

FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END



Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 24th. September 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr J. Strange, Cllr D. Bide, Cllr J. Braithwaite, Cllr R. Duffin, Cllr R. Gill, Cllr A. Stanger, Cllr R. Stanger, Cllr J. Warner, ECC Cllr G. Butland, BDC Cllr M. Ault, BDC Cllr M. Staines and Kevin B Money (Parish Clerk & RFO). There were also 6 members of the public present.

188/2024 **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllrs J. Berry

189/2024 **To receive member's declarations of interest and dispensations in items on the agenda Cllr R. Stanger and A. Stanger NPI in item 208/2024 (24/00388/FUL)**

190/2024 **To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23rd. July 2024**
All Agreed

191/2024 **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.
The dedication and appreciation of the cleaning of the war memorial should be mentioned.

192/2024 **Essex County Councillor - Cllr G. Butland**

ECC looking at future budget and will be very tight. ECC Care & community Commission established comprising of Health & Social Care which takes over 60% of ECC budget.

BDC at last night's meeting proposed a motion, which was passed, to withdraw Winter Fuel Allowance over 30,000 pensioners in the district will be affected.

If any pensioner is entitled to pension credit encourage them to apply.

193/2024 **District County Councillors - Update from Cllrs Staines / Ault from last meeting**

See BDC Cllr M. Staines report at <https://finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>

Cllr M. Staines left the meeting

194/2024 **Monthly Councillor Surgery meeting.** Update on meeting held on Saturday 3rd. August 2024 and 7th. September 2024 at the Guildhall. Councillors to discuss further meeting dates
Advertising of the function is very poor. Better publishing could help increase the numbers attending the sessions. A monthly session to be postponed until any major issues in the village have arisen.

195/2024 **Neighbourhood Plan - Presentation of the Neighbourhood Plan to the Council and to ratify Reg 14.** Following meeting on 19th. September

Richard was thanked very much by members of the PC for the exceptional work that he, John Pearce, Mick Nash and others had put in to the plan. It was voted and approved unanimously by the PC and if Wethersfield do the same, it will go to residents for approval, there is a meeting for residents in the Guildhall on Saturday 12th October. We understand there is a voting process for the approval which BDC will organise and it will be at the Village Hall – just as in a political election.

196/2024 **Braintree District Local Plan Review 2041** – update from Cllr R. Duffin

Wethersfield and Finchingfield have made a contribution to the call for sites.

Dates are now being extended because of central government timings. Looking now at 2033 to 2041.

We can expect to hear more from Braintree in January 2024.

Braintree has a 5.53 years' worth of housing applications.

Local Plan Review Starts	Early 2024
Call for Sites	Spring 2024
Evidence Base	Spring 2024
Issues and Options Consultation	January/February 2025

Signed

JStrange

John Strange - Chair

22nd. October 2024

Preferred Options Consultation (Reg 18)	October/November 2025
Pre-Submission Consultation (Reg 19)	Spring 2026
Submission to Planning Inspectorate	June 2026
Review Complete	Adoption December 2026

197/2024 Electric Vehicle Chargers at Finchingfield Village Hall Car Park, Sportsfield and CHE

An operator has approached the Parish Council to instal electric charging points at Finchingfield Village Hall, Sportsfield and CHE. Cllr J. Strange proposed taking this item forward with the operator. Cllr D. Bide seconded. **All Agreed**

198/2024 Street Lighting cost for street lights in Finchingfield – Cllr R. Stanger

Npower decided to put the price up from 17p to 45p per kw

There are 11 companies supplying Parish Council with street lighting electricity. However, very few companies will offer another quotation. Npower have increased the invoice from £80 to £300 per month.

199/2024 Finance

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

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. August 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 August and September 2024 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council financial requirements. All Agreed

4) Councillors to set up a working party to look at 2025-2026 budget

Cllr J. Strange proposed setting up a Budget working party. Cllr R. Stanger seconded. **All Agreed.**

Councillors J. Strange, Cllr R. Gill, Cllr R. Duffin. Cllr R. Stanger were asked to assist with the working party

5) Councillors reviewed and accepted the External Auditors recommendations from the 2023-2024 Audit review. The external auditors report will be placed on the website.

