

GREAT FINBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council meeting** held at the Village Hall, Great Finborough **Monday, 21st September 2026 at 7.30pm.**

Present:

Councillors:	A Mann (Chairman) L Morgan S Waspe J Spencer R Burton J Tarabella
In Attendance	J Blackburn - Clerk

GFPC116/26/27 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

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

GFPC117/26/27 – DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST

None had been received.

GFPC118/26/27 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

GFPC119/26/27 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13th JULY 2026

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13th July 2026 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

GFPC120/26/27 - PUBLIC FORUM

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

GFPC121/26/27 – TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Bennett was not present at the meeting. His report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

GFPC122/26/27 - TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR JOHN MATTHISSEN

Cllr Matthissen was not present at the meeting. His report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

GFPC123/26/27 – PRESENTATION BY J FIRMAN

James Firman (Trees & Hedges) gave a brief explanation about the large Chestnut Tree in the village, of which the Parish Council had asked for advice.

He explained that the issue was the size of the branches and he felt the natural point to cut back to was where the tree had been cut to in the past. Anything less than they he felt would be a waste of money.

He went on to explain that the tree had survived the previous cut, which members believed to be approximately 15 years ago, and it had grown well.

James suggested that he prune the tree back to take the pressure off the limbs. If the works were not carried out then the tree could split which would result in it needing to be felled. He advised that it would be three-four years before the tree would take shape again once it had been pruned.

Moving forward James advised that every five years the tree be thinned which would stop the need to cut the tree right back again. Thinning the tree would give a continuous canopy and keep the tree at a smaller size.

He advised that the works, if approved, would be carried out October / November.

Cllr Mann reported that he would put a notice into the Newsletter to inform residents of the works and why the works were necessary. Also a notice near to the tree for passers-by to read would be another good way to keep residents informed. **Cllr Mann to action.**

In relation to item 26(b) on the Agenda – Biodiversity – Tree Works, Cllr Mann reported that James had also looked at other trees in the village and would notify Cllr Mann of any works he felt would be required and give a quote for those works.

GFPC124/26/27 - TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) **CLERK'S REPORT**
The Clerk reported that she had undertaken a Bank Reconciliation, which had tallied correctly and had circulated the report to members prior to the meeting.

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 15th September 2026 was £56,528.22.

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

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Sept)	£599.89
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Sept)	£40.68
Robinson Arnold	Village Maintenance Works (Hedges/Weeds)	£544.80
Wave	Water for Allotments	£82.39
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit 2025/26	£252.00
Great Bricett PC	Contribution to Black Ink Cartridge (Clerk's Printer)	£17.49
Digital Copycentre	Newsletter Printing	£220.00
Gallagher Insurance	Insurance Renewal	£873.29
Megan Clarke	Litter Picker's Pay (Sept)	£18.00
Roman Gambling	Litter Picker's Pay (Sept)	£24.00
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Oct	£35.94

The Clerk reported the following payments be ratified:

Megan Clarke	Litter Picker's Pay (Jul)	£18.00
Roman Gambling	Litter Picker's Pay (Jul)	£24.00
Amazon	Brackets for SID	£11.69

MSDC	Bin Emptying 2026/27	£927.00
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Aug	£35.94
MSDC	Annual Play Area Inspection	£78.64
ICO	Data Protection Renewal	£47.00
Top Garden Services	Village Gras Cutting - March to July	£1,296.00
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Sept	£35.74
Megan Clarke	Litter Picker's Pay (Aug)	£18.00
Roman Gambling	Litter Picker's Pay (Aug)	£24.00
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Aug)	£600.09
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Aug)	£26.00
Oliver Reeves	Litter Picker's Pay (Jul/Aug)	£30.00
J Firman Trees & Fences	Tree Works	£1,800.00

It was AGREED: That payments totalling £6,699.89 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

The following receipts had been received:

DMM Electric	Newsletter Advert	£103.00
Catherine Rolfe	Newsletter Advert	£16.50
MSDC	Precept 2nd instalment	£9,248.00

d) **EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – 2025/26**

The Clerk reported that the External Auditor had informed her that the tick box on Section 2 of the AGAR needed to be 'yes' rather than 'no'. The Clerk amended the page and it was initialled by herself and the Chair. It was then re-submitted to the External Auditor and was published on the website.

