

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL HELD
AT 7.30 PM ON THURSDAY 15TH JANUARY 2009
AT THE MEMORIAL HALL, THE VILLAGE,
FINCHAMPSTEAD, BERKSHIRE

PRESENT: Cllr Roland Cundy, Chairman, Cllr Geoff Markham, Vice Chairman
Cllrs Mrs C Driver, Mrs L Newcombe, Mrs N Jennings-Frisby,
Cllrs R Black, S Bromley, W Chapman, M Macey, K Mayne,
Cllrs A Pearce, G Veitch, R Woof.
Borough Cllr Eric Davies, Standards Committee,
WBC Officer – Wendy Crosson-Smith
25 members of the public
Member of the press

Mrs Jane Holloway, Clerk

Prior to opening the meeting Cllr Cundy greeted members of the public and advised that, because they are particularly concerned with the Leas Field agenda item, the preliminary business would be completed, then 15 minutes allowed for a Public Adjournment.

Cllr Cundy welcomed Borough Cllr Davies and Ms Crosson Smith to the meeting and reminded all council members to be mindful of prejudicial interest in any of the matters on the agenda.

12/2009 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE -

Cllrs E Cox, attending WDALC meeting at WBC, Cllr S Weeks, attending WBC budget meeting, Cllrs I Gordon, J May

13/2009- MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Main Council meeting on 16th December 2008, were amended on page 160 to show NMR Primary School (not Junior) and then signed as a true record.

14/2009 - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON THE MINUTES

474/2008 – Memorials for Mollie Harle and Harry Long

ON MAIN AGENDA – Item 11

474/2008 – Correspondence - Flooding Park Lane/Reading Road

The Clerk spoke to Mrs Gan who has advised that the residents believe the adjacent landowners will sign up to the WBC proposals and will contact the Parish Council if this does not occur. This item to be carried forward.

474/2008 - Dept of Communities & Local Govt – Consultation on Byelaws – read by Cllr Cundy who reported this document was not of relevance to Parish Councils.

476/2008 – Website

Cllr Bromley reported that the meeting with Mr Milne was yet to be arranged – c/f to February meeting.

476/2008 – Thames Water Pumping Station, Longwater Road – fly tipping

The Clerk has been advised the meeting between WBC and Thames Water has been arranged for later this month and the Clerk will progress.

476/2008 –RBS – new software updates –

To be actioned by the Clerk and Cllr Bromley

478/2008 – Publication of Model Scheme (Freedom of Information Act)

The Clerk completed the document which was circulated to all members and published on the website and noticeboards.

484/2008 - WBC – Litter Day – co-ordination for 26th April –

The Clerk wrote to WBC and FinchNag to confirm FPC support and those members of the public present invited to participate.

484/2008 – NMR Primary School

The Clerk wrote to congratulate the Head, staff and pupils for an excellent OFSTED report.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7.40 pm FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Meeting re-opened at 7.50 pm and Cllr Cundy thanked the public for attending and addressing their concerns to the council. The Agenda item for the 'Leas Field – Sports Club decision' was brought forward for discussion by the members.

The matter raised on the Memorial Benches was answered by Cllr Markham who advised the two new benches would be sited between the two pitches on the Memorial Park.

Cllr Cundy brought forward Agenda Item 6 for discussion by the members.

15/2009 – FINCHAMPSTEAD SPORTS CLUB - LEAS FIELD

The meeting was advised that Cllrs Cundy and Weeks met Robin Brown, President, John Wood, Chairman and Neil Doody, Treasurer of the FSC on 8 December to discuss their decision to fence off the Leas Field above the Memorial Playing Fields. Subsequently, the Clerk wrote to request a formal written response to this meeting and proposals put forward by the Parish Councillors.

The Clerk received the Sports Club reply which Cllr Cundy read out in full. In summary, the Club wished to inform all those attending tonight's Main Council meeting that the Sports Club own the Leas Field and are within their rights to fence off the area. This was done to prevent dog owners accessing the field, some of whom fail to remove their dog's faeces from the playing field. The Club is concerned about health issues to their members caused by such fouling and are responsible for the welfare of their members and other users. The Club are mindful that this decision is not universally popular and will continue to monitor the effect this closure has.

Cllr Cundy advised the meeting that the Finchampstead Parish Council is the Custodial Trustee for the Memorial Park and day to day management is undertaken by the Finchampstead Park Management Committee who has a lease with the Sports Club for its pavilion. Cllr Cundy stressed the preferred solution is to reach an amicable agreement with the Sports Club who must be mindful that the Trustees have responsibilities towards Finchampstead residents for the legitimate use of the Park.

The members discussed the issues raised by residents both by letter and verbally given earlier this evening.

1. Prevention of public access to an existing Right of Way, established in over 27 years of use before and since the Sports Club purchased the land. The proposal made to the Sports Club during the meeting on 8 December to allow continued access on the field had not yet been agreed to by the Sports Club.
 - o The members agreed that the Parish Council, being the Custodial Trustee of the Memorial Park, could pursue a legal action to seek a legal Public Right of Way. Access has been established for more than 27 years and would form the basis for this although it is recognized this could take some time to achieve. Cllr Cundy advised that Simon Weeks, as Borough Councillor, has already approached WBC Countryside Service to initiate this action.

2. The Sports Club changes to the Leas Field have caused it to become higher than Footpath 9 that runs alongside it. This causes regular flooding on the footpath that sometimes becomes impassable in winter thus preventing legitimate right of way. This has not previously caused difficulties as footpath users could walk through the Leas Field from the footpath. Erection of the fence has made this access impossible.
 - The members agreed that this is of utmost urgency to remedy and that the Sports Club be made aware of their responsibilities to make suitable reparations. The Clerk will contact WBC Rights of Way officer to jointly write to the Sports Club on this matter.
3. Cllr Cundy reported that he had received allegations that the Sports Club use chemicals during the maintenance programme and concerns that these were not appropriate for use under current regulations.
 - It was agreed the FPMC be asked to require the Sports Club to provide copies of appropriate licences, list of chemicals used with their protocols and a Risk Assessment Report be undertaken if not current.
 - It was further agreed that use of any chemicals or poisons to cease on the Memorial Park land immediately.
4. Sports Club currently enjoy access to the Memorial Park for their members' use but should be aware that closure of Leas Field will cause additional traffic and public use of the Park. Their concerns on health issues will therefore be transferred to the Memorial Park when the Sports Club use this land. FPC, as the Custodial Trustee for the Memorial Park will exercise its duties to adhere to the original conditions for full access and enjoyment of the Park by Finchampstead residents.
 - The Parish Council recognise the grounds staff efforts maintain the grounds to a high standard. It was agreed that, if necessary, maintenance could be carried out by an alternative contractor by agreement with the FPMC who may need financial assistance for this purpose.

As a first action, a meeting will be sought with the FPMC to discuss all the matters raised above.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8.20pm for a further 5 minutes to allow the public to comment further. Meeting re-opened at 8.25pm.

Cllr Cundy introduced Ms Wendy Crosson Smith to members who is attending in her new role as Area Leader for Neighbourhood Services. The aim is to provide a permanent link between the parish/town councils, NAG's, Borough Councillors and other agencies with the various departments of the Borough Council. Ms Crosson Smith is available to provide co-ordination of effort and projects covering different WBC departments to provide a more efficient approach to common problems. It was agreed that the current issues suitable for this would be Public Rights of Way issues raised earlier, Skate Park project, new Baptist Community Centre and the Parish Council's proposed Healthy Streets Initiative. Cllr Cundy thanked Ms Crosson Smith for attending and believes this could prove to be very useful to a Parish Council already pro-active in many areas.

The list of items on the Agenda were re-arranged to discuss those of relevance to Ms Crosson Smith.

16/2009 – COMMITTEE REPORTS

PLANNING – Cllr Mrs Newcombe reported on the meeting held on Monday 5 January 2009 and that Jeni Jackson will be attending the next meeting on 28 January to discuss several areas of unsatisfactory service from WBC.

Enforcement Issues

Travis Perkins land clearance – a further site visit has been requested

Jovike/The Stables – site visit not made as promised but now due before Ms Jackson's attendance.

Appeal Decisions

Broughton – Appeal dismissed (no objections from FPC)

Heatherbrow – Appeal dismissed (no objections from FPC)

New Applications – Objections by committee

Meadowside, Park Lane further over development in countryside, Thames Basin Heath limitations, exceeding 50% of original planning application

Rorkes Drift, Drift Lane Building in countryside, TBH, adjacent to area of special landscape importance.

290a Nine Mile Ride building proposed right up to edge of boundary.

280 Nine Mile Ride Over development and out of keeping.

Hunters Wood, The Ridges No Obj provided extension no used as separate living accommodation.

80 Reading Road Over industrialization in residential area.

Decisions

Horns Farm Saddlery FPC no objections but refused by WBC as size and scale adverse effect on countryside

82a McCarthy Way FPC no objections but refused by WBC.

347 Nine Mile Ride FPC objected to garage in front of building line and refused by WBC as overbearing on neighbours.

32 Wild Briar FPC no objections but refused by WBC and hipped roof makes extension unbalanced in design.

Ms Crosson Smith agreed to speak to Jeni Jackson about the FPC Planning Committee's concerns.

ROADS & ROAD SAFETY – Cllr Mayne reported on matters arising since last meeting:

- New Mill Road/Reading Road junction – meeting yet to be arranged with Borough Cllr Ken Baker
- Highways Wish List – yet to be completed and will be discussed at next committee meeting.
- SID – Police representatives at FinchNag did not believe the plan for the FPC to buy their own unit was not to be advised and this is subject to further discussion.
- *5 Year Plan – is being updated in light of a 'Healthy Streets Initiative' for the Gorse Ride area. This will help allay local fears of residents to school traffic and the expected increase in such traffic with the opening of the new Community Centre.*
- *Cycling Strategy – the committee made a commitment to financially assist the schools to install cycle sheds and add to available funding from central government.*
- Newsletter to be used to communicate these ideas to residents and develop the area positively. Cllr Cundy suggested there be a major portion of the newsletter devoted to the Roads initiatives.
- The committee will continue to fully support the SID initiative promoted by FinchNag and are investigating the possibility for a Parish Council to own a SID independently.

The next meeting is Tuesday 24/2/2009

FINANCE

Cllr Markham advised developments since last Main Council meeting.

- **Bank Accounts** – an account is being opened with the Clydesdale bank who offer a better rate of interest for fixed term deposits. Generally, interest rates have reduced significantly for all bank accounts available to the Parish Council.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

- NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT £103009.01
- HALIFAX ASSET RESERVE (at 1st Dec 08) £ 52090.46
- CHEQUE LIST – JAN/09 APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Next Finance Meeting on Weds 21st January 2009 – Precept Meeting at **small committee room, Memorial Hall, Finchampstead.**

AMENITIES – Cllr Markham reported on the meeting held on 26th November 2008 – minutes distributed

- Allotments – Cllr Weeks has arranged a meeting with Bernie Pitch from WBC to discuss the planning permissions required.
- Notice boards – Cllr Markham has agreed a start date with John Fruin for two weeks' time.
- Village Shop/Garage – Cllr Markham has spoken to Julie Noakes who runs a community shop in West Berkshire who has sent information on how to proceed. Cllr Woof advised that most successful community shops are in much more isolated areas and the Working Group do not believe this would be the case for Finchampstead. Advice is being sought from Martin & Pole and the matter will be discussed at the next Amenities meeting.

FOOTPATHS – Cllr Chapman reported that the Footpath Warden has been paid for the third quarter and machinery was currently being serviced.

17/2009 – OTHER REPORTS

WBC CORE STRATEGY & SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENTS

The Parish Council comments to the amendments will be sent to the Programme Officer and Cllr Mrs Newcombe attended a meeting at WBC to discuss the Social Infrastructure component of the Strategy. Cllrs Mrs Newcombe and Mayne subsequently drafted the replies to the Social Infrastructure Matrix which was circulated to the members prior to this meeting. Cllr Cundy proposed an amendment to include Waverley Way in the Schools Section and Cllr Mrs Newcombe will amend and complete the Matrix for submission to WBC prior to the deadline.

Cllr Mayne advised that he is due to receive a DVD on a Traffic Modelling exercise but probably is limited to main roads and not cover the implications for Nine Mile Ride. There will be a potential bottleneck on this route if the problems are not addressed and Cllr Cundy advised getting all the local Borough Councillors involved as well as Bor.Cllr. Baker

Cllr Mrs Newcombe also advised that the Preliminary Hearing being held on 20 January is a preamble to the Public Examination Hearing which commences on 17 March which will last for 3-4 months. Any councillor is welcome to attend by Cllr Mrs Newcombe does not believe it to be strictly necessary as FPC comments have been submitted and written and oral comments have equal weight with the Inspector.

Cllr Cundy thanked both Cllr Mrs Newcombe and Kevin Mayne for their efforts in completing this task.

FPMC – no meeting to report.

FinchNAG REPORT – Cllr Pearce gave a verbal report on yesterday's meeting

- SID activity – new schedule for February and March issued and volunteers required. The police reported that during the last session 296 were detected as being more than 10 mph over the speed limit, 20% being local drivers.
- Gorse Ride Community House – will now be open on Monday as well as Wednesday evenings.
- Skate Park – Louise Morris advised FinchNag that the project was going forward with the likely site being at Waverley Way.
- Litter Day – more co-ordination is required to maximise effort and specific areas identified but away from main roads that are cleared by FPC Litter Warden.
- NAG survey due to determine the top three areas of concern to residents.

MULTI AGENCY GROUP & GORSE RIDE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION – no report received

CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk advised quotes for work to refurbish the office have been received – carpet £325, blind £68, re-decoration £350. Expenditure AGREED.

