playing field - proposed by Cllr Gordon, seconded by Cllr Strange, passed unanimously.

Peter Dacey is co-ordinating the celebrations for CHE, Cllr A Stanger to liaise with Peter about spending Finchingfield funds on a similar approach to CHE.

23/149

LAMP ON FINCHINGFIELD UNDERTAKERS BUILDING

Cllr A Stanger has liaised with the owner of the building, they are happy to have the switch moved from The Greedy Duck to Undertakers.

Possibility of putting the switch on a timer, issue with it being on a meter for the Greedy Duck and passing onto the Undertaker. PC electrician can do the movement on the electric source to undertakers who are willing to have it in their building.

Cllr Martin Smith proposed, Cllr Strange seconded, no objections.

23/150

HONORARIUM FOR LIBRARIAN

Linda Turner has been a volunteer for 40 years - PC paid £650 last year - this is budgeted. Requested to pay again for current year.

Cllr Martin Smith proposed, seconded by A Stanger – unanimous agreement.

23/151

PARISH COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES

All clear

23/152

LOOKING FORWARD ON FPC EMERGING PRIORITIES

- Hill Development resident integration
- Environmental schemes
- Encouraging new business development
- Co-ordination of parishioner concerns and ideas
- To encourage more parishioner attendance at FPC meetings and to be more proactive with surveys.

Cllr Gordon raised the above issues and the need to move away from being reactive and more pro-active. Up to 4 years into the future. Agreed for Cllr Gordon to be on the Neighbourhood plan committee to help address this.

Cllr Martin Smith stated greatest concern is the Bridge, and there is no change to emerging priorities.

TREES IN FRONT OF HILL DEVELOPMENT

23/153

Hill development have requested these be cut down and have requested Essex Highways to help. No feedback from Hill, they have taken down two trees thought to be 'unsafe'. Essex County Council have stated these need to be taken down, Hills are replacing new trees.

Action: Cllr Martin Smith to contact Clive at Hill development to further discuss. This was previously discussed at the last meeting with a likely tie into a request to move the 60mph signs, this should also be raised with Clive.

23/154

PLANNING

22/03297/HH

Proposal: Erection of single storey detached garage.

Location: Spinney Lodge, Brent Hall Road, Finchingfield

NO OBJECTION

22/03278/FUL

Proposal: Proposed replacement dwelling, demolition of existing building and residential dwelling, and proposed conversion of 4no. existing buildings to four dwellings.

Location: Great Wincey Farm, Brent Hall Road, Finchingfield

NO OBJECTION

23/00096/TPO

Proposal: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order

Reference: 2/78 - G3; Species:

G1 group of Limes - Full canopy reduction of 2m

T1 Lime amongst row - Felled

Location: New Place, Bardfield Road, Finchingfield

NO OBJECTION

23/00062/LBC

Proposal: Replace all existing ground floor and first floor single glazed casement windows with new slimline double glazing units set into painted hardwood casements.

Location: Brook Cottage, Vicarage Road, Finchingfield

NO OBJECTION

23/155

WEBSITE

- WASC Jan-Feb 2023 has been published on the website.

23/156

ITEMS FROM COUNCILLORS TO BE ADDED TO THE NEXT AGENDA.

- Finchingfield Bridge update
- Hill update
- End of year Audit
- Finance committee report
- CHE Specific
- Power Network update
- Open Spaces update
- Planning

23/157

Councillors are asked to inform the clerk of any items by 21st February 2023.

NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL: The next meeting of Finchingfield Parish Council will take place at Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday, 28th February 2023 commencing at 7.30pm. The Chairman thanked everybody for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed:
Chairman

Date: