

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL HELD
AT 7.30 PM ON THURSDAY 19th FEBRUARY 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, R Black, W Chapman, E Cox,
Cllrs M Macey, K Mayne, A Pearce, G Veitch, R Woof.
16 members of the public
Mrs Jane Holloway, Clerk

51/2009 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE -

Cllrs Mrs Jennings-Frisby, S Bromley, I Gordon, J May, S Weeks

52/2009- MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Main Council meeting on 15TH January 2009, were amended on page 3 to remove the words '*Borough Councillor Davies*' and amended to read **Mr Davies** and then signed as a true record.

53/2009 - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON THE MINUTES

14/2009 – Correspondence - Flooding Park Lane/Reading Road

The Clerk has still had no communication from Mrs Gan. This item to be carried forward.

14/2009 – Website

Cllr Bromley advised the Clerk he is investigating new software required to re-write the Website and will attend the Amenities meeting on 10 March to report in full.

14/2009 – Thames Water Pumping Station, Longwater Road – fly tipping

The Clerk has chased WBC on this matter and awaits an update – to be carried forward.

16/2009 – Village Shop & Garage

The Clerk has received a letter from the owners to report that a potential purchaser has come forward and we will be kept informed of developments.

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 is still to be arranged.

23/2009 – Standing Order Amendments

The Clerk distributed the revised document to all councillors.

24/2009 – Memorial Benches For Mollie Harle And Harry Long

The Clerk has placed the order for the two benches and the proof for the plaques was approved.

The meeting closed for Public Question Time at 7.45pm and re-opened at 8.07pm. Cllr Cundy brought forward Agenda item 6 for discussion by the members.

54/2009 – FINCHAMPSTEAD SPORTS CLUB - LEAS FIELD

Cllr Cundy thanked the public for attending the meeting and making their individual concerns known to the Council. This will aid the members' deliberation and enable them to make decisions on the matter.

Cllr Markham advised those present of the role of the FPC as Custodial Trustee of the Memorial Park under the original 1947 Conveyance when the Park land was purchased and passed to the Parish Council for the benefit of Finchampstead residents. The day to day management of the Park was devolved to the Finchampstead Park Management Committee. The Sports Club is a separate organisation who lease the land for their building from the FPMC and under the lease are responsible for the maintenance of the Park. Cllr Markham confirmed the Leas Field is separately owned by the Sports Club.

Cllrs Cundy advised that he and Cllr Markham met the Chairman and Treasurer of the FPMC to discuss the problems brought about by the recent closure of the Leas Field and the consequent impact on the Park itself. The Clerk also wrote to both FPMC & FSC to request the issues were addressed urgently and an early resolution sought between the two parties.

The Clerk received a letter from the Sports Club that requested the contents be made known to those present at Main Council and Cllr Cundy read this letter in full.

In summary, the letter stated the Sports Club will continue to monitor the effect of the Leas Field closure and that the Club is aware of the feelings expressed by members of the village. The Sports Club are therefore prepared to open the Leas Field during the week via the gate near the cricket scoreboard, which will usually be unlocked, but the field will remain a strictly 'no dogs' area. There will be greater access at weekends when the majority of sports games take place. The FSC advise that the situation will continue to be monitored and if there is future abuse of the Leas Field then access will be restricted once again.

Cllr Cundy also advised that the actions agreed at the January Main Council meeting have been addressed and progressed so far:-

i. Public Right of Way

Cllr Weeks initiated an application for a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) as a public right of way that has been established for more than 20 years. The members AGREED to support this and set up a DMMO Working Group to progress the matter. Members of this Group will be Cllrs Cundy, Markham, Chapman, Veitch and Woof.

ii. Use of Chemicals in the Park

The Clerk advised that the Environmental Officer from WBC visited the FSC to review the procedures and chemicals used by the grounds staff. The Officer has reported to the Clerk that all is in order but he will send a copy of relevant Codes of Practice to be passed to FPMC for their future reference.

iii. Duties of the Custodial Trustee of the Memorial Park

The Parish Council are mindful of their duties to the original conditions for full access and enjoyment of the Park by Finchampstead residents. This will be further discussed with FPMC at the earliest opportunity to ensure these conditions are met in full.

Recently, Cllrs Cundy and Markham were made aware of the existence of an Agency Agreement drawn up in addition to the original Lease. This Agreement contains various obligations and duties on the FSC which include FPMC approval for FSC use of the Park for sporting facilities; to avoid at any time residents of the Parish being denied access to the Park or its facilities; any fees collected from non-FSC fixtures are passed to the FPMC Treasurer and retain a written record of all bookings and fees received, the FPMC having the right to examine the records. It was AGREED that the Clerk write to the FPMC to re-examine the Agency Agreement as it does not appear to be met in full by the Sports Club. It was further agreed that the Agreement needs to be reviewed and the FPMC should undertake this as a matter of urgency.

The Parish Council are also aware of the current Government initiatives that all public bodies consider their green spaces be made available for a wide variety of uses because of the value of increased physical activity for all. The Parish Council also have to take into account the groundswell of residents' opinion that the Park is being monopolised at the expense of the original purpose of the Conveyance.

It was agreed the Sports Club have made a small step forward in allowing some public access to the Leas Field and the members believe this is a positive sign.

The members concluded that, taking into account the views expressed to members both during Main Council meetings and directly from residents, they remain resolved to seek a suitable compromise for all parties.

55/2009 – COMMITTEE REPORTS

PLANNING – Cllr Mrs Newcombe reported on the meeting held on 28 January when Ms Jeni Jackson attended to discuss several issues. Ms Jackson agreed to attend to the issues raised and the committee hope action will be prompt, particularly with the Enforcement Issues outstanding.

Applications

166 NMR - Objections as inappropriate development, backland development, not a designated site for travellers.
Silverstock Fm Sandhurst Road
Objection if proposed dwelling is outside curtilage.
369 Finch Rd garage in front of building line and overlooking neighbours
184 NMR overdevelopment, TBH, out of keeping with street scene
The Paddock Longwater Lane
OBJ, previous planning refusal states no business dev on site. Detrimental effect on road, TBH, adverse visual, physical, ecological impact.
Greenacres, Lower Sandhurst Rd
Out of keeping, inappropriate development, urbanising effect, Curtilage change, Greenfield site of special interest.

Decisions

Meadowside, Park Lane
Refused obtrusive in location causing over development (FPC Objs)
20 Reading Rd Refused due to size of outbuilding unacceptable in countryside (FPC no Obj)
160 NMR Refused as unacceptable, not maintaining sylvan character of green route. (FPC no Obj)
Greenacres, Lwr Sandhurst Rd
Refused siting, designand proportions, adverse impact on undeveloped character (FPC no Obj)
Rhododendrons, Warren Lane
Refused, bulk, urbanising (FPC no Obj)

Cllr Pearce has alerted the Electricity company of improper use of the substation land in Barkham Ride. It was also reported that work has commenced at The Greyhound, Longwater Road.

FINANCE

Cllr Markham reported on the Finance meeting held on 21st January 2009

- **Bank Accounts** – A current account and a 40 day notice account are being opened with the Clydesdale and internet banking will also be applied for – Cllrs Cundy, Markham and Mrs Newcombe will be authorised total access but the Clerk will only be authorised to view the accounts online. Financial Regulations will be amended accordingly. Both the Halifax and NS&I Accounts will be closed and the funds transferred to the Clydesdale Bank.
- I&E report for 3rd Quarter – see Appendix A for details which also includes the revised figures for the 2009-10 Precept – to be approved at Agenda Item 7

The following grant applications were agreed at Finance Meeting and are recommended for **Approval by Main Council.**

Thames V. Ambulance £400 - Provides emergency services for residents

National Trust – Ridges £1000 - To contribute to lower track upgrade, ditch clearance and felling trees to improve views

SSAFA £100 - To provide services otherwise unavailable

GRRR £250 - materials to complete Orbit mound project

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.

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

Berkshire MS Therapy Centre - £330 - Oxygen therapy treatment

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.

These donations were APPROVED unanimously.

A further application has been received from the Wokingham United Charities Trust for £6000 for 2009-10 which will be discussed at the next Finance Meeting.

- STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS
- NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT £103009.01
- HALIFAX ASSET RESERVE (at 1st) £ 39112.66
- CHEQUE LIST – FEB/09 APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Next Finance Meeting on Weds 1st April 2009 –**small committee room, Memorial Hall, Finchampstead.**

AMENITIES – Cllr Markham reported on matters arising since last meeting:

- Allotments – The meeting has still to be arranged
- Notice boards – Cllr Markham has agreed a start date with John Fruin for two weeks' time

Next meeting Tues 10th March 2009

FOOTPATHS – Cllr Chapman reported on matters arising since last meeting:

Cllr Chapman met the landowner to discuss a possible diversion for the route of Footpath 6 and this will be discussed at the next Footpaths meeting on Weds 4th March 2009

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

SID sessions continue in the Parish with FinchNag and PCSOs. Cllr Macey is researching an alternative offer from WBC where parish councils buy SID units but are maintained by the Borough. A formal offer is awaited.

Healthy Streets Initiative – Cllr Mayne has met Keith Baker and this project was discussed and a WBC Officer will be allocated to assist at Borough level.

Cycling Strategy/Bike Shed for schools – this will be discussed at the next Roads meeting
S106 Monies for Sandhurst Road – Cllr Mayne advised that the WBC reported another sum of £18K was unexpectedly available for a footway link on Sandhurst Road. Due to the tight deadline, the Parish Council were therefore unable to agree a preferred spending target but this highlights the difficulties of knowing how much S106 monies are available.

The next meeting is re arranged to Thursday 26 February at the Memorial Hall, Finchampstead to allow members to attend the Public Meeting for the new Community Centre, Gorse Ride.

56/2009 – OTHER REPORTS

FPMC

Matters raised are written Minute Number /2009

Gorse Ride Report – Cllr Mayne reported on the GRRRA and MAG meetings. The Action Plan is being developed from the Vision Statement and will include a Zero Tolerance Graffiti Project led. The members remain positive and it was agreed it is important to continue to support the GRRRA and MAG.

WBC Core Strategy – Transport Report

Cllr Mayne reported that he received the Traffic Modelling data which did not appear to take into account the proposed new site for the Arborfield High School. A realistic School Travel Plan will need to be developed and implemented to include school bus transport etc. The members AGREED with Cllr Mayne's suggestion that a meeting be held with both Arborfield and Barkham parish councils to agree a joint strategy. The Clerk will contact the parish clerks. Cllr Cundy thanked Cllr Mayne for all his hard work in this matter.

FinchNAG REPORT – Cllr Pearce reported on the last meeting which was attended by Jim Gallagher. The Baptist Church will work closely with the Heads of Gorse Ride and NMR schools to build up a good relationship for the new Community Centre. FinchNag are required to undertake an annual survey of residents to identify the most important topics. The funding for this will come partly from Thames Valley Police and WBC will print the leaflets at cost. The Parish Council may be approached for help with funding.

Litter Pick Day – 26 April 2009 – there are four area co-ordinators to be appointed, each to find 10+ helpers to undertake the litter pick and the local schools will be involved. Cllr Pearce will pass on the names of any councillor wishing to take part.

Cllr Pearce also attended the Wokingham Borough Community Safety Conference and advised that the Chief Executive, Susan Law, opened the meeting. Several high ranking police officers attended and wish to develop the relationship with the WBC and communities.

CLERK'S REPORT

Redecoration completed – very many thanks to Cllrs Bromley and Chapman for their considerable assistance.

SLCC Conference – 24th March 2009 is open to cllrs as well and items on agenda are Regional development/local empowerment; Managing Council assets; HR duties; Allotments and garden management; 'Going the Extra Mile' (creative use of powers and what councils can achieve). Any councillor wishing to attend should advise the Clerk to book a place.

57/2009 – NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

Contracts signed off by WBC and Baptist Church; building due to commence end February 2009. The 'Friends of FBCC' requested a further letter of support to approach BIFFA again with a specific plan to include the Youth Loft. (The FPC originally wrote to support an earlier application in January 2008 for around £5K which was to come from the £20K 'pot' in reserves). AGREED.

A Public Meeting will be held at Gorse Ride Junior School on Tuesday 24 February 2009 to speak to residents about any issues surrounding the build of the centre. The police intend to maintain a presence during school times to alleviate any traffic problems.

58/2009 – APPROVAL OF PRECEPT FOR 2009-2010

The I&E 08-09 + PRECEPT REPORT was distributed which shows the total Precept to remain at £97618 and is recommended by the Finance Committee for approval. The Clerk will return the document to WBC as required.

APPROVED.

The members discussed the proposal shown on the Agenda, namely, *‘Although the Precept for 2009-2010 has been recommended to remain at the same level as 2008-09 (£97618), the proposal is that, in the event that WBC cut services to the detriment of Finchampstead residents, the Parish Council will consider using its Reserves to allow such services to continue.’*

NOT APPROVED

59/2009 – FUEL ALLOTMENT – REPORT BY WORKING GROUP

Fuel Allotment - History

Historically, common land within the parish was wooded and villagers were allowed to gather fuel in winter for their homes. When this was no longer possible the Parish Council decided to make small monetary donations to those residents within the parish boundary thought to be in need of such support in lieu of fuel.

Donations of £20 per person has for many years been given to 30 Finchampstead residents identified by the Parish Council as being suitable recipients. (Total £600). The Parish Council receives many letter of thanks from these residents which show their appreciation of being remembered and considered in this way.

Fuel Allotment – Proposal from Cllr Chapman

From December 2009, the number of recipients should be reduced to 20 and the sum increased to £30, thus maintaining the grant to £600 in total.

AGREED.

60/2009 – FLOODING IN FINCHAMPSTEAD

The members discussed the recent flooding hotspots that occurred during the recent rainy weather. The flooding caused a number of accidents that, although not causing injury, are nonetheless a serious hazard which should be addressed urgently. The matter will be on the Agenda for the next Roads meeting.

61/2009 – CORRESPONDENCE & FORUM

- Email requesting sight of documents relating to Leas Field requested by resident under Freedom of Information Act. The Clerk will release the relevant documents in .PDF format by email.

Invitations:

- Wokingham LINKs – Local Involvement Network Election - noted
- WVC Volunteer Recruitment Show – Sat 21st Feb. 10-4 at The Cornerstone, Norreys Avenue – noted

- Villages Youth Area Committee – Weds 25 Feb 7.30pm at the Youth Centre, 35 Reading Road (to include Skate Park update from Tom Savage) – Cllr Cox to attend.
- WBC Strategic Partnership – ‘Supporting our Community during Economic Downturn’ Fri 20 March 2009 9.30 – 3.30 at Sindlesham Court Conference Centre.
- WBC Tenants Services Open Day – Fri 3rd April 2pm-7pm at Sindlesham Masonic Centre – Parish Cllrs welcome
- Buckingham Palace Garden Party – Tues 7th July 2009. Cllr Mrs Driver proposed and Cllr Mrs Newcombe seconded that Cllr Cundy’s name be put forward. AGREED and the Clerk will complete the application.
- WBC Mayor’s Office – copy of letter sent to British Legion regarding wreaths.

Correspondence handed to committees

FINANCE – Clifton Ingram – FPMC Lease
 Alan Harland re recent Audit visit to Parish Office
 Grant Application from Wokingham United Charities for £6000
 Villages youth project – request for funding 2009-10

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

62/2009 – DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Main Council 7.30 pm Thursday 19 March 2009 at the Memorial Hall, Finchampstead

REMINDER that Main Council on Thursday 16 April will be in the California Association Hall as there was a double booking in the Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 10.25 pm.