



GREAT FINBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Great Finborough **Monday, 20th April 2026 at 7.30pm.**

Present:

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

In Attendance Mrs J Blackburn – Clerk
 District Cllr John Matthissen
 Three members of the public

GFPC01/26/27 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

Apologies had been received from Cllr Morgan, which was approved.

GFPC02/26/27 – DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST

None had been received.

GFPC03/26/27 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

GFPC04/26/27 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9TH MARCH 2026

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th March 2026 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

GFPC05/26/27 - PUBLIC FORUM

Three members of the public were present.

One resident present, from College Barn, reported that Knights Bridge remained unrepaired following an accident last year.

Members explained that they had chased the repairs with the County Councillor, who had been in contact with the relevant people at Highways and that Cllr Mann had contacted them direct. It was due to be repaired, but the date was unknown.

The resident then asked whether a priority system could be introduced at Knights Bridge to which members explained that a priority system had already been asked for but unfortunately refused by the Highways Department.

The resident reported that speeding was a huge issue along High Road and over Knights Bridge. She had many horses at the farm and it was dangerous walking the horses across/along the road. She therefore asked members if 'Horse Riders' signs could be installed to try to slow down traffic.

Cllr Waspe informed the resident that over the years he had asked for such signs which had always been refused.

District Cllr Matthissen stated that whilst the Highways Department would not pay for signs, it would be worth asking for them again.

He suggested that when members made contact with the Highways Department, to ask for the criteria of the required width of the road for a priority system to be implemented. **Cllr Mann to action.**

GFPC06/26/27 – TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT – CLLR PENNY OTTON

Cllr Otton was not present at the meeting and had sent her apologies. Her report had been received prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- a) Potholes – all potholes had been dealt with.
- b) Knights Bridge Repairs - ongoing

GFPC07/26/27 - TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR JOHN MATTHISSEN

Cllr Matthissen's report had been received prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

He highlighted the following items from his report:

- Devolution and Local Government reform – three Unitary Councils
- Recycling and Waste Collection
- Funding for Neighbourhood Plans

GFPC08/26/27 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None had been received.

GFPC09/26/27 – PLANNING DECISIONS

The following decisions had been received:

Ref: DC/26/00113 - Full Planning Application - Construction of 64 no. ground mounted solar array - Stone Barn, High Road, Great Finborough – **Granted**

Ref: DC/26/00955 - Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Erection, Extension or Alteration of a Building for Agricultural or Forestry use The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 6. Erection of steel framed agricultural building - Jackbridge Farm, Jacks Lane, Great Finborough – **Not Required**

GFPC10/26/27 – PLANNING COMMENTS TO BE RATIFIED

None.

GFPC11/26/27 – APPEALS

The following Appeal Decision was received:

Ref: Appeal A Ref: APP/W3520/C/24/3348273 - Land at Cagmans Farm, High Road, Great Finborough – **Dismissed**

GFPC12/26/27 – 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 13th April 2026 was £52,811.86.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Roman Gambling	Litter Picker's Pay (Mar)	£24.00
Megan Clarke	Litter Picker's Pay (Mar)	£18.00
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Mar)	£33.66
SALC	Annual Subscription	£392.28
Digital Copy Centre	Newsletter Printing	£220.00

The Clerk also reported that the following payments be ratified:

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Mar)	£519.29
Digital Copycentre	Newsletter Printing	£220.00
Suffolk County Council	Streetlighting Costs	£428.81
Wave	Water for Allotment (14th Dec-13th Mar)	£6.21
SALC	Payroll Service for 6 months	£140.40
Amazon	Padlocks	£14.99
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Apr	£116.54
Land Registry	Land Search / Title Deeds	£28.00

It was AGREED: That payments totalling £1,642.89 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

The following receipts were noted.

Cat Jones	Newsletter Advert	£75.00
Jackbridge Farm	Newsletter Advert	£75.00
Grace Spinal Flow	Newsletter Advert	£40.00
Alchemy Home Furnishings	Newsletter Advert	£40.00
Allotments Association	Allotments Water & Rent	£116.18
G Brown	Newsletter Advert	£75.00
Digital Copycentre	Newsletter Advert	£103.00
MSDC	Precept (1st instalment) & CiL	£15,248.00

GFPC13/26/27 – DONATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Members discussed donations for 2025/26 and asked the Clerk for the remaining funds as at 31st March 2026, to which the Clerk replied that she would check and let them have the figure via email.

Members agreed that up to £400 maximum would be spent on donations, split equally to Stowmarket Foodbank, Citizen’s Advice Bureau, First Responders and Pettward Hall, if there was a surplus.

It was AGREED: That the surplus figure be shared with Councillors via email and donations made as stated above. **Clerk to action.**

GFPC14/26/27 – 20MPH ZONES IN VILLAGE

A brief discussion took place in relation to areas in the village which would benefit from a 20mph speed limit.

Areas identified were Valley Lane, Middlefield Drive, Coombs Lane and High Road, around the bend of the Primary School.

Cllr John Matthissen advised that photographs should be supplied of all the surrounding hazards, which could be included in the application and might help the argument that the speed limit there should be reduced.

Cllr Spencer felt that a survey should be conducted to ascertain the views of the residents.

Cllr Tarabella reported that in the information she had read it stated that average recorded traffic speed would be considered. Areas with recorded speeds of below 28mph were likely to be accepted with a speed limit sign only. Recorded speeds between 28 - 32mph – were unlikely to be acceptable with signage alone. Gateway signing and traffic calming throughout the area may be required. Recorded speeds above 32mph was unlikely to be acceptable without extensive traffic calming measures such as road humps, plus night time lighting and a road safety audit.

Cllr Mann stated that he would do further research. **Cllr Mann to action.**

GFPC15/26/27 – RESULTS OF TRAFFIC SURVEY – VALLEY LANE

It was noted that a recent traffic survey showed there were no issues with speeding along Valley Lane.

GFPC16/26/27 – EV CHARGING IN VILLAGE

Cllr Morgan had looked into the process of having EV charging points installed at the car park at the play area in the village, which he had circulated prior to the meeting.

The plan would be for the two charging points to be supplied, fully managed and installed from a company, with the electricity being paid for at the charging point.

Cllr Matthissen stated that the Government would occasionally run schemes for EV points to encourage local Councils to have them installed, as did the County and District Councils.

He advised that the Parish Council should look for a company who would provide a supply and maintain contract. He also advised that it should be considered who the EV charging points would be for, and where the electricity should come from, as sufficient power would be needed.

Cllr Tarabella stated that the company 'Believ' did everything that would be required. Their cost for charging would be 40-43p per kw/h overnight and 50-53 per kw/h during the day.

Cllr Matthissen stated that he would look into what the District Council could do to help.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Morgan to carry out further research into companies that could supply and maintain EV chargers which included a survey as to who in the village would be interested in the installation. Also, to research any rebate scheme available.

GFP17/26/27 – LAND REGISTRY PROJECT

Following investigation Cllr Mann reported that confirmation had been received that the Parish Council owned land at the Allotments, Woodpecker Hill, Football Pitch and Play Area/Car Park. Other pockets of land had not been confirmed.

Cllr Matthissen stated that the District Council had a mapping system which showed the land they owned. **Cllr Mann to check.**

GFPC18/26/27 - LIGHTING FOR THE DEFIBRILLATOR UNIT PLUS REPLACING STRUCTURE

Cllr Mann reported that a resident had stated when she had needed to use the defibrillator, during a dark night, she had not been able to see the keypad sufficiently which had been an issue. Therefore, a light for the defibrillator needed to be considered. A solar option could be the way forward.

Also, the old telephone box that the defibrillator was housed in had become an eyesore and residents had questioned whether a red telephone box could be acquired as a replacement.

Cllr Mann stated that he would put an article in the Newsletter asking residents their views on a red telephone box.

Cllr Mann also reported that the pads were due to expire at the end of the month so new ones needed to be purchased.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Mann research a solar light for above the defibrillator.
That Cllr Morgan purchase new pads for the defibrillator.

GFPC19/26/27 – NEWSLETTER

Cllr Mann reported that there had been new uptake on advertising in the Newsletter. He also explained that the cost of paper may increase but the increase had not been confirmed.

GFPC20/26/27 – THE FORGE CARAVAN PARK – UPDATE

It was noted that the Certificate of Lawful Use had been successful as the residents of The Forge Caravan Park had submitted sufficient evidence of their residency over the last 10 years.

GFPC21/26/27 – OLD SWIMMING POOL UPDATE

Cllr Kemp reported that she had contacted 'Save the Gipping' and had spoken to Will Fenton. He worked locally on rivers and streams and would be happy to meet if required.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Kemp and Cllr Wasp meet with Will Fenton.

GFPC22/26/27 - PLAY AREA

Cllr Mann reported that he still had the tarmac patching to do which would be carried out as soon as possible.

He explained that through the Newsletter he had asked for volunteers to help clean the equipment. The advert was a success as residents had come forward who could help which included the provision of water and electricity. A date would be arranged for the cleaning to take place.

Cllr Mann also reported that padlocks had been purchased to replace the ones that had not worked.

GFPC23/26/27 - VILLAGE MAINTENANCE AND OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

a) Replacement of Speed Indicator Device (SID) with solar option – Purple Hill

Cllr Mann reported that a solar option was needed for the SID as the batteries were old and the power from them did not last very long.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Burton liaise with Elan City for a price for solar.

b) Low Level Solar Lighting options for Car Park and Football Ground Car Park

There was nothing to report.

Other issues in relation to maintenance were reported as below:

- Picnic bench at Wildflower Meadow had been vandalised therefore the Clerk was looking into the insurance claim for such an item and whether there was an excess.
- A fence panel on the border of the allotments had fallen into the allotments. The Care Home adjacent the allotments had acknowledged the issue and confirmed it would be dealt with.

GFPC24/26/27 – FLOOD WORKING GROUP

Cllr Mann reported that the application had now been received and was being considered.

GFPC25/26/27 - BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Cllr Tarabella and Mary Smyth (Allotments Association) had produced a Biodiversity Action Plan Framework which had been shared with the Parish Council prior to the meeting.

A variety of available information sources had been considered, including UK and Local Government guidance and plans adopted by other Parish Councils. They also considered measurable targets and indicators.

Cllr Kemp asked how residents would be weaved into the biodiversity work to which Cllr Tarabella stated that they had listed examples of ways to engage the community, including articles in the Newsletter, within the Framework.

Mary Smyth added that events would take place to encourage residents to take an interest in nature, which would include a treasure hunt and quizzes.

Peter Turner, Gardening Club Chair, also commented that any residents with pieces of scrub land could be encouraged to sow wildflowers in their gardens.

Cllr Burton reported that he had priced up seeded paper, which could be inserted in to the Newsletter. They would cost £147 for 200 sheets.

Cllr Mann proposed and Cllr Kemp seconded that the plan be adopted. All Agreed.

GFPC26/26/27 – EMERGENCY PLAN

There was nothing to report.

GFPC27/26/27 - FOOTPATHS

Cllr Burton reported that there were a couple of directional signs missing which needed to be reported on the 'Report it' tool.

Cllr Mann reported that a couple of farmer's fields had not been reinstated following ploughing – opposite Borough Lane and FP82 at the bottom near to the bridge.

GFPC28/26/27 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- Social Media Policy

GFPC29/26/27 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Monday, 18th May 2026 at 7.30pm (Annual Meetings)

The meeting finished at 9.13pm.

Chairman: Dated: