

FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END



Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 25th. June 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr J. Strange, Cllr J. Braithwaite, Cllr R. Duffin, Cllr A. Stanger, Cllr R. Stanger ECC Cllr G. Butland and Kevin B Money (Parish Clerk & RFO). There were also 19 members of the public present.

128/2024 Chairman to welcome

a) To accept the resignation of Ashleigh Heirs and Emma Hammond from the Council with immediate effect. Councillors accepted the resignation of Ashleigh Heirs and Emma Hammond

129/2024 Apologies for absence were received from BDC Cllr M. Ault, BDC Cllr M. Staines and Cllr J. Warner

130/2024 To receive member's declarations of interest and dispensations in items on the agenda. None Declared

131/2024 Minutes To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 28th. May 2024. All Agreed

132/2024 Public participation session A maximum of 15 minutes shall be allowed for public question time, and it is requested each member of the public speak for a maximum of 3 minutes.

Concerns and others in the increase of motor bikes at the weekends. They need to behave in a courteous manner. They arrive at the early hours and leaving late at night. Action must be taken to control the speed. Speed control of 20mph. Signs for motor bikes to be responsible. A crossing by Jesmond Garage. BDC Cllr M. Staines has taken up this issue with ECC Cllr G. Butland and BDC LHP.

BDC Cllr M. Stains has reported that we would need to develop a proposal for Cllr Butland to take to the Local Highways Panel a.s.a.p. - using materials which we developed including, but not limited to;

- Population changes from new builds: Increase / changes in Village Hall / playing field usage / demographic: Highways safety concerns Gt Bard to Finch (bikes time trials up the hill)
- Ensure all the detail aligns with the ECC guidance on zebra / other / crossings
- consider other non-zebra crossing types (see picture from Henley-on-Thames) these raised and signed crossings have the additional merit of deterring bikes speeding - like a speed bump - and align to the pavement each side: ensure folks could still park in front of the Post Office
- Add consider other stuff to reduce speed too i.e. road markings (which *may* be less obtrusive in the heritage setting, village gates, chicanes, humps - PLUS getting the most from any new bridge weight restriction poles etc (deer, flooding, pedestrians - horse riders all along the B1053 etc)

I think there is quite a bit to do and to consider objectively to ensure that ECC Highways don't pull the wool over our eyes - so as a first step I'd suggest hiring an independent Traffic consultant i.e. Journey Transport - that we met at the Pan Pant Valley Parish Event to guide us through the process (soup to nuts) and perhaps offer some advice at the outset on the likely success of 20mph on section(s) of the B1053.

A suggestion was that the Department of Transport attend the village to monitor the exhaust fumes from the off-road motor bikes.

B1057 speed signage was raised by ECC Cllr G. Butland having taking this issue to BDC LHP for the next meeting. Cllr j. Strange mentioned about having a Speed Indicator device installed along the B1057.

The grass verge by the village hall has been left in a very poor state.

Dogs are still messing on the footpaths. Can something be placed in the magazine to inform dog owners of this problem?

133/2024 Essex County Councillor. Cllr G. Butland

Cllr G. Butland said that most of what he was going to cover was included in the public participation session and that he wouldn't duplicate it.

Signed

JStrange
John Strange - Chairman

23rd. July 2024

134/2024 District County Councillors. Update from Cllrs Staines / Ault from last meeting

In the absence of BDC Cllr M. Staines his report was circulated prior to the meeting. This report can be found at <https://finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>

135/2024 Update on all the questions raised by residents at the last meeting – Cllr A. Stanger

How will the residents record what they think is important to villagers?

Please email the Clerk with any questions or issues that need to be resolved and as a collective, we will try to answer and resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

Will the Parish Council canvass the residents for information?

This can be achieved on important matters such as the pond, Bridge, and New Community centre (which was also mentioned in the NP with strong feedback).

We can use the services provided by the consultants who produced the questionnaire for the NP and the results can be analysed.

Any internal surveys can be undertaken and circulated to residents.

Yes, we can also provide results of surveys and the needs of the residents.

There is only a one-way communication on Facebook from residents. Could this be opened up for a two-way communication?

We will trial an open surgery once a month in the Guildhall on a Saturday, residents are welcome to drop in and discuss anything they wish with either myself or any of the other Council members. Also, the usual method of communication is via the email to the Clerk.

We will also keep up the newsletter in the villager, FB, the website, and notice boards.

What is happening to the village sign on Brent Hall Road?

We have completed the Local Highways form to apply for the sign

Can these be taken tasks be taken forward – Additional Speed restriction to be put in place - Footpaths be made “fit for purpose” - Better measures to deal with careless and dangerous parking?

Cllr A. Stanger reported that NEPP Paul Seabright will visit the village. Also, Steve Blake environmental officer for car and bike noise.

Can more contact information be given in “The Villager” for better communication aspect.

Yes, done.

Can the yellow lines be restored to original condition?

Essex Highways visit to the village week of 10th June.

A resident stated that Finchingfield is a village but can the village be more beautiful?

Can a task force be set up?

Yes, a Task force will be set up in the June meeting.

Painting the railings around the Pond!

Can various signs that have be up for a time be taken down? Except for the Bridge signs

The sign has been removed.

A group of “Mums” in the village are, in parts of the village, unable to pass parked cars which are on the pavement. This process makes the Mums pushing prams go into the road. How can the village be more considerate for users? The village is growing with families with young children.

The resident has removed the planter and the vehicles from the pavement with thanks, much appreciated.

136/2024 Monthly Surgery meeting. Councillors to discuss and agree possible dates

A rotation of Councillors to attend the Saturday 6th. July 2024 from 10am to 12noon at The Guild Hall

137/2024 Councillor vacancies - BDC update

The Clerk informed the meeting that FPC can now start the process of co-opting 3 residents onto the Parish Council.

The Clerk informed the meeting that he has posted the official co-option notice on the notice boards, Facebook and website with all the information on how residents can register their interest in becoming a Parish Councillor.

138/2024 Finance

1) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. May 2024

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. May 2024

2) To receive the comparison of Actual against Budget 2024/25

Councillors noted the comparison of Actual against Budget 2024/25

3) To approve the payment of Accounts for June 2024 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council financial requirements. **All Agreed**

Signed

JStrange
John Strange - Chairman

23rd. July 2024

139/2024 2023/2024 Annual Return

1) To Receive the Internal Auditors report for 2023/2024

Councillors noted the Internal Auditors report for 2023/2024

2) To Receive and, if agreed, sign Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement of AGAR 2023/2024
Cllr J. Strange proposed to sign Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement of AGAR 2023/2024. Cllr J. Braithwaite seconded. **All Agreed.** The Chair and Clerk then signed Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement of AGAR 2023/2024

3) To Receive and, if agreed, sign Section 2 - Accounting Statement of AGAR 2023/2024
Cllr J. Strange proposed to sign Section 2 - Accounting Statement of AGAR 2023/2024. Cllr J. Braithwaite seconded. **All Agreed.** The Chair and RFO then signed Section 2 - Accounting Statement of AGAR 2023/2024

140/2024 Wethersfield Airbase – any update from last meeting – Cllr R. Duffin

The next meeting WASC meeting is at the end of July when we'll know the identity of the new government. At some point after that they'll make their plans clear.

The Tories previously promised to deliver 20,000 new prison places by the mid-2020s but only 6,000 have been created so far.

Labour said it will deliver the remaining 14,000 if it gets into government.

An FOI request confirms that Wethersfield is still part of HMP's long term plans for a new prison.

There is a Home Office catch up meeting on Team scheduled for Tuesday 16th. July.

The current manager of the base has moved on to another facility, so we'll find more about the thinking.

However, given there is a new government, so expect lots of change.

Aside from WASC, there is a lot of work going on to creating alternative use for the site. You may have noticed that James Cleverly is supporting this as part of his election campaign. This is a long-term project but conversations are beginning to take place at both local government and big national organisations that could be supportive.

There has been destruction of buildings by the Home Office on the base without planning permission. WASC clerk is on to this and has had an assurance from Dominic Collins, BDC's Corporate Director of Growth that this will be investigated by the planning team. Cllr Staines has already covered this in his piece.

141/2024 CHE - Picnic Benches x 2 for CHE – Cllr J. Strange

CHE has money left over from the planting of the orchard.

142/2024 ROSPA play inspection reports for Stephen Marshall area & CHE

The Clerk recommended setting up a small working party to rectify any issues.

143/2024 Finchingfield Pond, Sluice Gates and working group – Cllr J. Braithwaite

Nothing further to update. A long-term solution is being looked at.

144/2024 Finchingfield Bridge – Cllr J. Strange

Cllr J. Strange is attending the next LHP meeting in August. All LHP forms have been completed and submitted.

145/2024 Finchingfield Road Sign – Cllr A. Stanger. Already covered under 135/2024**146/2024 Finchingfield planting community scheme – Cllr J. Strange**

This item is deferred to another meeting.