200/2024 Task Force update – Cllr J. Berry & D. Bide

- The “prettifying up” of Finchingfield seems to be going very well, with a group of regulars meeting on the first Saturday of the month to undertake various tasks. The last session saw 17 people attend. The road signs have been cleaned and some uprighted (!), weeds removed, and we are concentrating now on washing the benches on the green and re-varnishing them. One outside of *Saxons* has been repaired to make it safe again. This is an ongoing task as there are 15 benches to be done. The white railings on the footbridge and on the lead up to the road bridge are being rubbed down and repainted. Lots still to be done, and the list seems to grow weekly. Our next session is on Saturday 5th October, 10am.
- As part of the “prettifying up”, it has been suggested that it would be nice to have a selection of planters dotted around on the greens. I have approached Olivers Plants in Earls Colne where I spotted some suitable stone planters and asked for a favourable price! The cost of 3 planters including seasonal plants would be £121.21 each (£363.63 total). A volunteer would be allocated a planter each to ensure it is watered and replanted when required. Please would the PC consider this? The planters could be positioned strategically to prevent people parking their vehicles on the green, thus helping to solve another problem!
- The recent ROSPRA report has highlighted a few areas where the outside gym could be improved. I approached the installers, Caloo, who informed me that the gym has not been serviced since 2021, and a service which would include any paint repairs is £445.00 + VAT. Please would the PC consider this so that the equipment is safe and maintained?
- Also, the ROSPRA report raised issues with the children’s play equipment at both CHE and Finchingfield. Creative Play installed the equipment, and they will undertake the repairs needed for a cost of £975 + VAT. So that our obligations with regards to liability etc are covered, please would the PC also consider this?
- Creative Play did not install the children’s play equipment in CHE – does any PC member know who did, and I’ll approach them directly.
- Some of the repairs could be done by a team of volunteers to save money, but if the appropriate companies are instructed to do this, and maybe annually too, we are then fulfilling our H&S obligations. Please discuss this too.
- The bench in the Finchingfield play area needs replacing urgently, as it is broken. Ally has approached the persons who originally donated the bench in 2000, and they have agreed to replace it.

Signed

JStrange
John Strange - Chair

22nd. October 2024

201/2024 Wethersfield Airbase – any update from last meeting Cllr R. Duffin

Had a zoom catch up with the Home Office this afternoon.

Also the NP team are engaging with BDC and the Home Office on future plans for the site, this was mentioned in the meeting and that Guy Weston Deputy Premises Director is working with the community.

There are currently 550 people on site at the moment and still 8 SDO conditions outstanding as there has been at the last two meetings. However they hope to have these completed in November. Once achieved the population can rise to 800.

Applications are being worked on, before decision is made residents are moved off Wethersfield to receive the decision. No one is on site more than 9 months which we're led to believe is encouraging for residents.

Ciaran Gold from BDC confirms Braintree have received the £3,500 per bed that was promised, but still don't have the instructions from HO on what it can be used for. It's intended for BDC and Essex CC so things like the museum cannot be supported at the moment.

The long term future of the site and what government's plans are for asylum seekers, i.e. how to deter them and how to accommodate them in the future, is taking time for the government to evolve this.

There was a disturbance on the site last night which caused a lot of police and other emergency traffic. One person was arrested and is police custody.

WASC have not had recent meetings as with the change of government there's not been much to report on.

Our contamination survey is nearly complete and I'll update after the next meeting on 28th October. We are having further meetings with Natural England looking at the area and the airfield in particular.

ECC Cllr G. Butland left the meeting

202/2024 ROSPA play inspection reports for Stephen Marshall area & CHE.

Update from Cllrs J. Berry and D. Bide. Councillors to discuss going onto a "Play Inspection course" with EALC. Discuss quotation from Creative Play

See 200/2024 item

203/2024 Finchingfield Bridge – Update from meeting on 20th. September - Cllr J. Strange

Meeting with Essex Highways. The good news is the bridge is staying with repairs taking place in the future.

The bridge being closed whilst the repairs are undertaken. Further surveys are to be happen. Further feedback in November '24.

204/2024 Finchingfield Road Sign – Cllr A. Stanger

Numerous LHP application forms have been submitted but have not appeared on the LHP agenda.

205/2024 Community Energy and Solar Panels – update from Cllr R. Duffin

There is a day long introduction to this at White Colne on Saturday 16th November. Colne Valley Community Energy Project. www.colnevalleycep.org gives details but its about making solar energy affordable with thermal imaging, air source heat pumps, EV charging, selling surplus etc. I expect to go to this but if anyone else would like to, I'd be glad of the company and extra insight.

206/2024 Grant applications – Update on any Grant application received by the Clerk

Applications received from Cornish Hall End PCC for £1589, Finchingfield PCC for £288, Finchingfield Guildhall for £5000, Wethersfield Museum for £2000

Councillors discussed each individual grant application and made the following discission

Cornish Hall End PCC for £1589 Cllr J. Strange proposed a donation of £339. Cllr A. Stanger seconded.

All Agreed

Finchingfield PCC for £288 Cllr J. Strange proposed a donation of £288. Cllr A. Stanger seconded.

All Agreed

Finchingfield Guildhall for £5000 Cllr J. Strange proposed a donation of £2500 Cllr A. Stanger seconded.

All Agreed

Wethersfield Museum for £2000 Cllr J. Strange proposed a donation of £2000 Cllr A. Stanger seconded.

All Agreed

All the above agreed donations will be paid following the October '24 meeting

207/2024 FPC Councillors responsibilities for 2024. Councillors to agree responsibilities

Councillors noted the new 2024-2025 Councillor responsibility list

Signed

JStrange

John Strange - Chair

22nd. October 2024

208/2024 Planning applications**24/01799/LBC - Spains Hall, Spains Hall Road, Finchingfield**

Proposal: Repair works to windows, glazed doors, masonry, coping stones and ancillary works comprising:

- Sensitive repairs to Georgian timber sash windows and French doors on the South wing of the house will be made using traditional splice repairs as per SPAB technical guidance notes. (repair of wood windows)
- Sensitive repairs and repointing to brickwork on the South wing using and lime mortar.
- Replace C20th concrete parapet copings on the South Wing using traditional Clipsham limestone.
- Replace rotten C20th timber pentice boards and string course on the South wing using like for like materials and mouldings.
- Clear out parapet sump and gutter with sensitive lead repairs made where necessary.

RESOLVED: No objection to this application

24/01873/TPOCON - 2 Street Farm Barns The Causeway Finchingfield

Proposal: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area:

- T1 - Ash Tree to be reduced back to previous cuts.
- T2 - Cherry Tree to be reduced back to previous cuts.
- T3 - Cherry Tree to be reduced back to previous cuts.
- T4 - Boundary hedge to be reduced back to previous cuts.

RESOLVED: No objection to this application

24/00388/FUL - Land Adjacent to The Playing Fields Bardfield Road Finchingfield

Proposed BMX track and two junior football pitches with associated parking and access.

RESOLVED: No objection to this application

24/02008/TPOCON - Finchingfield House The Green Finchingfield

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: - Horse Chestnut (T1) Fell the tree to a stump. The tree has basal decay to approximately 30-40% of the buttress roots

RESOLVED: No objection to this application

209/2024 Items for next agenda

To be sent to the Clerk prior to the next meeting

210/2024 Date of next Full Council meeting – 22nd. October 2024 at Finchingfield Village Hall**211/2024 Councillors to note and agree 2025 meeting dates as follows**

28.01.25: 25.02.25: 25.03.25: 22.04.25: 27.05.25: 24.06.25: 22.07.25: 23.09.25: 28.10.25: 25.11.25:

212/2024 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. **All Agreed**

213/2024 Closure of the meeting

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

The Chair then closed the meeting having considered and determined all items of business at 9.30pm.