



## **GREAT FINBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Great Finborough **Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 7.30pm.**

### **Present:**

Councillors:           A Mann (Chairman)  
                              L Morgan  
                              R Burton  
                              S Waspe  
                              J Spencer  
                              J Barron

In Attendance         Mrs J Blackburn – Clerk  
                              County Councillor P Otton  
                              District Councillor J Matthissen  
                              Thirty Four members of the public

### **GFPC157/25/26 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND APPROVALS**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Kemp which was approved.

### **GFPC158/25/26 – DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST**

None had been received.

### **GFPC15925/26 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None had been received.

### **GFPC160/25/26 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2025**

**It was AGREED:** That the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

### **GFPC161/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT – CLLR PENNY OTTON**

Cllr Otton's report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

She asked Councillors whether the Knights Bridge repairs had been carried out to which they confirmed they hadn't. She stated that she would chase up the works.

Members informed Cllr Otton of a drain issue on the Buxhall Road, which she confirmed she would investigate.

Cllr Mann explained about Valley Lane and the many concerns over speeding, with many pets being killed. It was a narrow road and asked if anything could be done. Cllr Otton replied that the speed limit could be reviewed and she would look into the 'Quiet Lane' option.

### **GFPC162/25/26 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**Ref: DC/25/04902** - Householder Application - Installation of a below ground LPG storage tank for domestic central heating - Redcroft, Borough Lane, Great Finborough

**It was AGREED:** That the Parish Council had no objections to the application. **Clerk to action.**

**Ref: DC/25/04134 - APPLICATION FOR DISCHARGE OF CONDITION(S)** Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/24/00494 - Condition 3 (Archaeology) and 7 (Precautionary Working Method Statement) - Stowmarket Golf Club, Lower Road, Onehouse

Members felt that more information was needed in order to discuss this application and asked for the Clerk to ask for an extension. **Clerk to action.**

#### **GFPC163/25/26 - PLANNING DECISIONS**

None had been received.

#### **GFPC164/25/26 – WORKING PARTY SIDS**

Cllr Mann reported that the SIDs and fixings had arrived. The installation of the devices would be carried out on the weekend of 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2025.

#### **GFPC165/25/26 – DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY**

Cllr Morgan reported that he had looked into the cost of a replacement battery which would be £250.

**It was AGREED:** That Cllr Morgan order the battery. **Cllr Morgan to action.**  
That CiL money be used for the purchase.

#### **GFPC166/25/26 – VALLEY LANE TRAFFIC**

It was reported that Valley Lane was being used by children with dirt bikes with no lights and therefore a concern with the issue of speeding by other vehicles down the lane.

It was also noted that the boundary hedge to Andrew Middleditch's paddock needed to be cut back. Cllr Mann agreed that he would contact him. **Cllr Mann to action.**

#### **GFPC167/25/26 – CAR PARK LINES**

Cllr Waspe reported that apart from a small area the lines in the car park had been re-painted. Members thanked Cllr Waspe for carrying out the works.

#### **GFPC168/25/26 – OLD SWIMMING POOL UPDATE**

The Clerk reported that she had received permission from one of the landowner's, Mr John Sinclair, but was still awaiting permission from Mr Hart.

#### **GFPC169/25/26 - PLAY AREA**

Cllr Mann reported that he was awaiting a check of the area that needed to be re-tarmacked by Cllr Kemp so would defer to the next meeting.

#### **a) POSTS**

Cllr Mann reported that some posts and rails needed replacing but also introducing new posts around the entrance to the play area to prevent parking on the grass. A price needed to be sought with the installation of the posts being carried out in the New Year.

Cllr Mann would pass on the details to the Clerk for ordering. **Cllr Mann to action.**

## **GFPC170/25/26 – COMBS LANE MOBILE SITE – THE FORGE**

Cllr Mann welcomed members of the public present and explained that the following discussion would be useful as a fact finding session as to what the position was with the site.

It was noted that representatives at the meeting consisted of the site owners, residents and neighbours.

Mr Albert Lee, Son-in-Law to the original owner of the site, spoke on behalf of those present and explained the history of the site.

His Father-in-Law, Mr Gumble, who owned the site at the time, had received an Enforcement Notice from the District Council to put the site back to what it was originally used for, a transient Traveller's Site. The District Council were looking to see if any Travellers were present on the site and the Enforcement Officer had visited to check. It was confirmed to him that no Travellers were in residence and hadn't been for many years.

Mr Lee explained that during the 1980s planning permission had been approved for a Traveller Caravan Site and was designated as such, but he confirmed that no Travellers had lived there then, or since.

It was Mr Lee's understanding that as no Travellers had resided at the site for 10 years, then they were immune from prosecution.

All the residents present at the meeting had lived at the site for many years. Mr Lee explained that they needed to prove that was the case and the Enforcement Officer had informed the owners that they needed to apply for a Certificate of Lawful Use, along with evidence to support it. The Certificate needed to be submitted next month.

The residents explained that the situation was very stressful. They felt that the District Council were trying to evict them from their homes in order for the site to be used by Travellers. They were concerned also as some of the residents were vulnerable people.

It was noted that the District Council had pursued a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) on the site back in 2012, which had failed.

A contractor who had worked at the site many times over the last 12 years was present and stated that during those 12 years he had not seen one Traveller on the site.

He felt that the District Council had spent over £1 million on the CPO, money that he felt had been wasted. He questioned whether the District Council would be willing to spend the same amount again on the current process.

He understood the issues with sites being needed for Travellers and recalled recent events at Stowmarket Recreation Ground and at Stowupland, which had cost those Councils thousands of pounds.

He added that before his death Mr Gumble had always looked after the site, he had enjoyed a quiet site and didn't want Travellers to reside there.

Neighbours of the site were also present. They expressed their full support to the residents and stated that the site was well looked after, quiet with no issues at all.

Cllr Matthissen was present at the meeting and explained that the Enforcement Notice had been in place for four years. He explained that the failure of the CPO had not changed the planning position. He also explained that the process of the Certificate of Lawful Use would take some time, a minimum of eight

weeks, probably longer. He added that as the District Council had taken so long to get to this stage it was unlikely that the Enforcement would be seen through and executed.

Cllr Morgan asked Cllr Matthissen whether it was a coincidence that Enforcement had pursued the site during a time when sites were being sought for Travellers arriving in the County.

Cllr Matthissen stated that from a Planning point of view, he felt The Forge would not be an ideal transient Travellers site and the fact that the Enforcement Notice hadn't been carried on when first issued would go against them. He also stated that there weren't enough homes to house any current residents forced out by this order

He added that the number of transient sites in the District was less than what was needed. Houses, employment land and transient sites were all required. It was his understanding that no land had been offered for transient sites at the current time

Cllr Waspe offered to meet with Cllr Matthissen for a walk around The Forge site, to which Cllr Matthissen agreed.

Members recognised the difficult circumstances that the issue was putting the owners and residents under

Cllr Mann explained to those present that once the Certificate of Lawful Use had been applied for the Planning Authority would consult with the Parish Council as usual where Members would offer their views. Should the Certificate be approved that would be the end of the process.

#### **GFPC171/25/26 - PUBLIC FORUM**

It was confirmed that the Annual Allotment Fire would be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November

The Parish Council were thanked for the provision of the Poppy Wreath and Tommy Figures on the Green.

#### **GFPC172/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

a) **CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk had nothing to report other than what was on the Agenda.

b) **TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Clerk reported on the Council's current financial position and movements since the last meeting. It was reported that the balance in the accounts as of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2025 was £46,479.99.

c) **TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS**

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Oct)	£485.69
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Oct)	£32.75
Jennie Blackburn	Poppy Wreath Reimbursement	£19.99
Saffron Mann	Litter Pickers Pay (Oct)	£18.00
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Nov	£150.14

The Clerk also reported that the following payments made needed to be ratified:

Amazon	Car Park Lines Paint	£69.95
Digital Copycentre	Newsletter Printing	£220.00
Top Garden Services	Grass Cutting in village (Mar - Oct)	£1,920.00

Amazon	Yellow paint for car park	£39.99
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**It was AGREED:** That payments totalling £2,956.51 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

The following receipt was noted.

MSDC	Cil Money	£6,000.00
MSDC	Locality Funding (SIDs)	£1,500.00

d) **DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2026/27**

**It was AGREED:** That the Draft Budget for 2026/27 be approved.

e) **CHAIR'S EMAIL ADDRESS**

**It was AGREED:** That the Chairman of the Parish Council has a gov.uk email address in order to comply with Assertion 10. **Clerk to action.**

**GFPC173/25/26 - VILLAGE MAINTENANCE AND OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP**

Cllr Mann confirmed that the next Working Group was due to meet on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

Cllr Morgan reported that he had applied for more hedging.

Cllr Mann reported that a tree on Parish Land near the village hall, was undermining the wall and touching cables. Due to the cables being present it was unable to be added to the jobs for the Working Group and a contractor needed to be sought. He stated that he would obtain a quote.

He also reported that the Chestnut Tree needed some of its lower branches removing, which a working group would tackle but also, obtain opinion from an expert on trimming the canopy as it had been at least 10 years since it was last tackled.

Cllr Mann reported that someone in the village had left a large bag of dog mess hanging on a dog bin so he had contacted the District Council for it to be removed, which it had been.

He confirmed that he would put an article in the next Newsletter asking people to dispose of their dog's mess appropriately and correctly.

**GFPC174/25/26 – FLOOD WORKING GROUP**

In relation to the Leaky Dam project Cllr Mann reported that Cllr Burton's wife had put them in touch with her University Colleagues who could help with the project. Also, Suffolk Wildlife Trust could help and all could provide skills for the project so progress was being made.

**GFPC175/25/26 - BIODIVERSITY ACTION GROUP**

Cllr Mann reported that he had put an article in the Newsletter asking for any interest in the Group. Unfortunately, he had yet to receive any replies.

**GFPC176/25/26 – EMERGENCY PLAN**

There was nothing to report.

**GFPC177/25/26 - FOOTPATHS**

Cllr Burton reported that there was nothing to report other than more fields were being ploughed pathways were temporarily being lost.

**GFPC178/25/26 - TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – CLLR JOHN MATTHISSEN**

Cllr Matthissen’s report had been circulated prior the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Cllr Waspe informed Cllr Matthissen that in relation to the ditch from Burford Bridge the water was unable to get through to the river, as it needed to be deeper as it doesn’t seem to drain. Cllr Matthissen agreed to meet with Cllr Waspe to have a look at the issue.

**GFPC179/25/26 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- Litter pick during Winter – date to be arranged
- Buxhall Road – leaking had stopped – Cllr Waspe explained that the owner of Buxhall Lodge had been redirected, which should largely resolve the issue
- Precept explanation to be provided in next Newsletter
- Car Park – consider low level lighting around the area – next Agenda
- Newsletter item – new advertisers / bad debts – next Agenda

**GFPC180/25/26 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**It was AGREED:** That the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 9.43pm

Chairman: ..... Dated: .....