18/2009 – NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

Cllr Cundy advised that he contacted Jim Gallagher who advises that the builders have now marked the field but the start date has been delayed to February 2009.

19/2009 – FUEL ALLOTMENT – REPORT BY WORKING GROUP

Cllr Mrs Driver advised that the Working Group believe it is time for the distribution of this small fund be reviewed. The distribution has evolved over years and the meaning is now blurred and it was agreed that Cllrs Mrs Driver and Wally Chapman prepare a written report and recommendations for newer members of the council so that the matter can be concluded at the next meeting.

20/2009 - WBC PLAY AREA IN GORSE RIDE NORTH (alleyway)

This was vandalised some time ago and WBC have fenced off the area to prevent access. The Borough Council propose removing the equipment and returning the site to grass unless the Parish Council wish to take it over themselves. It was agreed the site is inherently unsuitable and WBC should take the action proposed.

21/2009 – HEALTY STREETS INITIATIVE

Cllr Mayne's draft report was distributed to members prior to the meeting and to other partners for their comments. The matter will be on the agenda for the next Roads & Road Safety Committee meeting on 24th February 2009 and Cllr Mayne is trying to arrange a meeting with Borough Cllr Baker to elicit his support. Cllr Mayne advised the schools' heads were keen on the project and can obtain available central government funding which could be matched from the R&RS budget. Cllr Mayne thanked Ms Crosson Smith's offer of help to provide liaison and agreed with her suggestion to include Tenants Services in the partnership list. Cllr Cundy thanked Cllr Mayne for all his hard work and it was agreed it was a real opportunity to go in tandem with the new Community Centre.

22/2009 – NEWSLETTER

The members of the Editorial Group were agreed to be Cllrs Mrs Newcombe, Roland Cundy, Kevin Mayne, and Roger Woof and a date for their first meeting will be arranged.

23/2009 – STANDING ORDER AMENDMENTS

List of amendments for Standing Orders - Second publication of amendments carried forward for approval at this meeting.

- Para 1.3 **Amended wording to** *‘No meeting of the Council shall be deemed official unless three clear working days’ notice of such a meeting has been given.’*
- Para 19.6 **Amended wording to** *‘The Council delegates power to the Planning Committee to make comments on planning applications on its behalf direct to the Borough Council. Recommendations from all other committees must be submitted to the main Council for ratification.’*
- Para 23.3 (i) **Amended wording to** *‘Every member shall observe Finchampstead Parish Council’s Email Policy which sets out expectations for the use of email in the conduct of Parish Council business.’*
- Para 23.3 (ii) **Amended wording to** *‘Nothing in the Email Policy shall contradict Standing Orders.’*
- Para 23.3 (iii) **Amended wording to** *‘Emails are considered documents for the purposes of Standing Order 26’*
- Typographical errors to be corrected; References to Wokingham District Council to be amended to Borough Council; re-numbering of paragraphs as appropriate.

APPROVED - the Clerk will make the necessary amendments and distribute the revised document.

24/2009 – MEMORIAL BENCHES FOR MOLLIE HARLE AND HARRY LONG

The wording prepared by Cllr Mrs Driver was **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**. The Clerk obtained a quote for two 3 seater solid oak benches with engraved metal plaques at a cost of £829.00 each. **AGREED**.

25/2009 – CORRESPONDENCE & FORUM

1. Christmas card from Suzanne Sach
2. SID dates schedule – to be copied to interested cllrs.
3. WBC – School Admissions arrangements 2010-2011
4. WBC – Youth Offenders Reparation Placement – seeking to identify appropriate placement for community reparation purposes.
5. Request from Professor Pye to access archive documents for historical research

Correspondence handed to committees

FINANCE

- Grant Application – GRRA – final landscaping of Orbit ‘Mound’
- Grant Application – Claire Denham, Gorse Ride Community House – Garden project
- WBC – Precept letter and appendices

ROADS

- Email from Michael Bader re War Memorial junction

FOOTPATHS

- WBC – Restricted Byway Kiln Ride Extn Modification Order

FOLDER CONTENTS – The folder is available from 7.30 pm on the night of the meeting and will be held in the Parish Office for the month following. If any councillor wishes to take an item, please advise the Clerk.

Forum

Cllr Mrs Driver advised the date of this year's Village Fete, to be run by St James', as Saturday 4th July and it was agreed to have a Parish Council presence as before.

Cllr Mayne reported that a resident has emailed comments on the safety of the War Memorial junction but as the council has already agreed there is no practical solution, the Clerk will advise this.

26/2009 – DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Main Council 7.30 pm Thursday 19 February 2009 at the Memorial Hall, Finchampstead
Meeting closed at 10.03 pm.