

## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00 PM ON 18 DECEMBER 2019 AT THE FBC CENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD

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**PRESENT:** Cllr Cundy, Chair. Cllr S. Bromley, Vice Chair.  
Cllrs Mr D. Cornish, Mrs C. Driver, Mrs B. Eytle, Mrs N. Jennings-Frisby,  
G. Jukes OBE, Mrs S. McDonald, Mrs. R. Margetts, J. May, R. Marshallsay,  
A. Pearce, S. Weeks, R. Woof & G. Veitch.

Mrs K. Dagnall, Clerk.

Mrs A. Kent, Assistant to the Clerk (part).

#### **487/2019 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs S. Bowers and R. Rampton.

#### **488/2019 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were received.

Councillors were asked to review their Members Interests Form and to update these if necessary.

Councillors were reminded that if a pecuniary interest is declared at a meeting, the Councillor may make representations on the item but should leave the room while the item is discussed and, if relevant, voted on. Non pecuniary interests should be declared, but a Councillor declaring such an interest can participate in discussions and vote on the matter.

#### **489/2019 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 November 2019 were signed as a true and correct record.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

Two residents attended to observe the meeting.

#### **490/2019 CHAIRMANS REPORT**

- Cllr Cundy attended the recent Annual General Meetings of both the Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) of which the Council is a member, and of the Berkshire Association of Local Councils (BALC). The HALC AGM was run on a more professional basis. The disadvantage of the Council not being a member of the County Association - BALC - is that it is unable to be a member of the National Association of Local Councils. This is something that HALC is looking in to on behalf of the Council.
- The Clerk has met the Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Communities Environmental Lead from the Localities Scheme and the Localities Officer for Finchampstead to discuss concerns over how the Scheme is operating in Finchampstead. It was a positive meeting and plans are in place to improve the situation.
- Cllrs Cornish, Cundy and the Clerk met representatives from the Social Value Portal and Legal and General on 13 December. The Portal is working on behalf of Legal and General and is keen to hold a 'stakeholder workshop' early in the new year to identify community needs. It is hoped that this can be tied in with the Neighbourhood Development Plan Group plans to consult local stakeholders.

## **491/2019 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Cllr Veitch advised that the Committee met on 11 December 2019. Minutes of the meeting have been circulated.

#### **Other matters**

- Several residents attended the meeting in relation to an application at Heartwood Lodge, Sandhurst Road. The Committee has lodged objections to the application on behalf of the Parish Council. The application will be determined by the WBC Planning Committee in due course.
- The Committee was generally supportive of the proposals for the Nine Mile Ride Extension but has submitted several comments.
- It was noted that the application for a change of use at the former Bathroom Concepts premises at the California Crossroads has been refused by WBC.
- Cllrs Marshallsay and Veitch and the Assistant to the Clerk met on 17 December to review current planning enforcement issues. WBC has been advised of the Council's concerns over the lack of progress or very slow progress with certain issues. Cllr Weeks noted that WBC has recently appointed a further Planning Enforcement Officer which should bring improvements to the process.

### **FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr Woof reported on the financial position of the Council, the meeting held on 27 November and other matters.

#### **Financial position**

- Unity Trust Bank £29,968.57
- CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund account £556,847.89
- CCLA Property Fund £25,000
- The above figures include £498,906.39 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds

The schedule of payments totalling £7532.88 was circulated to all Councillors and was unanimously approved.

Cllrs Bromley and Woof agreed to authorise the electronic payments.

#### **Other matters**

- The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November have been circulated.
- The main discussion was on the draft budget for 2020/21. This will be finalised at the Committee meeting on 7 January and it and the precept demand will be presented at the January Main Council meeting.
- Potential projects for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding were discussed. WBC has not put forward any project proposals at this stage. The Parish Council has several smaller projects which may be CIL funded in the short term but has no immediate plans for any major expenditure.
- The Committee agreed that Councillors should be allowed to use personal electronic devices such as laptops, tablets or mobile telephones in Council meetings if they wish. This proposal was recommended to the Council for approval and was unanimously agreed.

- Appraisals are complete. The HR Sub Committee met on 27 November and agreed pay awards for all staff for the coming year.
- A consultant from the Local Government Resource Centre visited the Council on 3 December and met staff and several Councillors to discuss the Council's staffing structure in the light of current workloads and the future growth and direction of the Council. A report on possible options is expected shortly.

### **AMENITIES COMMITTEE**

Cllr Veitch reported on current matters.

- Residents of Wellingtonia Avenue have all been contacted regarding a potential survey of the Wellingtonia trees (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) on their properties. Over half of the residents have responded positively to date and the next stage will be to arrange a survey of the trees.
- The Finchampstead Allotment Association Annual General Meeting was held on 5 December. Cllrs Veitch and Weeks and the Clerk represented the Parish Council and over 30 plot holders were present.

### **RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE**

Cllr Woof reported on current matters.

- WBC has finally arranged works to BW24 with the cost to be shared between WBC and the Parish Council. The work is due to take place in January.
- An order has been placed for improvement to the path from Briarwood to the FBC Centre playing fields and the work is due to take place in January.

It is intended that CIL funds will be used for the above projects.

- The kissing gate at the end of FP33 has been removed and this may be linked to remedial work being undertaken by Cemex UK Ltd on the future nature reserve at Fleet Hill Farm. The current path layout does not comply with the agreed plans and WBC is now actively following this up.

It was noted that FP33 is not a bridleway, but the aim is for this to be re designated as a bridleway for its full length so that it can link to the new bridleways on the future nature reserve, and to FP29 which will be re designated as a bridleway.

- The outstanding links to the California greenway are due to be completed on or by 20 December, together with the links to the bridge on the greenway linking the California greenway to Nine Mile Ride.
- Cllr Cornish advised that the local representative for the British Horse Society has provided a detailed report on proposals for improvements to the local bridleway network. This will be useful for both the Neighbourhood Development Plan and for the Rights of Way Committee.

### **ROADS & ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Cllr Bromley reported on current matters.

- Cllrs Bromley, Cornish and the Clerk met Officers from the WBC Local Transport Planning Team on 11 December and discussed the points raised in the Council's response to the consultation.
- WBC is proposing to install a new bus shelter opposite the California Ratepayers Hall on the Finchampstead Road. The Clerk has advised WBC that the Council has no objections in principle as it is keen to support the use of public transport but has asked for confirmation that local residents have been consulted.

The Clerk has suggested that the bus shelter outside the Hall is replaced at the same time, and WBC has now agreed to replace it as part of the California Crossroads improvements in 2021.

It was noted that when WBC installs new bus shelters it expects the Town or Parish Council to take on responsibility for the facilities.

#### **492/2019 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

##### **FBC Advisory Board – 4 December.**

Cllrs Cundy and Weeks attended the meeting.

- It is now likely that Thames Valley Police will relocate to a different part of the Centre, allowing the Parish Council to have a larger office space.

The Parish Council Office is due to be redecorated and to have new flooring installed in February 2020.

- All repair works associated with the May 2019 floods are now complete.
- The Council had previously complained about the unattractive cycle shed installed in a prominent location adjacent to the Multi Use Games Area but was told this was essential and could not be changed. The matter has been raised again and has been referred to WBC.

##### **Finchampstead Neighbourhood Action Group – 10 December.**

Cllrs Bromley, Cundy, Rampton, Weeks and Woof attended the meeting.

Thames Valley Police is keen to promote the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. There was interest in the Scheme and the introduction of this to the Parish will be discussed at a future meeting.

Thames Valley Police has appointed a new Officer for the Finchampstead area, Police Constable Gould.

#### **493/2019 CALIFORNIA CROSSROADS IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

WBC held a public consultation in late 2018 on proposals to improve the crossroads area. The Council submitted a detailed response to the consultation and this has been recirculated to Councillors.

Cllrs Bromley, Weeks and the Clerk met WBC Officers in September 2019 to review the revised scheme and discuss the points raised in the Parish Council's response to the consultation.

Cllr Bromley presented the revised scheme, the main changes are to parking arrangements and kerb lines, and the introduction of raised crossings.

WBC has agreed to look into some supplementary points raised by the Parish Council, such as ongoing maintenance and tree protection. Additional points will be covered at the detail design stage and WBC will be consulting the Parish Council over these.

Cllr Weeks advised that the work is now planned for summer 2021 and will take 4 months. The major road works will be implemented over 2 months during the school summer holiday to minimise disruption to traffic flow.

#### **494/2019 WOKINGHAM BOROUGH CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

Cllr Cundy advised that the WBC Climate Emergency Working Group meeting due to take place on 9 December was cancelled and has been rearranged for January 2020.

An initial report on good practice already in place in the Parish and potential opportunities to improve the position has been circulated. Councillors were asked to send comments and additions to the Clerk who will collate these into the report for discussion at the January Main Council meeting.

It was noted that at an appropriate stage the Council will need to discuss whether it should formally declare a climate emergency. Cllr Cundy will ask WBC for its views on whether this would be useful in terms of supporting the WBC declaration.

#### **495/2019 PROJECT AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATES**

##### **NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP)**

Cllr Cornish provided an update on progress with the Plan.

- The public consultation has generated almost 1000 responses. The analysis is underway.
- The next stage is to look at the housing need, how the approved provision on the Arborfield Strategic Development Location ties in with this, and the WBC process and timings for an updated Housing Needs Analysis. A meeting has been arranged with WBC to discuss this and the position with the WBC Local Plan Update.
- As previously mentioned, the Social Value Portal is working on behalf of Legal & General Homes to ensure the Finchwood Park development brings benefits to the community over and above the provision of new homes and associated community facilities. A meeting will be arranged to agree an appropriate way of working over the planned community consultation, so that this can assist both Legal & General and the NDP Group.

##### **GORSE RIDE REGENERATION**

- Cllr Weeks confirmed that a meeting has been arranged with WBC Cllr Clark, the Executive Member for Children's Services, and the Head Teacher of the Gorse Ride Schools to discuss the current issues the Schools are experiencing.
- Cllr Weeks has asked WBC Cllr Kaiser, the Executive Member for Finance and Housing, to give a short presentation to the Council at its meeting in January 2020.
- Cllr Mrs Eytel has met the Community Development Worker and FB Church Community Care Team volunteers to discuss some of the challenges facing the changing community and the issues encountered by the new residents moving into the Estate. While some support is in place this needs co-ordination in order to best provide for the community and its residents, and to identify gaps where more support is needed. It may be appropriate to form a new Group focussing on the social needs of the community.

Food poverty is a particular issue and the WBC Community Development Worker is looking into a possible Community Larder Scheme.

Cllr Weeks is meeting the WBC Community Development Worker and Head of Housing in January 2020 to discuss how the current issues can be addressed.

**ARBORFIELD STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT LOCATION (SDL)**

Cllr Pearce attended the Community Liaison Forum on 10 December and notes of the meeting have been circulated.

Cllr Weeks advised that the first four homes on Finchwood Park, the Legal & General Homes development, will be occupied this month. Part of the new public open space (SANG – Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) will be opened this month with the remaining area opened when ground conditions improve.

The Arborfield Green development includes the provision of a new primary school on a site off Biggs Lane. Cllr Weeks advised that the School is due to open in 2021 and WBC will shortly be consulting on options for the management of the school.

**496/2019 CORRESPONDENCE.**

Correspondence has been circulated by email and / or noted under agenda items above.

Nine Mile Ride School and the Gorse Ride Schools have sent letters of thanks for the donations made by the Council.

**497/2019 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- The agenda for the January meeting will include the 2020/21 Budget and Precept Demand and the Climate Emergency. There will also be a short presentation by WBC Cllr Kaiser on the Gorse Ride regeneration (subject to confirmation).
- Councillors are invited to put forward suggestions for future agendas.

**498/2019 FORUM**

- Cllr Weeks advised that WBC will be issuing lids for the existing recycling boxes to enable residents to keep their paper and card recycling dry.

**499/2019 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 15 January 2020 at the FBC Centre, commencing at 7.30pm.

*These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the Council.*

**FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL - PAYMENT LIST 18 DECEMBER 2019**

<b>UNITY TRUST BANK ACCOUNT 10/12/19</b>			£29,968.57	
<b>CCLA DEPOSIT ACCOUNT 30/11/19</b>			£556,847.89	
<b>CCLA PROPERTY FUND 31/03/18</b>			£25,000.00	
INCLUDING CIL RECEIPTS TOTAL £498,906.39				
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<b>£611,816.46</b>	

	NET	VAT	TOTAL	
<b>Outstanding payments yet to be cleared</b>				
FINCHAMPSTEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL	904.00	0.00	904.00	CH300272
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS OUTSTANDING</b>			<b>£904.00</b>	
<b>Payments already approved and paid</b>				
BRITISH TELECOM	76.68	15.33	92.01	BTDD8
<b>PAYMENTS DECEMBER 2019</b>				
<b>Staff costs</b>			<b>£5,648.39</b>	
<b>Other costs</b>				
OFFICE DEPOT - STATIONERY	43.36	8.67	52.03	TBC
IBS OFFICE PRINTER	151.95	30.39	182.34	52705248
WEBMARKETING-WEB HOSTING/SUPPORT	164.00	0.00	164.00	552450089
FBC CAFÉ CHARGES	36.03	7.18	43.21	549773292
HOOK PC - CLLR TRAINING- SM/RJM	79.50	0.00	79.50	858242006
NALC CONFERENCE 17/3/20 - RC	260.00	52.00	312.00	376892400
SLCC MEMBERSHIP	339.00	0.00	339.00	823402021
A.D. KENT EVENT / CHAIRS EXPENSES	81.01	0.00	81.01	747553960
<b>Allotment costs</b>				
-				
<b>Neighbourhood Development Plan costs</b>				
ROYAL MAIL RESPONSE PLUS	185.33	37.07	222.40	45566284
<b>Grants and contributions - subject to final approval by Council where required</b>				
READIBUS-COMM TRIPS 16/10, 27/11,11/12	409.00	0.00	409.00	269777828
<b>TOTAL DECEMBER 2019 PAYMENTS</b>		<b>£135.31</b>	<b>£7,532.88</b>	
<b>TOTAL REMAINING</b>			<b>£603,379.13</b>	
<b>DECEMBER PETTY CASH / CARD PAYMENTS</b>				
Total petty cash payments	27.41	0.00	27.41	
Total Card payments (Clerk)	292.13	22.34	314.47	
Total Card payments (Footpath Warden)	0.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£319.54</b>	<b>£22.34</b>	<b>£341.88</b>	