

## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GATHERING OF PARISHIONERS HELD AT 8.00PM ON THURSDAY 31<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2011 IN THE FBCENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD, BERKSHIRE

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**PRESENT:** Cllr R Cundy, Chairman, Cllr G Markham, Vice Chairman  
Cllrs Ms L Blackwood, Mrs L Newcombe, Mrs C Driver, Mrs N Jennings-Frisby  
Cllrs S Bowers, S Bromley, W Chapman, I Pittock, J May,  
Cllrs K Mayne, A Pearce, R Rampton, G Veitch, S Weeks.

The Clerk - Mrs J Holloway, Assistant Clerk - Mrs Anna Kent,  
Clerk designate - Mrs Katy Dagnall  
84 attending members of local organisations and the public

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

Apologies for absence were received from

- Parish Cllrs: R Woof
- Borough Cllrs: Rob Stanton, Angus Ross (attending WBC meeting)
- Roger Black, Christine Lalley, Sarah Shillibier, Christine Knox - WVC, Tom Conlin - Berkshire County Blind Society, Steve Meakin - Nine Mile Ride School, Bev Warman - WBC, Sarah Phillips - Gorse Ride Junior School.

Cllr Roland Cundy welcomed all to the meeting and stated he was pleased to see the many representatives from education, religion, Wokingham Borough Councillors, charities, local businesses, volunteer groups and residents, all who play a major part in making Finchampstead one of the nicest communities to live in and be proud of.

#### **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GATHERING HELD ON 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2010**

Minutes of the 2010 Annual Gathering were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

##### WBC Core Strategy and SDL

Cllr Cundy advised that an update on the current position would be included in reports to be presented during the meeting.

##### Rook's Nest Country Park - off Barkham Ride

Access issues had been resolved and the Park is now open to the public.

#### **THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr R Cundy. Appendix A refers.

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Cllr G Markham, Chairman, Appendix B refers.

#### **PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Cllr Mrs L Newcombe. Appendix C refers.

#### **ROADS AND ROAD SAFETY REPORT**

Cllr K Mayne. Appendix D refers.

#### **FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Cllr W Chapman. Appendix E refers.

Cllr Cundy added that the Parish was proud to have and to maintain 26 miles of footpaths. Maps are available from the Parish Office.

## **AMENITIES COMMITTEE REPORT**

Cllr G Markham. Appendix F refers.

Cllr Cundy thanked all the Chairs for their reports and asked for any questions from the floor.

- Mrs Celia May, CAB Trustee, thanked the Parish Council for the annual financial contribution, and for the additional contribution provided this year for the CAB Outreach facility which will be opening at the FBCentre in April.
- A further update on the Core Strategy and SDL was requested to add to points covered in the earlier reports. Cllr Mayne advised that in order to safeguard the interests of the Parish and its residents, it had been necessary for the Southern Parishes Planning Group, including Finchampstead Parish Council, to lodge a formal complaint with Wokingham Borough Council over the consultation process. This joint action has been undertaken at a cost of £1 per household. Negotiations with Wokingham Borough Council are ongoing and it is hoped to reach an out of court settlement.

## **ALLOTMENT PROJECT**

Paul Neary of the Allotment Regeneration Initiative (ARI) gave an informative presentation on the challenges and opportunities that allotments present.

Costs for plot rental vary widely across the country - from £3 to £250 per year. The alternative to paying an organisation such as a Parish Council to run a site, is to set up an association to run the site, allowing funds to be invested in the site itself after basic costs such as for insurance have been met. Setting up an association can be started with a small group of people, and can progress from there.

Mr Neary confirmed that while Finchampstead Parish Council is providing the allotments, it will not be running them, and it is up to the future plot holders themselves to get involved with this.

A question was raised on storage and security on the future site. Some vandalism and theft is inevitable but steps can be taken to minimise this, such as allowing public access through a site. Other allotment site owners or managers may be able to provide advice.

A further query was raised about buildings / toilets on the site. None are present, but options are available subject to funds, and the aims of the future allotment association. Some sites have a multi purpose portacabin, others composing toilets.

Mr Neary referred to the Allotment Regeneration Initiative Newsletter, a leaflet on the ARI, and to the ARI website <http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari/>

Cllr Cundy thanked Mr Neary for his presentation and advice.

## **BUSINESS OF PARISH INTEREST**

Cllr Cundy advised that the Clerk, Mrs Jane Holloway, is retiring and thanked her for her hard work on behalf of the Parish Council. The Assistant Clerk, Mrs Anna Kent, was also thanked, and the new Clerk, Mrs Katy Dagnall, was introduced.

Cllr Cundy thanked the Parish Councillors for their hard work, all undertaken voluntarily, in the past year. He noted the sad loss in January 2011 of former councillor Eric Cox who had contributed a great deal to the Parish over many years service.

Everyone present was invited to join Parish Councillors for refreshments after the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9 pm