

the village and requesting an interim rota for the May bank holiday weekends, and peak trading periods in July and August, however, the Business Guild state they would like a permanent solution to this – permanent parking signs. Also stating concerns over Cllr Denman resigning as a councillor and parking not being on the agenda.

Cllr Denman – regarding parking signage, stated it is a matter of finding people to put the signs out, although happy to help. Suggested the council look at when the next local Highways panel meeting is to discuss parking in Finchingfield for a permanent solution. Cllr Denman has previously made four applications to Highways, unfortunately nothing has materialised, Cllr Denman asked Cllr Butland for help to investigate this further.

The business Guild also stated their concern over the Christmas Tree, as to where will it go if there is no pond available at Christmas if the bridge refurbishment goes ahead – Cllr Strange asked this to go on the agenda for the next meeting to be discussed further.

A member of the public expressed concern over the reality of having the Asylum Center and the predominance of males in respect of this. Is the Home Office, Essex Police or the Council providing citizens advice on how to safeguard property and the well-being of villagers? adequate advice must be provided on how to safeguard both property and residents well being.

A member of the public followed on from the point previously in respect of security, stating the Parish Council should push for the MOJ to provide residents in the catchment area of the airbase with camera's (cctv)

A member of the public asked if the council were aware Ringwood Jacobs were in the pond taking pictures/imagery of the bridge today.

Michael Staines – Finchingfield Bridge – Stated he had been accepted to speak in opposition to the ECC application - no date yet arranged by ECC. Also stated he will be pushing James Cleverly to publicly communicate applications to Secretary of state. Also stated he had spoken to an independent road planning consultant who is familiar with Finchingfield, who made the following observations, the ECC application does not mention a transport statement or traffic assessment, or any data to support traffic volumes to support why such a huge upgrade to the bridge is necessary. The B1053 is not currently a strategic route, HGV's use the route for local purposes. Also, prompted by the transformation of the Cust Hall bridge in Toppesfield, after looking at the ECC planning application and current drawings, it does not appear to show any Armco barriers, signage, and lines – does not show stage one safety information/safety measures. A new bridge would require all modern safety measures, a repaired bridge would not.

Unesco World Heritage application – An outline application was submitted in February 2023, the government shortlisted 7 sites in April, none of these sites were in the East of England, unfortunately Finchingfield’s application was too late for this cohort. Stated recently been liaising with various groups – Anglia Ruskin University Cambridge, Historic England, Campaign to protect Rural England, and Dan Gascoigne from BDC. Unesco World Heritage listing has been helpful to all parties to resist planning applications, that might otherwise be part of diluting the authenticity and being of detriment to the cultural setting and risking future Unesco listing.

Member of the public (Civil Engineering & bridge design background) stated further to the briefing issued by Essex Highways in February in respect of Finchingfield bridge, they stated, the capacity of the bridge was 3 tonnes. Also stated, Essex Highways refer to the 2010 assessment report on the bridge, in reading this it indicates that it has structural integrity, and that the limit is 10 tonnes unless it is found not to have that structural integrity. Nothing suggests in the recent survey that there has been any further report other than site investigations, or anything that doesn’t suggest there is no structural integrity to the back foot of the bridge.

23/219

REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Butland – Providing update regarding the Home Office plans to house 1700 Asylum seekers at Wethersfield Airfield. Stated BDC went to the High court to seek an injunction against the Home Office for two reasons which are Jurisdiction, and secondly to challenge the Home Office’s move to operate/apply class Q (Class Q is a planning issue- classed as an emergency situation) BDC’s view was that this was not an emergency situation, following a briefing to the Home Secretary last November.

The Judge reserved judgement following the court day on Wednesday 18th April until Friday 20th April by which it went against BDC. However, the judge immediately gave BDC the opportunity to appeal to the court of appeal, this was due to a significant point in law that had not been tested, the issue around what constitutes an emergency situation. The judge felt it should be determined by the court of appeal if BDC wish to proceed further, Council and Cllr Butland have further discussions around Class/section Q.

Cllr Butland stated BDC are to decide whether to go to the court of appeal. BDC have had discussions with West Lindsay (Local authority at RAF Scampton) stating they are in a similar situation, after consultations between barristers, West Lindsay indicated they would join BDC in the court of appeal - wait for public announcement to be made. If this is to go ahead the judge in the High court asked for it to be dealt with expeditiously, the case to

be heard within 21 days of applying. The Home Office did state they would not move anyone onto the site pending the High court judgement. BDC not expecting any asylum seekers to be moved onto the site until the determination at the court of appeal, this can still go to the Supreme Court.

Cllr Butland thanks all local councillors that have helped BDC in respect of presenting evidence to the High Court, John Warner from Finchingfield, John Pearce from Wethersfield Parish Council, and The Fields Association for all their help.

Cllr Butland discusses legal costs and funding, around £120,000 spent so far on legal costs, also stating this is an important issue in this area and has ramifications across the UK.

Discussions around how much will the appeal cost?

Cllr Butland stated it would not require as much officer time from BDC, it will be BDC's barrister that will be reflecting upon the Judgement from the High Court and decide what needs to be done, however if BDC work alongside West Lindsay the costs will be between the parties involved. This is a huge problem that doesn't just affect this area.

Cllr R Stanger/Cllr Butland - Discussions around Bex Hill, and the 22 sites that were originally identified by the home Office, BDC have been in touch with several of them, legal support in respect of discussions.

Cllr Duffin – Discussions on how local government are involved, Cllr Butland states local government will be bringing their expertise. Further Discussions around class Q and section 101.

Cllr Tattersley – Stated that alongside the issues surrounding the potential Asylum Center at Wethersfield Airbase, to also be aware and not lose sight of any other issues happening outside of this area.

Cllr Strange thanks Cllr Tattersley for his service on behalf of Finchingfield Parish Council and other local councils. (Cllr Tattersley not standing for re-election)

FINCHINGFIELD BRIDGE UPDATE

23/220

Council discussions stating no new information. Cllr Strange reads statement from the Chairman stating proof the bridge is weak is really what is needed, the chairman will e-mail Paul Crick (ECC Highways & Transportation) to make Finchingfield Parish Council's points clear.

Council Discusses Chairman's plans to hold a meeting regarding the Finchingfield bridge hoping for Paul Crick & colleagues to be present. This will help residents with questions.

Cllr Duffin – Discussions around the safety of the bridge. We require proof/ a clear definition that a new bridge is needed. Suggested maybe liaising with a local resident who is in that industry of civil engineering and bridge design and could possibly look elsewhere to get a professional opinion.

Cllr Strange in agreement FPC could ask consultation from a local resident for help.

Cllr Gordon – Stated after reading the minutes from last month that once we have any additional information FPC to hold a meeting on the bridge.

Cllr R Stanger/Cllr Duffin/ Cllr Strange/ Cllr A Stanger - Further discussions on the boundary of the land by the Pightle as it was not drawn correctly.

Ordnance and Survey have re- drawn and corrected the outline of the land by the pightle, to be sent to Hills who will send on to ECC to re-register with land registry.

23/221

APPOINT A NEW COUNCIL MEMBER FOR WASC

To be deferred to the next Council meeting on 9th May.

Cllr Duffin – At the next meeting on 9th May we will formally assign council members area's/responsibilities, one of them being a member for WASC.

The next WASC meeting is on 5th June.

23/222

ERECTION OF ASYLUM SEEKER OBJECTION BANNERS IN FINCHINGFIELD

(Consistent with those already displayed in surrounding Villages)

Cllr Coverdale – Stated the council should discuss further and has been approached by people largely outside the village as to why we do not have a banner, stated it has been raised by members of the public this evening in the audience, therefore needs an open discussion to reach a determination whether we want a banner or not.

Cllr Duffin – Agrees with Cllr Coverdale. Stated understands there are different views on the banner that Finchingfield were offered, however stated that it is also important to allow voices to be heard, in order for government to hear how much you are resisting. Would villagers want a different banner with a slightly different message?

Cllr R Stanger – Stated we have clearly made our views to James Cleverly and Suella Braverman by writing to them and expressing our views. We have made it very clear how unsuitable the site is.

Various members of the public – Stated it would be awful to have the banner in the village, all in agreement Finchingfield is a welcoming village and does not want to see a negative banner in the village. Further discussions around this between councillors and members of the public, in respect of the wording of the banner.

Cllr Strange – Reads a statement from the Chairman Cllr Johnny Martin Smith – Stated his concern in respect of putting up a banner, it is divisive. We have registered our displeasure through our MP.

Cllr Butland – Advised a banner will not make a difference, stated BDC are looking to go to the court of appeal and if something is going to be decisive for the village then to put it to one side.

COUNCIL VOTE TO ERECT ASYLUM SEEKER OBJECTION
BANNER IN FINCHINGFIELD
(Consistent with those already displayed in surrounding Villages)

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTE - AGAINST 6 FOR 1

23/223

**COUNCIL TO MAKE A DECISION ON WHETHER TO
ADVERTISE REGARDING THE CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS AS
INSUFFICIENT STOOD**

Council members decided not to advertise for co-option.
COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTE NOT TO ADVERTISE – UNANIMOUS

23/224

**COUNCIL TO DISCUSS MEW PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE
USING E-VOICE**

Decided current website is working ok, defer agenda point.

23/225

KINGS CORONATION

Friends of Finchingfield would like to do some decorations, bunting etc this coming weekend in preparation for the Coronation. Villagers can take a picnic etc to the green during the Coronation weekend.

Sunday 7th May - Member of the public stated there are a couple of companies that are keen to have a presence on the green. Further discussions around £500 available from the council.

Cllr Strange – stated to e-mail the Clerk in respect to any further ideas, or possibly activities that will take place on the green, and if any money is required for any extra bunting, signage etc.

Member of the public stated they will possibly do a treasure trail.

The Business Guild stated they will also liaise with other groups/villagers.

Cllr Gordon/Cllr Strange – CHE doing something similar on their green/cricket field – villagers to have picnics if they wish – tug of war.

23/226

TWENTY'S PLENTY ESSEX

Cllr Strange – Cllr Denman to hand over as he is not standing for re-election.

Cllr Denman – Stated Council agreed on Twenty's Plenty, it was discussed with the local Highways Panel in January whereby a 20mph speed limit will be introduced. Twenty's Plenty's website does have a list of all the Parish Councils that have already agreed and voted on Twenty's Plenty. Cllr Denman asks for an action plan to take forward to the next local Highways Panel for this to be raised.

Member of the public – States living on Brent Hall Road, they are being subjected to over heavy lorry traffic every week. Stated Lorries are extremely close to their listed property, and travelling very fast, this is proving to be dangerous and causing damage (cracks) to the property. Stating the speed restriction sign should be moved 100 meters outside of the village, with the current new development in Brent Hall Road, traffic has increased in respect of large lorries. Stating concerns over no pavements, street lighting and where the current speed limit sign is following the development of the new estate.

Cllr A Stanger to call Site manager in respect of signs and speed limit on Brent Hall Road, following the recent amount of large lorry traffic.

Member of the public – Stated “Widdington Recycling” lorries taking routes that have not been agreed.

23/227

BMX TRACK UPDATE

Cllr A Stanger – States a local architect has drawn plans, plans and drawings have been presented to BDC in respect of a pre application and are waiting results. Planning will look at the site proposed.

Cllr Strange/Cllr Stanger – Once plans officially in place we will have a meeting to discuss/present further details.

23/228

CHE SPECIFIC

Cllr Gordon – Stated the works in the Car park should hopefully start in the next 2 to 3 weeks, just need to confirm the cost of the gate’s proposal.
Security – Obtain a padlock, and in respect of lighting, CHE Village Hall will be asked to put an automatic light on the side of the Village Hall wall.
CHE Pavilion – Need to work on a timescale, all dependent on the contractor once the gate work is completed.
Cllr Gordon – Stated Cllr Stanger may have stickers regarding dog fouling. CHE Village Hall Committee are happy to help in respect of Twenty’s Plenty Banners. Also stated, CHE are looking to do a Car Boot sale.
Cllr Gordon – ROSPA play equipment Inspection, to look at the report once done. Clerk states this is to take place in May – no fixed date can be given, once report arrives the Clerk will forward to council members.
Cllr Gordon – Ditch clearance – discussions between councillors in respect of grass/verge cutting and ditch clearance. Cllr Gordon asks for ditch clearance in CHE. Cllr A Stanger to ask contractor – plan ahead for the right time of year when there is not bird nesting.

23/229

ELECTORAL DIVISIONS IN ESSEX

Put forward by JMS - Deferred.

23/230

UNESCO HERITAGE APPLICATION

Michael Staines – Favourable feedback from Historic England who select the sites for short listing,
Cllr Strange – Chairman has previously mentioned to start a working group.

23/231

TO DISCUSS THE NEED FOR AN RFO FOR FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
HR TEAM TO INTERVIEW CANDIDATES & MAKE RECCOMENDATIONS.

Cllr Duffin – Stating the need to appoint an RFO, HR will be interviewing this week. Council in full agreement that an RFO is needed.

23/232

**TO ELECT NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS AS SIGNATIRIES FOR
UNITY BANK.**

Cllr Strange – Confirmed himself and Cllr Gordon will become signatories for Unity Bank.

23/233

FINANCE

Cllr R Stanger. – Accounts discussed, first part of precept due 27th April. Stated the preparation for the Annual Audit is in motion.

Cllr Coverdale – Stated Barclays accounts are unfortunately still open, however, stated he has contacted Barclays and the only way of closing the accounts through the Barclays process is to either provide another signatory, or to let the lapse. Cllr Coverdale explained the situation with Barclays, and they agreed to let the accounts lapse, Barclays will then close the accounts. Barclays agreed this is the best way forward.

23/234

PLANNING

Reference: 23/00754/HH

Proposal: Proposed single storey rear extension, link access & infill under existing undercroft.

Landscaping works and associated operational development.

Location: Ashwell Hall, Ashwell Hall Road, Walthams Cross

DETERMINATION: NO OBJECTION

Reference: 23/00799/HH

Proposal: Erection of single-storey rear extension and first-floor rear extension.

Location: The Pigeon, Little London Hill, Finchingfield

DETERMINATION: OBJECTION

Reference: 23/00841/LBC

Proposal: Lowering of ground floor in north wing.

Location: Brook House, Duck End, Finchingfield

DETERMINATION: NO OBJECTION

Reference: 23/00869/FUL & 23/00870/LBC

Proposal: Proposed conversion from offices (Class E) to residential use (C3) to form 3 No. 2-bedroom apartments.

Location: Former Finchingfield United Reformed Church, The Green, Finchingfield

DETERMINATION: OBJECTION

23/235

ITEMS TO BE ADDED TO THE NEXT AGENDA

- Assign a WASC member.
- Discuss Christmas Tree location Dec 2023
- CHE amended Gate quote.
- Electoral Divisions in Essex
- Car Parking signs in Finchingfield
- Code of Conduct - Appointed by the Trust
- Approve & agree contractor CONCEP Heating Engineers – (Installation of fans and radiators)

23/236

Councillors are asked to inform the clerk of any items by 2nd May 2023.

NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL: The next meeting of Finchingfield Parish Council will take place at Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 9th May 2023 commencing at 7.30pm. The Chairman thanked everybody for attending, along with thanking Cllr Coverdale and Cllr Denman for their hard work and service, and declared the meeting closed at 21.08pm.

Signed:Chairman

Date: