

FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END



Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 25th. July 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs Martin-Smith (Chairman), Cllr Strange, A. Stanger, R. Stanger, Duffin, Hammond, Braithwaite, Staines (BDC), Ault (BDC), K. Raymond (Parish Clerk) and Kevin B. Money (RFO). There were also 8 members of the public present.

058/2023 Chairman's welcome. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

059/2023 To Accept the Resignation of Cllr Gordon

Cllr Martin Smith thanked Cllr Gordon for his work within the Council and confirms an official vacancy notice for the Cornish Hall End Ward was published on 5th July 2023

060/2023 Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr Warner

061/2023 To receive Members Declaration of Interest and dispensations in items on the agenda

Cllr Hammond disclosed she cannot discuss point 074/2023

Cllr Martin Smith gave consent for Cllr Hammond to take part in discussion and propose the motion on point 74/23 but not vote

062/2023 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Cllr Martin Smith stated following the minutes of the last meeting on agenda point 42/23 Cllr Martin Smith confirms that following discussions with Essex Highways, the current vacant shop front of the Greedy Duck will become a monitoring station for the bridge works if these go ahead.

To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 27th. June 2023. **All Agreed**

063/2023 Public Participation Session

Member of the public stated that the Twenty's Plenty scheme has not been addressed on the agenda, their concerns were regarding the large heavy lorries that are still driving along Brent Hall Road and the huge impact this is having on their listed property which is now showing cracks and the importance of reducing the speed to 20mph is now more important than ever.

Cllr Martin-Smith stated the Twenty's' Plenty scheme will be on the agenda for the next meeting with a view to move this scheme forward.

064/2023 Report from the District / County Councillor

Cllr Staines gave a comprehensive report which can be found at

<https://www.finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>

065/2023 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Martin Smith stated that Jan Stobart is unfortunately not present for this evening's meeting and ask Cllr Strange to provide an update.

Cllr Strange report can be found at <https://www.finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/finchingfield-wethersfield-joint-neighbourhood-plan/>

066/2023 Neighbourhood Watch Group for Finchingfield

A resident confirmed they have spoken to Clive Stewart who is the Braintree Regional Co-ordinator to discuss what was involved, stated a Facebook group will be set up also confirmed 89 residents from the village are happy to be involved in helping monitor safety around the village, reporting anything that doesn't look right. Also, Clive Stewart said that most Parish Council's donate around £50 which will go towards signage, stickers etc, the resident co-ordinator will receive a list of what is available and will

Signed

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liaise with the Parish Council to ensure the Council are happy for it to be displayed. Also stated that Wethersfield residents have had discussions with Clive Stewart. Also stated it will help to reassure residents and perhaps now is the time to do it.

Cllr Martin Smith agrees, and asks what donation is recommended, the resident states £50 is usually donated from Parish Councils and can be more if they wish.

RFO states there is a budget for grants.

Councillors discuss further, Neighbourhood Watch is a charity nationally, discussions around funding. RFO suggested to councillors to put an agreed amount into the earmarked reserve account allocated for the Neighbourhood Watch.

Resident stated they will continue to liaise with the Parish Council.

Cllr Martin Smith proposed a donation of £100, Cllr Strange seconded. Unanimous vote.

The RFO was asked to transfer £100 from the current account to the earmarked reserve account under the heading Neighbourhood Watch group.

067/2023 Finance

- a. To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 30th. June 2023

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 30th. June 2023

- b. To receive the comparison of Actual to Budgeted for 2023/24

Councillors noted the comparison of Actual to Budgeted for 2023/24

- c. To approve the payment of Accounts for July and August 2023 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council financial requirements. **All Agreed**

068/2023 S106 Money

Clerk discussed an e-mail that was recently received from Braintree District Council in respect of what s106 money was available to Finchingfield Parish Council. Firstly, an outdoor sports contribution amount of £60,808.67 towards to provision of new and/or improved outdoor sports facilities. Secondly £7,382.96 towards the provision and/or improvement or enhancement of an area of public open space and facilities. The £7,382.96 needs to be spent by January 2024.

Cllr Duffin discussed s106 money and asked Councillors to think of other projects other than a BMX track to where the larger sum of money can be spent. He stated that this money has been received from the Hills development and after speaking with BDC that although it is not a simple process this money can be re directed to other projects, it would be possible to make changes as to where the money is spent following a conversation with Hills.

Cllr Martin-Smith states the s106 amount of £60,808.67 will be discussed at the next meeting and asks how much the BMX track will cost. Cllr A Stanger stated it will cost £120,000. Cllr Martin-Smith and Councillors agreed to discuss the s106 funding of £60,808.67 at the meeting in September.

Cllr Duffin asked Councillors to think of other ideas. Cllr Braithwaite stated she would like to see the centre of the village made beautiful and attractive.

Cllr Hammond stated she would like to see the money spent on something for the younger generation in the village.

Councillors discussed further on how better to attract visitors and new residents to the village. Cllr Martin-Smith stated this needs to be debated further at the next meeting. Cllr Duffin asked Cllr Martin-Smith if he is happy if he could liaise with Hills?

Cllr R Stanger stated that the S106 money from Hills held by BDC specifically states it is to go towards the provision of new and/ or improved Outdoor Sports facilities at Finchingfield Playing Fields, Stephen Marshall Drive, which may include the extension of the Playing Fields to include adjoining land'. Also states that BDC confirmed their officers would accept that the contribution could be used towards the provision of a BMX track. Cllr R Stanger states he has approached Hills for a grant of an extra £60,000 to go towards the BMX track.

Cllr Martin-Smith asked Cllr Duffin to enquire for further details and also states the s106 of £60,808.67 will be discussed and debated further at the next meeting and also asks Cllr R Stanger to enquire further regarding the extra £60,000.

Councillors discussed and agreed that the £7,382.96 be spent on new play equipment at Cornish Hall End. Cllr Martin-Smith asked Cllr Strange to obtain quotes in readiness to present at the next Parish Council meeting.

RFO stated the importance and urgency of spending this money by January 2024.

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Cllr Martin-Smith requested a vote for £7,382.96 to go to Cornish Hall End for play equipment. Cllr A Stanger proposed with Cllr R Stanger seconded. All agreed

069/2023 Council to discuss writing publicly following last months distribution of leaflets by a political group

Cllr Martin-Smith stated that as this issue had gone away it was felt it wasn't necessary to respond at that time. **All Agreed.** Cllr Martin-Smith stated he will write a letter to the Villager magazine for the September issue

070/2023 Finchingfield Bridge

Cllr Martin Smith asked Seve Newton, an engineer, who has voluntarily taken his time to look at reports regarding the bridge.

Mr Newton has provided a report which is an overview on his findings on the Essex Highways documents relating to the bridge.

Cllr Duffin and Cllr Martin-Smith discussed Mr Newtons findings regarding questions around the load carrying capacity being underestimated.

Cllr Martin-Smith asked Cllr R Stanger to liaise with Essex Highways in respect of asking them for a copy of the GEO 2.0 report. Cllr Martin-Smith also thanked Steve Newton for his report and findings.

Cllr R Stanger stated that Essex Highways have not done anything to the bridge since 1995 apart from a very small amount of cosmetic work.

Cllr Martin-Smith stated he is waiting to hear back from Essex Highways following the results of their latest assessment, and stated he will keep councillors informed if he has any further information before the next meeting.

Mr Newton's report is available to view on the Parish Council website at

<https://www.finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/news/>

071/2023 Goldhawk Bridge Restoration

Cllr Strange stated he has liaised with David Kitchen from Goldhawk Bridge Restoration. Mr. Kitchen remembers the Finchingfield Bridge surveys that were done previously. Mr Kitchen is aware of some of the engineers from Essex Highways, Cllr Strange stated he had received an e-mail from David Kitchen stating they have contacted Essex Highways requesting an update on the plans and discussions of the bridge with Essex directly but until they get feedback they do not think they can be constructive in any advice they may give at this stage. The Mouchel report is over 10 years old and they need to find out further information since that report was done. Mr Kitchen stated they hope to be of more help once they have further information.

Cllr Strange discussed further, stating following the findings and surveys from Essex Highways will determine the involvement of David Kitchen (Goldhawk Bridge Restoration)

Cllr Duffin, Cllr Strange & Cllr Martin-Smith discussed Mr Kitchen's involvement in the past with Finchingfield Bridge and other bridges in respect of using strengthening methods.

072/2023 Zebra Crossing

Cllr A Stanger stated she has spoken to residents along Bardfield Road who would welcome some sort of traffic control and a safety measure that would allow residents to cross the road safely. She would like to speak to Cllr Butland regarding liaising with a Highways technician to look at safety measures to slow the traffic down, either a zebra crossing or a chicane. Cllr Stanger also confirms the Hills development will be starting the work for the new footpath very soon which will lead from the Hills development and join up to the path on the west side of Bardfield Road.

Steve Newton stated that, as a member of Highways engineers, he is aware there are rules and regulations as to where zebra crossings can be positioned.

Cllr Martin-Smith asked Cllr A Stanger & Steve Newton to liaise in respect of where a zebra crossing can be located. Cllr Martin-Smith also discussed a Chicane for entrance/exit points of the village.

Cllr Duffin suggested to also look at other ways to achieve safety, referring to 20mph speed limit, entrance barrier and chicanes.

Cllr Braithwaite suggested a zebra crossing could work as it will enable residents/families to cross the road at a certain point.

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Cllr Hammond discussed concerns of the speed at which vehicles travel along Wethersfield Road.

Cllr Martin-Smith stated he agrees with Cllr Braithwaite and a zebra crossing will help children cross the road at a particular point. It is important to provide a service as well as introducing a traffic calming measure. Cllr Strange stated it can take a long time from point of request to introduce these measures.

Cllr Strange & Cllr Martin-Smith asked the Clerk to write to Cllr Butland regarding the Parish Council's concerns and for help and guidance to move forward with traffic calming measures.

073/2023 BMX Track

Cllr A Stanger stated the pre-planning application has been done and now full planning will need be put forward to BDC by John Mclarty. Cllr A Stanger stated this will cost due to the need for ecological surveys that will need to be carried out to follow planning regulations.

Cllr A Stanger stated the cost for this will amount to around £4,000. Cllr A Stanger asked if the Parish Council will fund some of this? It will also be funded by Finche group which has funds specifically for the BMX track as Cllr A Stanger stated it has been asked for by young people in the village for the last 15 years and has been on the open spaces plan.

Cllr A Stanger stated this will need to be discussed further but currently John Mclarty has requested a fee of £480 including vat alongside £462 for the planning application fee.

Cllr Martin-Smith requested a vote to approve the £942 which includes VAT to move the BMX track to planning. Cllr A. Strange proposed and Cllr Hammond seconded.

074/2023 Parish Council donation towards the forest school

Cllr Martin-Smith stated at the last Parish Council meeting it was agreed for a space to be used at the playing field for the Forest School. Cllr Hammond would like £2,000 from the Parish Council for this project

Cllr Hammond stated that unfortunately due to the current circumstances with regards to losing children from the Wethersfield airbase and other local children, the school has lost a lot of money so are now unable to fund this project. There is no PTA funding left to help. The £2,000 will be used towards fencing the area, clearing it and making it safe for the children. The forest school will help the children to have a wider educational experience.

Cllr Martin-Smith asked the RFO if the Parish Council can accommodate £2,000. The RFO stated that this money can be earmarked for the Forest School. Cllr Hammond stated she will obtain three quotes.

Cllr Martin-Smith asked for a vote to earmark £2,000 for the Forest School. Cllr A Stanger proposed and Cllr Braithwaite seconded. **All agreed.**

The RFO was asked to transfer £2,000 from the current account to the earmarked reserve account under the heading Forest School play area.

075/2023 Footpaths

Cllr Martin-Smith confirms that the Clerk will investigate further. The Clerk to contact BDC and liaise with the residents in question

076/2023 Update on the patch of grass outside winners tearooms in Finchingfield

Cllr Martin-Smith stated there has been some concern that the works of the 10 houses that are being built on Brent Hall Road have caused an area of grass outside Winners to become soggy, possibly from water running from down the hill towards Winners.

Cllr R Stanger stated that he has contacted Anglian Water who have visited but stated it is nothing to do with them. It is not fresh water from the water system and it is not sewage. The environmental agency has also visited and stated there was no interest as it has nothing to do with the pond, but they will visit again. Cllr R Stanger will monitor.

077/2023 Update on Village Hall

Cllr Martin-Smith read a statement from the Chairman Brian Patient of the Finchingfield Village Hall & Sportsfield Management Committee. Stating the Chair feels there has been a lack of communication between the Parish Council and the Management Committee and if this does not improve, he will be forced to resign.

Cllr Martin-Smith stated he has been in contact with Brian Patient and that the Village Hall is very important to the Parish Council and understands the need for repairs and that there needs to be a proper

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plan in place. Cllr Martin-Smith stated he has asked Cllr R Stanger, Cllr A Stanger and Cllr Strange who are members of the Village Hall Committee to schedule a meeting before the next Parish Council meeting to discuss the future of the Management Committee with a view to look at new members joining to help a project of huge importance to the village

078/2023 Painting of the Village Hall

Cllr Martin-Smith confirmed that the Village Hall & Sportsfield Committee have decided on the colour - French Grey for the Village Hall further to a recent meeting they held.

079/2023 CHE Specific

- 1) Cllr Strange stated the hedge cutting to the playing field, fence repair and overhanging trees will be in progressed this week.
- 2) Cllr Martin-Smith asked Councillor's if they agree to grant permission for use of the CHE playing field for a market fair. Cllr Hammond proposed agreeing to the playing field being used Cllr R Stanger seconded. **All agreed.**

080/2023 Parish Council website

Cllr Martin-Smith stated that Cllr Strange's son has helped the Clerk recently with the website, in respect of the technical side. The Clerk stated she is currently working through the information - managing ok but although some areas are still quite tricky. The Clerk stated that the RFO has kindly set up a backup website that mirrors the current website and has transferred all of the Finchingfield Parish Council documents across. RFO stated that the existing PC website is taking up a considerably amount of time of the Clerk and RFO. He also stated that he will send the website link to the Councillors to view for their thoughts. This item to be decided at the September meeting.

081/2023 Planning

23/01724/TPOCON - Barley Croft, Vicarage Road, Finchingfield

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area - G1: 27 x Cypress - fell to ground level. G2: 23 x Laurel - reduced to 2m height and spread to create formal hedge.

RESOLVED: FPC COMMENT: OBJECTION

23/01832/TPOCON - 3 Parsonage Terrace, Vicarage Road, Finchingfield

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: Bay Tree - Removal. Apple tree - Removal. Unknown - Removal of remaining trunk.

RESOLVED: FPC COMMENT: NO OBJECTION

082/2023 Next meeting of the Parish Council

The next meeting of Finchingfield Parish Council will take place at Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 26th September 2023 commencing at 7.30pm.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having considered and determined all items of business at 9.30pm and thanked everyone for attending.