It was AGREED: That the External Audit report be approved.

e) **INCREASE IN HOURLY RATE – PARISH CLERK**

It was AGREED: That the annual hourly rate increase for the Clerk be approved. **Clerk to action**.

f) **INSURANCE RENEWAL**

It was AGREED: That the Insurance renewal of £873.29 be approved. **Clerk to action.**

GFPC125/26/27 – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

It was noted that the Social Media Policy continued to require input from Members.

The Clerk circulated the latest version prior to the meeting and would collate comments and suggested amendments from members and would bring back the finalised version for approval at the October meeting.

GFPC126/26/27 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None had been received.

GFPC127/26/27 - PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

GFPC128/26/27 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE RATIFIED

Ref: DC/26/03066 – Full Planning Application – Erection of 3.2M x 2.5M shed for storage of harden equipment – The Hoot, Valley Lane, Great Finborough – **No objections**

GFPC129/26/27 – FOOTBALL PITCH

Cllr Mann reported that Haydon Baker continued to use the football pitch, who had stated that he had replaced the goals on a couple of occasions due to the previous ones being vandalised.

It was AGREED: That Haydon Baker continue to use the football pitch with it being reviewed in six months' time.

GFPC130/26/27 – VILLAGE GRASSED AREAS – MAINTENANCE

Cllr Mann reported that he had observed the District Council cutting grassed areas in the village that the Parish Council paid for other contractors to cut.

The Clerk had liaised with the District Council to confirm the areas they cut and they provided a map showing those areas concerned.

It was confirmed that the Parish Council do not pay the District Council for grass cutting so it would be left at the current time.

A general discussion took place in relation to reviewing the contractors for grass cutting in the village and obtaining quotes from other companies to ensure value for money was continuing to be the case.

It was AGREED: That quotes be sought for grassing cutting in the village. **Cllr Mann to action.**

GFPC131/26/27 – TELEPHONE BOX WORKS

Cllr Mann reported that a new advertiser in the Newsletter, DM Electrical, had been asked to look at the lighting in the telephone box where the defibrillator was located.

The contractor had quoted £100 to replace the light with an LED light.

It was AGREED: That the quote be accepted. **Cllr Mann to action.**

Cllr Spencer joined the meeting.

GFPC132/26/27 - JOINT LOCAL PLAN SCOPING CONSULTATION

It was noted that the consultation had now closed.

GFPC133/26/27 – COMPOST SITE

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

GFPC134/26/27 – CLOUD WORKING

Cllr Burton suggested that the Parish Council work towards cloud working where all documents and information owned by the Parish Council could be held. It would also mean that documents that required input from members could be accessed digitally, using a password, rather than comments being sent directly to the Clerk.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Burton investigate options further and what costs would be involved. **Cllr Burton to action.**

GFPC135/26/27 - POSTS IN VILLAGE

Cllr Mann reported that he had received quotes for the replacement of all wooden posts in the village with composite ones. He explained that he needed to confirm how the posts would be installed, whether drilled into concrete or another option.

The quotes had been for £1,500 for all posts, or £500 for just the rotten ones. He confirmed that he would seek another quote.

Members discussed the project and agreed that CiL money could be used.

Cllr Mann reported that he would obtain a sample and circulate photos of the post to ensure members agreed with its colour.

It was AGREED: That in principle the cost of £1,500 be accepted.

GFPC136/26/27 - UPDATE ON 20MPH ZONES WITHIN THE PARISH

There was nothing to report.

GFPC137/26/27 – UPDATE - LIGHTING FOR THE DEFIBRILLATOR UNIT PLUS REPLACING STRUCTURE

This item was covered earlier in the meeting.

GFPC138/26/27 – UPDATE – NEWSLETTER

Cllr Mann reported that due to an error an extra £8 had been charged for the printing of the Newsletter.

It was AGREED: That £8 be paid.

GFPC139/26/27 – UPDATE - SWIMMING POOL

Cllr Waspe reported that to carry on with the project bricks and cement would be needed and also help to carry out the works.

Members noted that they had approved £100 towards the project but felt that if a contractor was found to carry out the work then locality funding could be applied for, for any extra costs.

Cllr Mann stated that he would obtain a quote.

GFPC140/26/27 – PLAY AREA

Cllr Mann reported that due to the hosepipe ban he had not been able to carry out any cleaning to the play equipment, but would check for any repairs soon.

GFPC141/26/27 - VILLAGE MAINTENANCE AND OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

Cllr Mann reported that the next Maintenance Working Group will be held on 14th November 2026 from 10am until 12 noon.

He stated that the focus would be on cutting the brambles back around the youth shelter in readiness for the planting of the fruit trees.

Cllr Mann explained that someone had agreed to remove the Perspex from the youth shelter, as previously agreed, free of charge.

Cllr Tarabella reported that she had contacted Richard Parmee, Biodiversity Manager at the District Council, who had agreed to provide the 14 fruit trees for the village and advised that they be planted early December.

Mary Smyth, Allotment Association, reported the following:

- Some of the fencing posts around the allotments were loose and required attention. Cllr Mann stated that he would obtain quotes to rectify the issue.
- Water unit – Cllr Mann stated that it was difficult to move and would wait for the ground to become softer. He would look at the unit during the Maintenance Working Group date on 14th November.
- Annual Allotment Bonfire – due to be held on 22nd November. A Risk Assessment would be carried out. **All agreed.**

Cllr Mann reported that quotes had been sought from the District Council to cut the Wildflower Meadow but a reply had not been received.

Mary Smyth stated that Martin ?? had offered to cut it to which members agreed and offered to help with the raking.

GFPC142/26/27 – FLOOD WORKING GROUP

a) Hill Farm Leaky Dams

Cllr Mann reported that forms had been completed and the project was moving forward.

GFPC143/26/27 - BIODIVERSITY

(a) Action Plan - Cllr Tarabella reported that drafts of Sections 1 – 3 of the Biodiversity action plan were progressing, but how to produce the location maps was still being considered.

Work on the first draft of the Actions Table was also progressing and actions for Woodpecker Hill had now been added.

(b) Tree Work – Cllr Tarabella reported that James Firman had carried out the urgent work on trees in Woodpecker Hill, but there were still 6 other groups of less urgent trees that required attention and some on-going non urgent tree work that would be carried out by the volunteers group.

The chippings from the felled trees needed to be distributed on the paths and the large timbers needed to be placed in piles within the wood, which would be carried out by the volunteers group.

The articles on biodiversity for the Newsletter, would now be submitted quarterly, inline with the seasons, rather than monthly.

Responses to the Newsletter articles had recently been received from 2 residents

GFPC1442/26/27 – EMERGENCY PLAN

Cllr Morgan reported that 80% of the Emergency Plan had been completed, following a meeting with Connor Green. He added that the Plan needed to be linked to GiFT in relation to vulnerable residents and he would speak to Sally Gooch.

GFPC143/26/27 - FOOTPATHS

Cllr Burton reported that he had not been informed of any footpath issues.

Cllr Tarabella reported that there was an issue with the footpath at Valley Lane, at the re-wilding area, where the directional sign pointed around the peripheral of the area, rather than through the middle, which was the correct route.

It was noted that many of the arrows on posts at footpath junctions had gone missing.

GFPC144/26/27 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- Cllr Waspe stated that the ditch along Finborough Road, and the lack of an attenuation lake, would cause the adjacent cottages to flood in wet weather if the ditch was not dug out – required attention - Next Agenda.
- Leaks - Buxhall Road had been fixed / telephone box had been reported
- Refurbishment of War Memorial bedding - Next Agenda
- Local Road Closures – Next Agenda

GFPC145/26/27 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Monday, 19th October 2026 at 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 9.08pm

Chairman: …… Dated: ……