



GREAT FINBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Great Finborough **Monday, 9th March 2026 at 7.30pm.**

Present:

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

In Attendance Mrs J Blackburn – Clerk
 County Cllr Penny Otton
 District Cllr John Matthissen
 Nine members of the public

GFPC227/25/26 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

None had been received.

GFPC228/25/26 – CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

Cllr Waspe proposed and Cllr Mann seconded that Jacqueline Tarabella be co-opted as Cllr. **All Agreed.**

The Declaration of Office was signed.

GFPC229/25/26 - DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST

None had been received.

GFPC230/25/26 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

GFPC231/25/26 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12TH JANUARY 2026

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th January 2026 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

GFPC232/25/26 - PUBLIC FORUM

Nine members of the public were present. No issues were raised.

GFPC233/25/26 – FORGE CARAVAN PARK

Residents from the Forge Caravan Park were present and one gave the following update:

A lot of investment had been made in the site and new tenants arrived with only one caravan remaining available.

She explained that she had received a welcome letter of support from Onehouse Parish Council. Also, 60 letters of support had been submitted to the District Council in relation to the current Application for a Lawful Development Certificate.

She reported that at a recent District Council meeting a question was asked in relation to a land supply statement that stipulated that the supply of sites for Travellers was separate to that of other land supply. A further supplementary question was answered with confirmation that no mid Suffolk residents would be made homeless during the call for sites process. It was also confirmed that The Forge site was not being put forward for a Travellers Site.

GFPC234/25/26 - TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR JOHN MATTHISSEN

Cllr Matthissen's report would be circulated following the meeting and would be published on the village website.

He reported on the call for sites link included in his report and advised Councillor's to have a look. He explained that the sites submitted would be assessed for suitability.

Cllr Tarabella asked Cllr Matthissen if land was outside the settlement boundary, how it would affect things to which Cllr Matthissen explained that if the land was allocated then it would change the settlement boundary.

In relation to the Cagmans Farm application, a question from the Inspectorate had been received which was being worked on.

GFPC235/25/26 – 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.

Cllr Otton briefly mentioned from her report that when resurfacing works to roads were due, car owners would be notified two weeks in advance. But a £70 fine would be given should vehicles not be removed on the day of the works.

She stated that at the next County Council Elections she would be stepping down. Due to those Elections Locality Funding would not be available after 27th March 2026.

Cllr Mann reported that repair works to Knights Bridge were yet to be undertaken, to which Cllr Otton confirmed she would follow up.

20mph speed limit information was of interest and would be put onto the next Agenda for further discussion.

GFPC236/25/26 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ref: DC/23/03967 - Full Planning Application - Erection of replacement buildings 7 and 9 (following demolition of buildings 6, 7, 8 and 9) (Retention of) and use of building 7 for sui generis (electrical work and storage) (Retention of) and building 9 for sui generis (electrical work and storage); change of use of building 11 from agricultural to sui generis (personal storage for Mr Lee) (Retention of) and change of use of building 12 from agricultural to sui generis (timber storage) (Retention of) (amended scheme to DC/23/01379) - Green Farm, City Lane, Great Finborough, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 3AR - **Reason(s) for re-consultation:** Legal agreement received 27.02.2026

It was noted that a Legal Agreement had been submitted in relation to the application and any further comments had been requested.

Members discussed the one substantial change from the original application to the current Legal Agreement which was that of noise and how noise would be managed. Many of the concerns raised in the initial submission from the Parish Council had not been addressed.

Residents were present at the meeting, who were affected by the development, and raised the following concerns:

- Increased pockets of land than was in original planning application
- Usage of buildings ambiguous with all buildings being given B2 status
- Working hours of 7am – 7pm not being adhered to, with site being used 24 hours a day which included weekends. Some businesses were a 24 hour operation which meant that the hours in the Agreement were incorrect.
- Impact of the site on neighbouring properties had already affected the lives of those residents due to proximity with noise, light and sound being a huge concern. One resident's own business was also being affected.

Cllr Matthissen stated that the Legal Agreement contained standard information and would override the past. He explained that Planning Officers were trying to achieve embracement of the site in terms of permissions to include noise, light etc with the permissions already in place not being able to be removed.

Concerns of the Parish Council were as follows:

- There did not seem to be any plan in place for monitoring the noise with any reported breaches seemingly to be left to the neighbouring residents
- Enforcement action on two of the buildings (7 and 9) remained live
- Working hours were of a concern and appeared to be beyond the existing working hours.
- There seemed to be some ambiguity of class B2 / E buildings usage between the Legal Agreement and the original Planning Application.
- In relation to traffic, there was concern about HGV's leaving the High Road to enter City Lane on what was already a dangerous junction. There wasn't room for two vehicles to pass on City Lane, therefore vehicles would have to wait on the High Road.
- The Legal Agreement did not include any form of traffic planning, which was felt should be included.
- Increased site use would increase potholes and deterioration of local roads
- The agreement contained no conditions/restrictions for other potential adverse impacts from B2 Use i.e. dust, grit, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke soot, ash.
- The circumstances (listed in para 1.5) under which the obligations in Para 1.4 would not apply, effectively grants defacto 24/7 use of the majority of the site.

Members were also concerned that all elements of the previous objection from the Parish Council had not been addressed, which included lack of landscaping and impacts such as excessive lighting, smell and visual impact of the buildings on neighbouring properties.

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council object to the application due to the above concerns. **Clerk to action.**

GFPC237/25/26 – PLANNING DECISIONS

The following decision had been received:

Ref: DC/25/04189 - Full Planning Application - Erection of 4 no. dwellings following demolition of existing agricultural buildings - Poplar Farm, High Road, Great Finborough – **Granted (subject to conditions)**

GFPC238/25/26 – PLANNING COMMENTS TO BE RATIFIED

The following comments had been submitted to the Planning Portal:

Ref: APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/26/00113 - Planning Application - Construction of 64no ground mounted solar array - Stone Barn, High Road, Great Finborough – No Objections

GFPC239/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) CLERK’S REPORT

The Clerk reported that the results had been received from the traffic monitoring of Valley Lane, which had been circulated to members. The results showed that there wasn’t an issue with speed.

Members noted the results and asked for the items to be added to the next Agenda. **Clerk to action.**

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 2nd March 2026 was £39,201.09.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Elan City	SIDs	£6,215.98
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Feb)	£519.29
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/exp (Feb)	£26.00
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Mar	£81.62
Roman Gambling	Litter Pickers Pay (Feb)	£24.00
Megan Clarke	Litter Pickers Pay (Feb)	£18.00

The Clerk also reported that the following payments be ratified:

Gipping Press Ltd	Refund - N/L Advert	£93.50
Roman Gambling	Litter Pickers Pay (Jan)	£24.00
Megan Clarke	Litter Pickers Pay (Jan)	£18.00
Digital Copycentre	N/L Printing	£220.00
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Jan)	£519.29
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/exp (Jan)	£32.75
Amazon	Replacement Battery for SID	£54.99
UK Safety Sign	Litter Picking Signs	£60.91
UK Safety Sign	Litter Picking Sign frames and clips	£67.99
Online Playgrounds	Tarmac Repair Kit	£160.80

It was AGREED: That payments totalling £8,043.62 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

The following receipts were noted.

Oak Carpentry	N/L Advert	£75.00
Rewts Tree Surgery	N/L Advert	£75.00
Ben Draper	N/L Advert	£93.50
Rushbrook Chimney Sweep	N/L Advert	£75.00
M R Joinery	N/L Advert	£103.00
Time for You	N/L Advert	£75.00
M & K Bryan - N/L Advert	N/L Advert	£75.00
Stowmarket Kitchen & Bathrooms	N/L Advert	£93.50

Andrew Bingham	N/L Advert	£103.00
F G Brown	N/L Advert	£103.00
Paula Mayhew	N/L Advert	£75.00
All Seasons	N/L Advert	£75.00

d) **TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION**

It was AGREED: That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) **TO APPROVE THE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

It was AGREED: That the Budget Monitoring report be approved.

f) **TO APPOINT THE INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2025/26**

It was AGREED: That Trevor Brown CPFA be appointed as Auditor for 2025/26.

The Clerk reported that the Recommendation (below) from the Internal Audit of 2024/25 had been dealt with earlier in the year with the Financial Regulations being reviewed, amended and approved.

The Council should review the current arrangements for authorising internet banking payments in relation to the Financial Regulations to ensure that actual procedures and the Regulations accord and there is no ambiguity in the narrative of Financial Regulations regarding the authorisation process

g) **TO APPROVE THE EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS AND NOTE PREVIOUS YEARS RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Clerk reported that due to the level of expenditure and income, the Parish Council would be subject to an External Audit for 2025/26.

