

## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 22 JANUARY 2020 AT THE FBC CENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 4ES

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**PRESENT:** Cllr Mrs C. Driver, Chair. Cllr S. Bowers, Vice Chair.  
Cllrs S. Bromley, R. Cundy, Mrs R. Margetts, A. Pearce and G. Veitch.

Mrs Dagnall, Clerk.

#### **37/2019 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs B. Eytle, Mrs N. Jennings-Frisby and Mrs S. McDonald.

#### **38/2020 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were received.

#### **39/2020 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2019 were signed as a true record.

#### **40/2020 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES AND OTHER ITEMS**

##### **336/2019 California Country Park**

As mentioned at the recent Main Council meeting the final improvement works and green way links were not completed in December as planned. This has been followed up and Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) has advised that the work will be completed within a few weeks.

##### **341/2019 Noticeboard and Seat refurbishment**

The Jubilee Bench and the Barkham Ride noticeboard have been refurbished. The St James' Church noticeboard will be replaced with a recycled plastic board this spring, and the Memorial Park board will be replaced in 2020/21.

##### **343/2019 VE Day anniversary**

At the previous meeting it was agreed that the Council would not arrange an event but would encourage the Church to mark the event in some way. As reported at the recent Main Council meeting St. James' Church has decided to hold a street party on 8 May, and the Church bells will be rung at 7pm as part of the national commemoration event.

##### **Defibrillator training**

A defibrillator/ first aid training session was held on 12 November 2019. This was very popular and it is hoped that two sessions can be run in 2020.

##### **Telephone box book swap**

Large quantities of old and / or poor quality books are being deposited in the book swap. These have been cleared and taken to the recycling centre. Notices have been put up asking for only good quality books which may be of interest to others.

It was agreed that this would be monitored, with a full review when the crossroads improvements scheme is implemented in 2021.

The Clerk will make enquiries about the telephone boxes available in Wokingham, with a view to adopting one to be installed in The Village.

### **Public Participation Session**

No members of the public were present.

### **41/2020 CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

This item was due to be discussed at the Main Council meeting on 15 January but was deferred to a future meeting due to time constraints. It was agreed that in the interim the Amenities Committee should consider the item.

Cllr Cundy attended a meeting of the WBC Working Group on 10 January, little progress has been made and the next meeting is on 18 March.

WBC is supportive of Local Councils declaring a Climate Emergency as this demonstrates commitment. This will be considered by the Council at a future meeting. It was noted that any Council declaring an emergency is required to publish an action plan within 6 months of the declaration.

An initial report on good practice in Finchampstead, and some opportunities for improvements, was discussed. This is currently set out under the headings used by the Friends of the Earth '20 Actions for Town and Parish Councils' document.

Comments and suggestions will be incorporated in the report and a revised version will be circulated.

The Committee agreed that the Council should form a Working Group to lead on the topic and potentially identify a small number of achievable projects which can be actively taken forward. The Clerk will progress this.

### **42/2020 INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2019/20**

A report showing the current position was circulated. No issues were raised.

Expenditure at the end of the year is likely to be around £3000 below budget.

### **43/2020 LITTER, WASTE AND RECYCLING MATTERS**

Information on the work of the two Litter Wardens carried out from April 2019 to date is summarised below.

2019/20	HOURS	MILES	SACKS COLLECTED
APRIL	18	25	17
MAY	38	77	41
JUNE	26	42	27
JULY	36	72	36
AUGUST	9	23	12
SEPTEMBER	22	38	20
OCTOBER	32	50	31
NOVEMBER	35	65	40
DECEMBER	50	81	45
JANUARY	23	40	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>293</b>

Cllr Bromley advised that the Food Waste recycling scheme has now been introduced to flats and to sheltered housing such as Warren Close.

#### **44/2020 CALIFORNIA CROSSROADS TIDY UP**

A tidy up session was held on Sunday 19 May but it was agreed that there would not be an autumn tidy up in 2019.

It was agreed that a tidy up session should take place on Sunday 26 April 2020. The main tasks are likely to be cleaning the yellow railings, litter picking and weeding. Cllr Pearce and the Clerk will co-ordinate the event.

The Clerk has contacted WBC requesting leaf clearance, gully clearance and gully repairs but no work has been undertaken to date. This will be followed up.

The Clerk will contact the Co-op and other businesses about the 26 April event as soon as possible.

#### **45/2020 COMMUNITY LITTER PICK 2020**

The 2020 Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean takes place between 13 March and 20 April and the Finchampstead Community Litter Pick will be held on Sunday 29 March.

Cllr Mrs McDonald and the Clerk will be co-ordinating the event. Arrangements were updated for the 2019 litter pick which should make planning the 2020 event more straightforward.

The Clerk will contact local businesses about the litter pick as soon as possible.