147/2024 Community Energy and solar panels – update from Cllr R. Duffin

Not taken this any further and don't intend to as there seems to be no interest at Finchingfield as I was told initially that there was another local government scheme, and then we've got too much on already to raise that at the May AGM when was the preference of the Solar people. The response was that the chairman would mention this in his next piece in the Villager and give an email address for people to register their interest. If there is response from residents we can arrange a visit for a future PC meeting.

148/2024 Wethersfield War Museum – Cllr R. Duffin

Ross Stewart, Curator and Chairman of the museum, informed the meeting that the airbase started in 2015. In 2022 we were asked to move off base due to the MOD selling the airfield. Since then, the archive has been in storage. We had reached a point where we could not find a new premises and started to give items away to other museums. One last look at right move brought up the vacant room for rent, Unit 2 The Green.

Finchingfield, CM7 4JS. A 3 year lease with a 1 year break clause, we had funding for 6 months' rent, utilities, insurance and some set up. Estimating £8k needed for year one we received a pledge of £2k from Wethersfield Parish, leaving only £2k to find and secure the first year, we wish to apply to FPC for that amount or part of. We are discussing with BDC the Council/Home Office fund, as yet there is no mechanism in place

Signed

JStrange
John Strange - Chairman

23rd. July 2024

to apply for this. We would expect any grant from BDC and or other sources to fund years two and three. Since going public about the museum in Finchingfield over 20 Americans have contacted us to they will now be coming to visit the Village between August and October, they will be using local hotels and facilities. The Museum will also draw a wide visitor base given the popularity of WW2 Airfields after the release of the Apple TV series Masters of the Air. Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge have taken this increase in tourism seriously and set up Aviation Trails not yet done by Essex or BDC who have 5 WW2 airfields in the district.

Cllr R. Duffin said that we should all be aware that 60 – 70% of the area of the base is in Finchingfield. The base was important nationally during the war and especially locally after the war. A lot of people used the social facilities there from 1950s up till about 1986/7 when the Americans moved out. Wethersfield have already agreed at their last meeting that they could contribute £2,000 and I would therefore propose that we vote to give £2,000 to the museum.

149/2024 Neighbourhood Plan - any update from last meeting – Cllr R. Duffin

This is in final drafting and hopefully, with holidays over we'll have a meeting in July to discuss and agree the final draft for the Neighbourhood Plan and engage with Community, PCs and if we want to do a pre-submission check with BDC.

150/2024 Parking, noise and speed and any enforcement in the village – Cllr J. Strange

Already covered under 135/2024

151/2024 Finchingfield New Community Centre & Village Hall – Cllr J. Strange

No further update since the last meeting

152/2024 Cleaning bus shelters – Cllr R. Duffin

Cllr Mark Ault rang Cllr R. Duffin to say that a resident has contacted him to complain about the bus shelter in Wethersfield Road being overgrown with weeds etc. As a consequence, he's cleaned out the bus shelter on Wethersfield Road. There's a large pile of cuttings which he's left there to rot away and there was litter which he's disposed of. He asks if this can be raised with whoever is responsible for cleaning bus shelters (website tells me it's usually the County Council). Can we ask the CC to keep this one clear. He also mentions that there is a hedge at the back of it, this is trimmed by the contractors to the Housing Association that own the houses. Apparently, they miss this part of the hedge (and it grows in to the bus shelter) so can we also ask the Housing Association (HA) to ask their contractor to include this. Cllr A. Stanger will relay the name of the Housing Association. CC and HA to be written to by the clerk.

153/2024 Planning applications

24/01288/HH - West View Cottage Bardfield Road Finchingfield

Proposal: Replacement of 4 No. windows to front elevation.

RESOLVED: No objection to this application

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

24/01192/PLD - Goldene Waltham's Cross Great Bardfield Essex CM7 4QL

Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development - Erection of single storey rear extension and conversion of loft to habitable room.

154/2024 Items for next agenda

ROSPA play inspection reports for Stephen Marshall area & CHE

Date of next Full Council meeting – 23rd. July 2024 at Finchingfield Village Hall at 7.30pm

155/2024 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Councillors to Resolve that by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Cllr J. Strange proposed and Cllr A. Stanger seconded to exclude the public and press for the remainder of the meeting. **All Agreed**

156/2024 Closure of the meeting.

To close the meeting having considered and determined all items of business.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having considered and determined all items of business at 9.25pm.