

FINCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, duly convened on Wednesday 27th January 2021. Commenced at 7.30pm with Cllr. John Delderfield in the Chair.

This meeting was held virtually in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Attending:

Cllr. Shaun Blackmur
Cllr. John Delderfield
Cllr. Abigail Desborough
Cllr. Andy Hudson-Smith
Cllr. Sonja Hudson-Smith
Cllr. Cathy O'Brien
Cllr. Barbara Ponder
Cllr. Dave Stringer

Cllr. Mike Howland (Borough Councillor)

Cllr. Brian Long (County Councillor)

Clerk – Sarah Thorpe

One parishioner was in attendance

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Howland had advised that he would arrive late due to another meeting.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests.

None.

3. Public Forum.

No matters were raised by the parishioner present at the meeting. Cllr. Long spoke about the pandemic and advised that a vaccination centre would be opening in Downham Market in a few weeks, in the meantime residents should go to Swaffham when called.

4. Minutes of Ordinary Meeting on 25th November.

The Chairman asked councillors to look at the accuracy of the minutes. Following a proposal by Cllr. Ponder, seconded by Cllr. S Hudson-Smith, it was agreed by all to accept the minutes as a true record; they would be signed by the Chairman at the next face to face meeting.

5. Matters Arising.

None.

6. Finance matters

Item a. Approval of Monthly Expenditure. The Clerk ran through the below payments for authorisation. Following a proposal by Cllr. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. Ponder, the payments were authorised, however the payment to Golden Trees was to be withheld at this stage. Invoices to be presented to Councillors for signature after the meeting. Payments to be issued by standing order, direct debit or BACS.

Payee	Goods/ Services	VAT	TOTAL	chq no	Supplier/Service
E-on	35.08	1.75	36.83	D/D	Streetlighting electric Dec/Jan
Wave	49.51		49.51	D/D	Allotment water supply
S Thorpe	686.92		686.92	S/O	Clerk's salary Dec/Jan
S Thorpe	115.56	4.00	119.56	BACS	Clerk expenses/admin Dec/Jan
J Delderfield	35.02	7.00	42.02	BACS	New board for notice board
CGM Ltd	18.50	3.70	22.20	D/D	Grounds maintenance Nov
Limetree Marketing	20.80		20.80	BACS	Newsletter printing
Golden Tree Surgeons	880.00	176.00	1056.00	BACS	Prunning of Cherry Trees
URM (UK) Ltd	12.00	2.40	14.40	D/D	Bottle bank emptying
Unity Trust Bank	18.00		18.00	D/D	Bank charges

£ 1,871.39 £ 194.85 £ 2,066.24

Signed as a true record of the meeting:.....Date:.....

Item b. Reconciled cashbook. The Clerk presented the completed cashbook to the end of December 2020. A copy of the bank reconciliation and statements had been forwarded to all members prior to the meeting. Following a proposal by Cllr. Stringer, seconded by Cllr. Ponder, the documents were accepted.

Item c. Quarter 3 Finance Review. The report had been circulated to councillors. The Clerk invited questions on the report. No questions were raised. Following a proposal by Cllr. Stringer, seconded by Cllr. Ponder, it was agreed by all to approve the review.

Item d. Budget and Precept for 2021/22. A budget had been prepared by the Clerk and copies emailed to all councillors. The Clerk advised that the budget for expenditure balanced with the budget for income, if the Precept was set at the same level as last year for the Band D taxbase. A brief discussion took place on the figures and it was agreed that in the current economic climate the precept should not be increased if there was no need to do this, especially as it was expected that the BC and NCC would increase their requirements. Following a proposal by Cllr. Ponder, seconded by Cllr. O'Brien, it was agreed by all to set the Precept at £8559 which would be the same level as last year for residents.

Cllr. Howland joined the meeting at this point.

Item e. Bank signatories for the United Trust bond account. A new signatory was needed for the account following the resignation of Cllr. Underhill. Following a proposal by Cllr. Ponder, seconded by Cllr. O'Brien, it was agreed by all to add Cllr. Stringer as the fourth signatory, which would be in line with the Unity Trust accounts.

7. Planning matters

Item a. New applications:

20/01808/F Removal or variation of condition 2 of planning permission

17/01778/F: Extension and alterations to dwelling including new first floor accommodation at Sycamore Lodge, High Street. This application had been considered by members since the last meeting. All agreed to SUPPORT the application.

Item b. Decisions from the Borough Council: The following applications had been approved:
20/01515/LB Listed Building Application: Conversion of outbuilding to home office at Old Post Office, High Street.

20/00240/TREECA Cherry trees on village green, remove deadwood and reduce by 1m-1.5m within conservation area at The Hill, High Street.

8. Health & Safety issues

Item a. Issues requiring attention.

- High Street (condition of road surface and noisy/sunken manhole covers) – a complaint had been received and referred to Highways, who had advised that the manhole covers were the responsibility of Anglian Water, however they had inspected the road and did not believe that action was needed at this time. Members disagreed with this response and believed that there were several issues on the strip between Lynn Road and Marham Road junctions. Some of the issues were: road surface was poor near Sycamore House and there was a noisy manhole cover near Hardley House. Cllr. Stringer agreed to look at the situation and take photos if possible and then Clerk to respond to Highways and report issues directly to Anglian Water.
- High Street (near Talbot Manor) – white lines needed to be replaced.
- High Street – road signs needed to be cleaned.
- High Street (Near Talbot Manor & Sycamore House) – footpath needs attention.
- Downham Road (between petrol station and Black Drove) – footpath could do with being extended to cover this strip. The PC had previously considered installation of a trod (informal footpath) for this stretch of road but had not gone ahead with the project due to the cost involved. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask for an up-to-date price and then look into possible funding options to help with the cost. Item to be put on agenda for the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to report new issues to appropriate authorities.

Item b. Update on Members' responsibilities and return of Health & Safety Inspection sheets.

- No inspection sheets had been returned. The Chairman advised that members with duties to carry out checks should still be completing them and returning the sheets to the Clerk. This was a requirement of the insurance company. Cllr. S. Hudson-Smith agreed to take on the responsibility of inspecting the Nature Reserve and assets at the site. Clerk to reissue sheet advising of members' responsible for the checks and the sheet which they needed to complete.

- Memorial Hall (moving of litter bin) – the litter bin which was usually near the play area had been moved to the front of the car park next to the bottle bank. It was agreed that it was not a problem in that position at the moment but should be moved back and secured before the Hall reopened.

9. Correspondence.

The Clerk drew councillors’ attention to the following items:

- Clerks & Councils Direct Newsletter.

10. Parish Affairs.

Item a. Nature Reserve. Cllr. Stringer had provided a report which had been circulated to all before the meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk would obtain quotes to carry out the recommended work for 2021. Cllr. Stringer would meet up with contractors to advise what was required.

Cllr. Blackmur joined the meeting at this point giving his apologies for being late due to technical issues.

Item b. Footpaths. Cllr. Desborough had advised the Clerk of a loose sign on FP2a; a sign down between FP4 and 5 and a landslide near the bridge on FP5. Issues to be reported to NCC Footpaths Officer. A notice had been received of a submission to NCC requesting modifications to the definitive map.

Item c. Allotment matters. Cllr. Ponder advised that there was still one vacant plot. A permanent repair was still needed for the gate; a new post was required. The tenant had responded to say that a mini digger would be needed to carry out the repairs and a new post. He had quoted a figure for the mini digger but a price for the post was not available at the moment. It was expected that the Clerk and Chairman would be able to approve the repairs under delegated authority when the full cost was known.

Item d. Update on Speed activated messaging sign (SAM2). Cllr. O’Brien had not yet produced a report, but it would be emailed to all when available. The Highway Engineer had approved another location for the sign within the 40mph zone on Downham Road. Cllr. S. Hudson-Smith agreed to check if there was currently a post which could be used and send photos to Clerk. Following a proposal by Cllr. Ponder, seconded by Cllr. Blackmur, it was agreed by all that the Clerk should order another bracket, if a suitable post was available. If no suitable post was available a new post would need to be approved by Highways and then purchased and installed.

Item e. Update on Community Speed Watch Scheme. Cllr. Ponder advised that the team’s activities were still suspended due to the current lockdown.

Item f. Update on registry of the land at the Chalk Pit. The Clerk had managed to obtain one further quote to complete the registration. It advised that it was likely to cost £500-600 plus VAT and land registry fees of no more than £50. The advice stated that it would be necessary for residents or members to provide statements of the facts as they know them to be and for the area to be fenced/enclosed by hedges to the exclusion of any other landowners which surround the land before the registration could be submitted. It was agreed that this matter should be put on hold until the current lockdown ended and then members could arrange a meeting at the site with the Clerk and a former member.

Item g. Hedgehog safety in the village. The Clerk had obtained a price of £1.50 per sign for A4 size wheelie bin stickers. A discussion took place on options. Following a proposal by Cllr. Delderfield, seconded by Cllr. Ponder, it was agreed by all to initially purchase 12 signs and to give two to the resident who had originally raised the concern. The remaining signs to be sold to residents for £2 each with the profit to be used for hedgehog protection at the Nature Reserve. Item to be placed in the next newsletter.

Item h. Options to improve broadband speed. Cllr. A. Hudson-Smith advised that he had been unable to get a response from a company regarding this issue. Due to the need to carry out substantial work in the village if this project was to be considered and the lack of response from the company it was agreed to take no further action on this.

Item i. Free Recycling Programmes. The Memorial Hall Committee had considered the possibility of a clothing bank in their car park, but no decision had been made. The Clerk advised that she had not received a response from the BC officer who Cllr. Long had suggested. Item to be discussed further at next PC meeting.

Item j. Footpath and track on California. No progress had been made on this issue due to the current lockdown. Cllr. Long had agreed to meet with Cllr. Desborough when the current lockdown was over. The Clerk suggested that David Mills, at Norfolk County Council along with herself and the Chairman could be invited to the meeting.

Item k. Possible extension to the 30mph speed limit on High Street. Highways had advised that the 40mph sections at either end of the village were in the rural area rather than the built up part of the village. A reduction to 30mph would not be

appropriate due to the rural nature as laid out in their speed management strategy, which was in line with national guidance. In conclusion they would not look to reduce the limit in these locations. Clerk to respond to resident.

11. Internal Affairs

Item a Items for the next Newsletter. Items to be included in the newsletter as already agreed. Allotment vacant plot to be advertised.

Item b Review of Communication and Social Media Policy

The Clerk advised that no amendments had been made to the document which had been adopted last year. The policy was briefly discussed. Following a proposal by Cllr. Ponder, seconded by Cllr. Stringer, it was agreed by all to approve the review of the document.

12. Items for the next agenda.

Items to remain on the agenda as already agreed. New items to be sent to the Clerk at least 10 days before the next meeting.

13. Confirm date of next meeting.

The next meeting would be an Ordinary Meeting on Wednesday 24th March 2021 at 7.30pm. It was expected this meeting would be held virtually. The Annual Parish Meeting, which usually took place before this meeting, would be delayed until May when it was hoped it could be held in the Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.58pm