

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE
HELD AT 7.30 PM, WEDNESDAY 21ST JANUARY 2009 AT THE MEMORIAL HALL,
FINCHAMPSTEAD, BERKS

PRESENT:

Cllrs G Markham, Chairman, Mrs L Newcombe, Vice Chairman
Cllrs S Bromley, W Chapman, E Cox, R Cundy, K Mayne, A Pearce
The Clerk – Mrs J Holloway

27/2009 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr S Weeks

28/2009 – MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meetings held on 2 October 2008 were signed as a true record.

29/2009 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

380/2008 - Major Project Review - Baptist Church Community Centre & Library

Item 6 of Agenda – Major Project Review

380/2008 – Insurance Policy

Item 12 of Agenda

381/2008 – Annual Return & Internal Audit Review

The Clerk sent the letter of appointment to Alan Harland to act as the Internal Auditor for the current financial year which has been agreed. Auditor due to attend the Parish Office on Tuesday 27 January 2009.

385/2008 - Standing Orders Review

Completed at Main Council on 16 January 2009 – Clerk to amend document and distribute the revised document to all councillors.

386/2008 - Financial Regulations Review

See item 10 on Main Agenda

387/2008 – Parish Office – new Computer System

Cllr Bromley completed the new computer installation and continues to work with the Clerk on the proposed changes to the website. Cllr Bromley will contact Webfusion about setting up through them but foresees no problem with re-writing the website. Cllr Mayne advised the necessity of transferring the Road Accident database from the old website.

30/2009 – INCOME & EXPENDITURE REVIEW 2008-09 (3rd Quarter Oct-Dec 2008) WITH YEAR END ESTIMATES

The Clerk presented the I&E and Nominal Ledger Reports (Appendix A) which were discussed and the contents noted. Most cost centres are within budget with some overspend previously approved e.g. extra Noticeboard and Engraving on the War Memorial.

Cllr Mayne advised that the R&RS budgets are unlikely to be spent unless previously identified schemes come to fruition before the end of March 2009. These being to purchase, on behalf of the FPC, a SID device for speed monitoring and to help fund a Cycle Shed for Gorse Ride Junior School to support the Healthy Streets Initiative proposed by the Roads & Road Safety Committee.

31/2009 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR DONATIONS 2008-09

S137 Grant Applications

Limits 2008-09 £5.86 per elector (9498 electors)

Limits 2009-10 £6.15 per elector

Thames V. Ambulance	£400	
Provides emergency services for residents		APPROVED
National Trust – Ridges	£1000	
To upgrade lower track and clear ditches (£3250); Fell trees to improve views (£1200)		APPROVED
SSAFA	£100	
To provide services unavailable from statutory organisations		APPROVED
GRRRA	£250	
Materials to complete Orbit mound project (GRRRA were granted £250 for prizes for the garden competition.		APPROVED
Gorse Ride Community House	£600	
Funds to help with garden project at the House to provide outside space to residents who visit and attend the courses. Approx. 45+ residents on average per week and home to the Finchampstead Community Kids Club and GRRRA.		APPROVED

The committee agreed it is important to maintain support for the Gorse Ride area to improve the residents' facilities.

Finchampstead Village Club	£100	
Essential electrical work reported upon recent inspection of building.		APPROVED

Berkshire MS Therapy Centre		
Oxygen therapy treatment	£330	APPROVED

3rd Finchampstead Guides	£2000	
9 Finchampstead guides in a group of 20 to organise and visit China with 'Guiding in China' – total cost of trip £18000. The committee discussed the value of the trip and agreed the opportunity for the Finchampstead Guides would be a valuable experience. It was agreed that a limit for such overseas trips should be limited to £200.00 per head and therefore the sum of £1800 was APPROVED. Clerk will write to the Leader to explain the Parish Council's decision and to request notification if the numbers change and that a report to the council be given on their return.		APPROVED

Relate

Letter received requesting a grant – Clerk contacted the charity to say that donations for current year already sent (£500 granted to Relate) and that applications for next financial year will be dealt with October 2009.

32/2009 - MAJOR PROJECT REVIEW

Baptist Community Centre (Library, Sports and Community Facilities)

The agreement is finally due to be completed on 24 January 2009 otherwise the Church will lose the majority of their funding

St James Renovation Project –the Clerk has been advised that the start date has been delayed and the Parish Council will be informed when work commences.

33/2009 – ANNUAL SALARY REVIEW

The Clerk distributed copies of the NALC Salary Scales and left the meeting during the Review. The committee's recommendation will be put forward to the February Main Council meeting.

34/2009 – PRECEPT FOR 2009-2010

At the last meetings of the Amenities, Footpaths and Roads & Road Safety Committees the 2009-10 budgets were recommended and presented to this Finance Precept meeting.

Amenities Budget

	2009-10	2008-09
Flowering Baskets	£1000	£800
Dog Bins	£200	£200
Notice Boards	£500	£2500
Refuse Vehicles	£5000	£5000
Litter Warden	£6000	£5000
Hospital Trips	£500	£1200
Thursday Bus	£2200	£2000
Keep Mobile	£3500	£3000
Fuel Allotment	£600	£600
Parish Newsletter	£2500	£2500
Paddling Pool, California Park	£5000	£5000
California Park Heritage Fund	£1000	£1000
Library rent (California Assoc)	£1600	£2000
Contingency Fund	£2000	£2000
Skate Park Project	£5000	£5000
Allotments funding	£10000	added to Precept for 2009-10
TOTAL	£46600	£37800

Footpaths Budget

	2009-10	2008-09
Warden	£2600	(2400)
Equipment Purchases	£500	(500)
Equipment maintenance	£300	(750)
Interpretative Panels/contingency	£4000	(500)
TOTALS FOR 2009-2010	£7400	(4250)

R&RS Budget

	2009-10	2008-09
Street Light Maintenance	£750	(£700)
Electricity Supply	£550	(£500)
Road Safety Improvements	£6300	(£6000)
Gorse Ride Safety Zone Project	£5250	(£0)
Contingency Fund	£0	(£5000)
TOTAL	£12850	£12200

The Finance Committee recognise that the WBC are cutting services which puts pressure on the Town and Parish Councils to increase their own budgets to cover the shortfalls. FPC already fund wardens for litter collection and footpath maintenance and that undertaking more responsibilities will set precedents.

The committee discussed the implications of increasing the Parish Council precept, which has remained unchanged for the last five years, and noted there are substantial reserved funds (£90K) to cover the Major Projects in hand as well as the additional projects proposed by committees. These are the Healthy Streets Initiative, Allotments and Interpretative Panels, and it was AGREED these items be removed from Committee Budgets and included in Major Projects.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council maintain their annual Precept at £97K (as for 2008-09) and further AGREED that Salaries and Parish running costs will be increased by approx 3% - Cllr Markham will adjust the figures for other Cost Centres accordingly. These figures for the Precept will then be recommended for approval at the February Main Council meeting.

35/2009 – NEW BANK ACCOUNT

Cllr Markham reported that since opening the Alliance & Leicester Bank Account the falls in bank interest rates mean there is little advantage in transferring funds to this account from the Halifax. The Clydesdale Bank offer a 40 day deposit account and progress is being made to open this account which currently offers 2%.

36/2009 – AUDIT 2008-09

The Clerk advised this will be undertaken by Mazars LLP and is due for submission by 30th June 2009. The Internal Auditor will commence work on Tuesday 27th January to prepare the Return for 2008-09.

37/2009 – FPC INSURANCE POLICY

The Clerk has written to Zurich Municipal to request a quotation to cover the possible SID public liability cover and for the Policy Renewal quotation to be sent to the Parish Office by end April 2009. Other quotations will be sought for comparison.

38/2009 – RISK ASSESSMENT – WORKING GROUP ANNUAL REPORT PREPARATION

The Working Group will prepare their report for the next Finance Meeting.

39/2009 – Correspondence & Forum

Roger Long's invoice £441.00 was submitted too late for inclusion at last Main Council meeting and brought forward to the Finance Committee for approval. APPROVED.

Forum

Cllr Cox proposed that a Working Party be set up to agree annual salaries prior to the next Precept Meeting (January 2010) - AGREED.

40/2009 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30 pm, Wednesday 1ST April 2009 at the Small Committee Room, Memorial Hall, Finchampstead.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm.