

# FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

## REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END



### Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup>. September 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr J. Strange, Cllr J. Braithwaite, Cllr R. Duffin, Cllr G. Gilbert, Cllr R. Gill, Cllr R. Stanger, Cllr A. Stanger, BDC Cllr M. Staines and Kevin B Money (Parish Clerk & RFO).  
There were also 2 members of the public present.

**186/2025**      **Apologies for absence** were received from ECC Cllr G. Butland, Cllr J. Berry, Cllr D. Bide

**187/2025**      **To receive member's declarations of interest and dispensations in items on the agenda**  
**None Declared**

**188/2025**      **To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup>. July 2025**  
**All Agreed**

**189/2025**      **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  
Bus stop shelter has been cleared. There are no signs on either bus stop. The Perspex for the bus timetable has been vandalised. A new updated timetable is required.

**190/2025**      **Essex County Council report** – Cllr G. Butland. No report was given

**191/2025**      **Braintree District Council report** – Cllrs M. Staines  
BDC Cllrs report can be found at <https://finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>

**192/2025**      **BMX Track update** – Cllr A. Stanger read an item from the Trustees Meeting 03/02/2020. A discussion followed and a proposal to have a meeting/display of possible pump tracks and ancillary information about the cost of building, insurance and maintenance. A number of Councillors requested a public consultation is undertaken to gauge support for the pump track due to the build being on trust land and planned use of earmarked s106 monies. From here, consideration to be given as to whether a public vote to proceed is required  
Nothing will happen with regard to building the pump track until this meeting has taken place.  
The meeting is suggested for after Christmas.

**193/2025**      **Task Force update** – Cllr J. Berry

a) Christmas – Councillors to discuss purchase of Christmas Tree, lights and Market  
To also discuss details of the tree and light switch on, plus an update on other bits that are being looked into (the library hosting something for the children, the church etc.).

The Christmas tree can be placed in the pond with a base subject to Parish Council permission.

Cllr J. Strange proposed that the Christmas tree is placed in the pond safely. Cllr R. Gill seconded. **All Agreed**  
Christmas lights switch on 29<sup>th</sup>. November 2025

b) RoSPA inspection reports No update was given

**194/2025**      **Further Sites Submitted to the Call for Sites for the Local Plan Review Spring 2025**

Review date is 24<sup>th</sup>. September 2025. Further sites are being looked at. Wethersfield airbase is being discussed tomorrow (24.09.25)

Cllr R. Duffin spoke at the Local plan review committee by saying:

*Thank you for letting me come to speak on behalf of Finchingfield Parish Council. We are impressed at the work that goes in to the review of the Local District Plan, and therefore this is a very short comment.*

*We note the planning officer's recommendations on Wethersfield Airfield to the subcommittee, and our Neighbourhood Plan broadly supports them. It's wonderful to be on the same side as the District Council, however we'd like to suggest these are not prescriptive enough. It's a long term plan for BDC and for Finchingfield and Wethersfield and whilst BDC will know more about it than us, I suspect that any developer*

Signed

*JStrange*

John Strange - Chair

28<sup>th</sup>. October 2025

would look at the plan and spot the openings in it and focus on opening those up.

Over 80% of the base is in the parish of Finchingfield and we've seen 22% growth to housing in the village over the last couple of years and recent housing developments have proved hard to sell.

According to their report the consultant to current owners of the site (Home Office) was instructed to make representations to BDC. With Wethersfield PC, Finchingfield are working hard on a Neighbourhood Plan, research on this has shown there is not much need for houses in the area apart from a small need for affordable housing. The current housing shortage does not appear to extend to poorly accessible areas. BDC planners have noticed the poor access to the airbase from all directions.

The parish's view is that the number of houses should not increase significantly from the current 150 on the base. The HO consultant says this should increase on the same footprint. We'd agree with this and suggest that this is set to a maximum of 150 - 200 on the same footprint.

Broadly, we agree with the recommendations made at 3.30 in the officers report but would request that the Draft policy is strengthened to make development appropriate to the area and employment provided to be appropriate for the community with opportunities for individuals to advance their careers minimizing traffic expansion.

Can we ask for Councillors and planners involved to approve a version taking the above amendments in to place?

### 195/2025 New Village Hall and Community Centre Project

1. To confirm to use the services of Holmes and Hill for the New Village Hall and Community Centre Project. Cllr R. Stanger proposed using Holmes & Hills for the New Village Hall and Community Centre Project. Cllr R. Duffin seconded. **All Agreed**

2. initial estimates for the work and will have this approved as well as that meeting.;

**This initial work would be approximately £950-£1150 plus VAT and disbursements.** If further investigation or assistance is then required, especially in relation to the Charities Act, we can then look at addressing any further fees at that point, by which point we should all have a clearer picture of what the titles say. The group have chosen an architect (George Courtauld). Cllr R. Stanger proposed accepting G. Courtauld as Architect. Cllr R. Duffin.

The architect to place plans are movable. The meeting notes of the working group for Finchingfield New Village Hall & Community Centre on 17<sup>th</sup>. September 2025 is on the website at

<https://finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/new-village-hall/>

### 196/2025 Finchingfield Bridge - De-Registration of Village Green

An email and letter have been sent to Essex Highways which states:-

Further to our conversation and your email in respect of the De- Reg of part of the Village Green, FPC are pleased to confirm that the Parish Council have agreed in principle to the arrangement but when drawing up the agreement with Holmes and Hills we need to have a clause within the agreement that ;

1; the area granted under the agreement is strictly for the maintenance of the Bridge and nothing else, ie widening or anything else which changes the structure and look of the Bridge.

2. Confirm the period of the works again for the MARS System " expected?

3. Land swap to be agreed and discussed prior to the Parish Council signing the papers

Cllr J. Strange proposed going back to Holmes & Hill that the de-regulate agreement is acceptable prior to seeing the final document. Cllr R. Duffin seconded. **All Agreed**

### 197/2025 Wethersfield Airbase – any update from last meeting Cllr R. Duffin

Site occupancy is now reaching 1200, 40 going out this week and two lots of 30 coming in. Going back to 800 as soon as they can. No time scale for this but hopefully it will be a couple of months.

Not going up to 1245 as they are licensed to do but won't go above 1200.

Peter Mitchell of Shalford PC said that an Emerging Development Order could be applied. Jenny confirms there are no plans to go above 1200.

Ciaran Gold BDC, says he regularly liaises with the Home Office.

Vote of No Confidence by Wethersfield PC. The Home Office asked what the reasons were behind this. The Wethersfield PC Clerk advised that a lengthy statement had been published and would send a further copy. Jenny says that the four emails from Donna and Mark Ault are being tracked. Alcohol misuse - a response is being drafted.

Minibus driver issue - the registration number given was actually in the workshop at that given time. Further checks on dates/time needed to further investigate.

Two service users trespassing with rubbish left behind, not a lot but it included condoms. A response has been sent to the Wethersfield Clerk.

Misuse of resident's address for delivery of packages. The police have responded on this to the Wethersfield Clerk with instructions and asking that residents get in touch with them directly.

Signed

*JStrange*

John Strange - Chair

28<sup>th</sup>. October 2025

## Actions outstanding:

The Nationality and age range data will be published and a link shared.

Absenteeism - if 7 days or more, their application is withdrawn.

Volunteers at the airbase are no longer escorted. New photocopy is now available.

Litter patrols at Sculpins Lane - this is now on a monthly basis.

**198/2025 Wethersfield PC passed a “No confidence” in the Home Office** – Councillors to discuss.

Cllr R. Duffin informed the meeting of how The Home Office is dealing with problems in relation to RAF

Wethersfield. Acting Chief Inspector Jackson is fully aware of the problems at RAF Wethersfield.

**199/2025 Working group for the pond** - any update from last meeting Cllr D. Bide

This item deferred to another meeting

**200/2025 Update on Traffic monitoring CCTV**– update from Cllr D. Bide

This item deferred to another meeting

**201/2025 CHE issues** – any update from last meeting Cllr J. Strange

a) CHE Playing Fields Children's Hedges and playing field surrounds

Hedges have been cut but the ditches remain unresolved.

**202/2025 s106 monies** – update Cllr R. Gill

Councillors to make a decision on the contractor to replace the ramps

3 parties invited to quote, 2 provided which were presented at the meeting for decision. Successful party to be alerted to concerns raised around whether the existing ramp is retaining and whether it's removal will

undermine the ground above it, although anticipate this was considered at point of site visit ahead of quotation.

Planning and building control to be contacted for advice on whether either is needed ahead of works starting.

Application for funding release will be made to Braintree once this has been received.

For info, the Duty Planning Officer is available tomorrow 9:30-11:30 for advice so I plan trying to make contact

then. Cllr R. Gill proposed quote 2. Cllr J. Strange seconded. **F6 Ab1**

Cllr R. Gill will now liaise with Sarah Burder at BDC to submit the application

**203/2025 Battle of Britain event** – update from Cllr D. Bide**204/2025 CCTV Invoice** to follow for 4G router and Sim contract £200+VAT – Cllr D. Bide

This item deferred to another meeting

**205/2025 Lighting proposal and energy review** provided for Bob Stanger, and Chairman

Unfortunately, the UMS supply system cannot support solar powered/battery topped up unmetered street

lighting, therefore the luminaires that have been suggested won't work on the system. The council are still

looking for ways to reduce the lighting bill. At the moment the way the electricity supply system is metered to

users is undergoing large changes

**206/2025 Planning – including any Current Planning Applications requiring a response****25/01865/TPOCON** - Mildmay Church Hill Finchingfield

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 Sycamore - Fell tree

**RESOLVED:** Finchingfield Parish Council supports this application subject to the tree and conservation officers' approval

**25/01909/TPOCON** - Oak Lea Duck End Finchingfield

Proposal: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: G1 (mixed unknown species)- request to fell 3-4 trees.

**RESOLVED:** Finchingfield Parish Council supports this application subject to the tree and conservation officers' approval

**25/01862/HH & 25/01863/LBC** - Belbyne Cottage Howe Street Finchingfield

Replacement rear porch

**RESOLVED:** Finchingfield Parish Council has no comment to make on this application

**25/01925/HH** - 1 Berners Place Wethersfield Road Finchingfield

Proposal: Single storey front extension.

**RESOLVED:** Finchingfield Parish Council has no objection to this planning application

**207/2025 Grant application/s** – CHE Parish Church requesting £3062 + £1220 replacement of the bell

rope. Cllr R. Gill proposed accepting part grant application of £3062 for the CHE Parish Church. Cllr G. Gilbert seconded. **All Agreed**

Signed

*JStrange*

John Strange - Chair

28<sup>th</sup>. October 2025

**208/2025 2026-2027 Budget** – Councillors to submit proposals for the draft 2026-2027 budget  
Councillors were asked to submit proposals/projects for the 2026-2027 to be discussed for the October meeting

**209/2025 Finance**

- 1) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. August 2025  
Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. August 2025
- 2) To receive the comparison of Actual against Budget 2025/2026  
Councillors noted the comparison of Actual against Budget 2025/2026
- 3) To approve the payment of Accounts for September 2025 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council financial requirements. **All Agreed**

**210/2025 Items for next agenda**

NP responsibilities – Cllr R. Duffin: Councillor responsibilities:

**211/2025 Date of next Full Council meeting – 28<sup>th</sup>. October 2025 at Finchingfield Village Hall**

**212/2025 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. **All Agreed**

**213/2025 Trust matters**

**214/2025 Closure of the meeting**

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

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.10pm and thanked everyone for attending