GFPC240/25/26 – POLICIES AND PROCESURES

a) **REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT CONTROL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

It was AGREED: That the Internal Audit Control and Risk Management Arrangements be reviewed and approved.

b) **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

It was AGREED: That the Freedom of Information Policy be approved.

c) **GDPR PRIVACY NOTICE**

It was AGREED: That the GDPR Privacy Notice be approved.

d) **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

It was AGREED: That the Complaints Procedure be approved.

e) **GRANTS POLICY**

It was AGREED: That the Grants Policy be approved.

GFPC241/25/26 – DONATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

It was AGREED: That the item be deferred to the next meeting.

GFPC242/25/26 – POTHoles

It was noted that some potholes in the parish were being dealt with the broader point of drainage being an issue, which would need to be monitored.

It was also noted that as the County Council's Precept could only be increased by 5%, their budget for roads was decreasing due to the need to support Adult Services and Special Educational Needs children being their priority.

Cllr Spencer felt that the situation with roads should be in the minds of the Parish Council moving forward as to whether any help could be given.

GFPC243/25/26 – FUTURE MEETING DAYS / DATES

The dates for future meetings was discussed with the usual second Monday of the month (excluding February and August) being reviewed.

As it was the same date as other Parish Councils in the area it made attending meetings for the District and County Councillors difficult.

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council change their meeting dates to the third Monday of the month (excluding February and August). **Clerk to action.**

GFPC244/25/26 – CONTAINER REVIEW

No longer required.

GFPC245/25/26 – NEWSLETTER

Cllr Mann reported that he had spoken to the printing company in relation to the quality of the printing, and solutions were being investigated to improve quality of photos. Colour printing may be considered in the future when events required colour photos.

GFPC246/25/26 – OLD SWIMMING POOL UPDATE

Cllr Waspe reported that he had had a recent meeting and was informed of grants available from Richard Parmee, Diversity Manager at Mid Suffolk District Council.

Cllr Waspe was interested in possible grant funding for the proposed Leaky Dams, Burford Bridge and the historic swimming pool, which would benefit from an environmental Biodiversity boost. Trees to be added over the river would also be something to investigate and would be beneficial.

GFPC247/25/26 - PLAY AREA

Cllr Mann reported that he was awaiting better weather to repair the tarmac using the repair kit recently purchased.

GFPC248/25/26 - VILLAGE MAINTENANCE AND OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

a) Speed Indicator Device (SID) installation

Cllr Mann reported that the second new speed indicator device (SID) had been installed. He explained that another SID had been re-located with its batteries being replaced. An older SID had been repurposed, but both batteries were not charging and therefore suggested converting to Solar but the cost made it prohibitive. It was discussed to replace both batteries with Cllr Mann to obtain prices.

Cllr Mann reported that a Litter Pick had taken place in the village with a large amount of rubbish being collected. He noted that other residents had volunteered their time aside from this collective pick, and thanked them for their efforts.

Cllr Mann reported that the replacement posts had been installed around the car park.

He also reported that in relation to the Chestnut Tree, a contractor, James Firman, had advised not to carry out any works to the tree until October. He had quoted £1,000 to carry out necessary works and stated that he would be happy to attend a meeting in order to discuss it further.

b) Low Level Lighting

Cllr Mann reported that solar lighting posts could be purchased at £70 each. Members would need to consider how many and where they would be required. Clerk to put on next Agenda.

GFPC249/25/26 – FLOOD WORKING GROUP

Cllr Mann had applied for the grant funding, which was pending. The funding would finance the consultant required to apply for permits for leaky dams project.

GFPC250/25/26 - BIODIVERSITY ACTION GROUP

Newly appointed Cllr Tarabella had stated that she would be willing to progress the group and would work on its set up with the inclusion of a Plan.

Mary Smythe, Allotment Association, was also willing to help.

Cllr Burton suggested the provision of a free pack of seeds for all residents, which could be in conjunction with the Gardening Club.

GFPC251/25/26 – EMERGENCY PLAN

There was nothing to report.

GFPC251/25/26 - FOOTPATHS

There was nothing to report.

GFPC252/25/26 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- Banking
- EV Charging – Car Park – Cllr Morgan to research
- Change of Litter Picker – Saffron Mann to be replaced by Oliver Reeves

GFPC253/25/26 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Monday, 20th April 2026 at 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 9.51pm

Chairman: Dated: