

FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL



The Coach House, The Village, Great Waltham, Essex. CM3 1AS

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REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END

- I. The meeting will be open to the public unless the Council directs otherwise. Members of the public are invited to address the Council during the Public Participation session.
- II. Under the 2014 Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations, the meeting will be recorded by the Clerk for the accuracy of the minutes. The recording will be destroyed once the minutes have been confirmed.

Members of the Parish Council are hereby requested to attend the Parish Council Meeting **Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 27th January 2026 at 7.30 pm** for the purpose of transacting the following business: *Mark Nicholls, Clerk - Posted: 21 January 2025*

AGENDA

001/2026 Apologies for absence

- a) To ratify the appointment of the Parish Clerk, Mr Mark Nicholls as from 1st. January 2026

002/2026 To receive members' declarations of interest and dispensations in items on the agenda

003/2026 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25th. November 2025

004/2026 Co-Option

Councillors are requested to receive written applications for the office of Parish Councillor and co-opt a candidate to fill the vacancy for the Finchingfield Ward. The Candidates have completed a short application form and confirmed their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules (Local Government Act 1972 section 79).

005/2026 Public participation session.

A maximum of 15 minutes shall be allowed for public question time, and it is requested that each member of the public speak for a maximum of 3 minutes

006/2026 Essex County Council report – Cllr G. Butland

007/2026 Braintree District Council report – Cllr M. Staines

008/2026 Finance

- 1) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. December 2025
- 2) To receive the comparison of Actual against Budget 2025/2026
- 3) To approve the payment of Accounts for December 2025 and January 2026. Also, to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council's financial requirements.

009/2026 Budget 2026-2027

Following the meeting on 14th. November 2025 the 2026-2027 budget was agreed at £96462 resulting in a Precept demand of £85867. Using BDC Tax base figure of 866.13 this makes a Band D Property for 2026-2027 £99.14p. An increase of £2.46p or 2.54%. The Chair and Clerk to sign the 2026-2027 Precept form

010/2026 To discuss a dedicated council recording device for future meetings

To discuss the use of a dedicated recording device for council meetings and appoint a councillor to investigate the cost and feasibility of available options, with a view to improving the accuracy of minutes, supporting the Clerk's preparation of the record, and strengthening transparency and good governance.

011/2026 Digital Workspace for Council Documents (SharePoint)

To consider the implementation of a secure digital workspace using SharePoint, including licensing and storage options, and resolve whether to approve a preferred solution and associated costs.

012/2026 Task Force update – Cllr J. Berry

- a) RoSPA inspection reports

013/2026 Finchingfield Bridge update Cllr J. Strange

- a) Finchingfield Bridge – Highways Licence and De-registration of Village Green

To consider an update on the Highways licence and the proposed de-registration of Village Green status and resolve what further actions, if any, are required.

014/2026 New Village Hall and Community Centre Project update Cllr J. Strange

- a) New Village Hall Update - To consider an update following consultation with residents and the architect, note progress on drawings in development, and consider any next steps.

- 015/2026 Wethersfield Airbase – any update from last meeting, Cllr R. Duffin**
- 016/2026 Traffic Speed Monitoring and Signage Cllr.A. Stanger, Cllr.D. Bide**
- a) Community Speed Monitoring (Speed Radar) To consider the use of speed radar for traffic monitoring and invite community volunteers to support the formation and operation of a speed monitoring group.
- b) Automated Speed Indicator Signs - to receive an update on the automated speed indicator signs.
- 017/2026 CHE issues – any update from last meeting – update Cllr J. Strange**
- a) CHE Village Hall - Ditch Maintenance – Forward Planning
To note that ditch maintenance is included in the next financial year’s budget and to consider identifying suitable contractors with appropriate equipment to undertake the work.
- 018/2026 Neighbourhood Plan responsibilities – update Cllr R. Duffin**
To review councillor responsibilities in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan, note progress to date, and request feedback from councillors on assigned actions to support ongoing engagement with Braintree District Council.
- 019/2026 Street Lighting – update from Cllr R. Stanger**
- a) To consider the A & J Street Lighting survey findings and recommendations and resolve whether to approve the recommendations and authorise implementation, subject to cost approval.
- 020/2026 Planning – including any Current Planning Applications requiring a response – Planning Comments from the Parish Council**

25/02597/FUL - Cottons Farm Sculpins Lane Finchingfield

Change of use of agricultural buildings to 5no. residential dwellings.

Due to BDC planning time-scale the Parish Council submitted the response below to BDC on 02.12.26
Finchingfield Parish Council does not support this application and it is viewed as over development of a small site in a rural area and is contrary to BDC and Essex CC planning policies. We note that there has been 22 applications on the site since 2003. The site is well away from Finchingfield and Wethersfield villages and there is no evidence of need for additional housing accommodation in this area. It is not included in BDCs Local Plan and is not included in the sites for development for the future local plan. The Finchingfield and Wethersfield Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan, currently with BDC for approval, does not include Cottons Farm for future development and that there is no need for more housing within the parishes, other than for small starter homes to be sited within the villages

25/02740/TPOCON - 15 The Causeway Finchingfield Essex

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area -T1- Apple. Cut to ground level as tree.

Due to BDC planning time-scale the Parish Council submitted the response below to BDC on 09.12.26
Finchingfield Parish Council has no objection to this planning application

25/02765/TPOCON - Mill Barn The Causeway Finchingfield

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area - Trim line of 9 Sycamore trees along the river back approx 5 metres back to knuckles as previously carried out.

Due to BDC planning time-scale the Parish Council submitted the response below to BDC on 19.12.26
Finchingfield Parish Council has no objection to this planning application

25/02778/TPOCON - The Vicarage Bardfield Road Finchingfield

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

- 1 - Acacia Tree Reducing 4 lowest branches by approx. 4m to match in with the upper crown. Reduce overhang
- 2 - Lime Tree - Front Garden - Reducing the branches overhanging the drive entrance back to the kerb line, by 2m
- 3 - Elderberry Tree - Front Garden - Fell to ground level,
- 4 - Lime Tree - Rear Garden - Remove stem closest to the Green House, reduce by approx.3-4m in height.
- 5 - Large Cedar Tree - Rear Garden - Reduce overall by approx. 3m back to previous cutting points.
- 6 - Poplar Tree - Rear Garden - Re-pollard to previous points approx. 5-6m off.
- 7 - Goat Willow - Rear Garden - Reduce height by approx. 3m. Remove bough that overhangs lawn area.
- 8 - Maple Tree - Rear Garden - Reduce overhang by approx. 2.5m - 3m,

Due to BDC planning time-scale the Parish Council submitted the response below to BDC on 19.12.26
Finchingfield Parish Council has no objection to this planning application

26/00047/TPOCON - Land Duck End Finchingfield Essex

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: Reduction of Willow Tree by 3m to the top and 2m to the sides. Documents can be found:

<https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=T8N1OBBFN4500>

26/00016/TPO – 1 Primrose Cottages, Duck End, Finchingfield

Application to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order **TPO 02/2025 – T1 Pine Tree: Fell.**

Parish Council comments are required by **9 February 2026** due to BDC planning timescales.

Finchingfield Parish Council to consider and agree its response to Braintree District Council.

<https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=T8FPO5BFN1800>

021/2026 Planning Decision/s made by BDC

022/2026 Pond, Sluice Gates and Footing Foundations - Cllr J. Strange

To consider earmarking £14,400 from existing reserves (plus an additional £5,000 dredging budget), appoint a working group to obtain three quotations, and appoint a structural engineer, subject to costs being brought back to Council for approval. (ref 239/2025)

023/2026 MACAR Homes – Land Behind Freshwell Health Centre - Cllr J. Strange

To receive an update on the planning application with Braintree District Council and consider whether any further action or representation is required.

024/2026 Winter Salt Cllr J. Strange

To receive an update on the remaining winter salt stock (approximately 25–30 bags stored at Balcomber Hall Farm) and consider whether any further action is required.

025/2026 Tractor Run Event – 10 May 2026 - Cllr J. Strange

To consider and approve the use of a gazebo on the Village Green for the event and consider whether any additional stalls are permitted.

026/2026 Councillors to consider the Clerk's identified training needs

(as set out in the attached schedule) and resolve whether to approve attendance and associated costs. Booked on a rolling basis

027/2026 Items for next agenda

a) May Day Fête – 4 May 2026 (Proposed)

To discuss a proposed May Day Fête to be held on Monday 4 May 2026, including the use of a Maypole and the provision of stalls, and to consider whether the proposal should be developed

b) Finchingfield Windmill – Proposed Transfer to a Community Interest Company update Cllr J. Strange

To discuss Essex County Council's proposed transfer of the Windmill asset to a Community Interest Company and consider any required next steps, including whether to support the proposal in principle and agree further actions. There will be guest speakers, including Essex CC, representing the Windmill for this item.

028/2026 Date of next Full Council meeting – 24th. February 2026 at Finchingfield village hall at 7.30pm

24.03: 28.04 Annual Parish Assembly: 26.05 FPC AGM: 23.06: 28.07: 22.09: 27.10: 24.11.26

029/2026 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.

030/2026 Trust matters

a) Trust CIO Project

To receive an update on the Trust CIO project, including advice from RCCE, and to note that further information will be provided shortly.

031/2026 Closure of the meeting

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