The Clerk has contacted local schools and nurseries to encourage them to take part in the Keep Britain Tidy 'Great British School Clean', run as part of the overall 'Great British Spring Clean'. The schools and nurseries have also been informed about the Eco Schools programme. Several schools have responded and are keen to participate, this is being followed up.

#### **46/2020 ALLOTMENT SITE**

A report on the allotment site was circulated.

- The site is in good condition with the common areas well maintained by the Allotments Association
- 2.5 plots are currently vacant
- 6 non parish residents are on the waiting list (a maximum of 12 non parish residents are permitted to hold plots)
- The planned tree works are being carried out from 20-25 January 2020
- WBC has been asked to supply material for the Association to use to fill in pot holes on the allotment track (part of Footpath 13)
- The Association and the Clerk are currently seeking advice on whether to permit bee hives on site.

#### **47/2020 TREE PLANTING AND PROTECTION**

Cllr Veitch provided an update on current activities.

#### **Wellingtonia Avenue**

All residents have been contacted and there has been a very positive response. Permission has been given for a survey of 28 trees across 12 properties, 34 on one property and the 26 trees on National Trust land. Only four residents have not responded.

Cllr Veitch, a representative from the Wokingham District Veteran Trees Association (WDVTA) and the Clerk are meeting a consultant on 24 January to discuss the survey detail, and the survey should take place this spring.

When the survey has been completed and the reports circulated it is intended that a meeting or seminar is held to discuss the importance of the trees and the survey findings.

### **Tree planting**

As reported at the recent Main Council meeting a further 3 English oaks have been planted at Burnmoor Meadow. Locations for a further 4 trees have been agreed for planting in the 2020/21 season. A Tibetan cherry tree has been planted at the California Country Park for Cllr Bowers.

The Clerk is looking into options for replacing the plaques by the trees at Burnmoor Meadow, as the wooden 'plinths' are rotting away.

WBC has planted a large number of trees in the California Country Park around the new car park and in the area near the café and 'wishing well'.

### **Woodland improvements**

The woodland adjacent to the allotment track was planted around 20 years ago by RMC (now Cemex UK Ltd.) under a planning condition. The woodland has not been managed, the trees are densely planted and there is little understorey or younger trees due to the lack of light. If left alone, it is likely that all trees will fail at the same time.

It was agreed that an arboricultural consultant should be asked for a quotation for a survey of and management recommendations for the woodland. If the quotation is acceptable the work will be commissioned and the report will be sent to Cemex UK Ltd. for their approval and ideally agreement to undertake the recommended works, or to provide funds for this to be done.

The work is likely to include removing old rabbit and deer guards, removing some trees to allow natural succession and possibly areas for new tree planting, and wildlife habitat improvements such as bird box installation. The project would show a positive commitment to addressing climate change.

Cllr Mrs Driver suggested that the woodland adjacent to the Finchampstead Doctors Surgery on the Finchampstead Road may benefit from management. This could be a future project when resources are available.

### **Parish Tree Strategy**

The WDVTA is planning to use Finchampstead as a pilot for a Parish Tree Strategy, eventually to be rolled out across the Borough. There is no progress to report at present.

### **Street trees / trees on new developments**

There are concerns about the lack of maintenance of new trees planted on new roads and in new developments, and about the lack of street tree planting and /or replacement. Cllr Veitch and the Clerk will discuss what action can be taken on this.

The Finchampstead Park Management Committee has undertaken a survey of the older trees in the Memorial Park. Cllr Bromley has sent the report to Cllr Veitch and the Clerk.

#### **48/2020 COMMUNITY PAYBACK**

Wokingham Borough Council has entered into a contract to utilise Community Pay Back teams and has provisionally offered their services to the Parish Council. This would be through a Service Level Agreement with a commitment to at least one day a month.

The Clerk has requested further information about how this will work in terms of planning and commissioning projects, and about whether projects could include work on WBC land such as open spaces or highways.

All the Parish Council's Committees are being asked for comments and suggested projects before the Council decides whether to proceed.

It was agreed that this should be supported. Potential projects could include:

- Leaf clearance at the California Crossroads
- Clearing highway footways – subject to WBC agreement
- Clearing tree guards and installing bird or bat boxes in the allotment woodland, subject to the project going ahead

#### **49/2020 CORRESPONDENCE**

- There was no correspondence to report.

#### **50/2020 FORUM**

- Cllr Mrs Driver advised that she would be standing down as Chair of the Committee in May 2019 and Cllr Cundy thanked her for all her work for the Committee.

#### **51/2020 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Committee meeting is 13 May 2020.

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

#### **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
40/2020	Arrange defibrillator training sessions for 2020	Asst to the Clerk
40/2020	Order noticeboard for St James Church	Clerk
40/2020	Look into red telephone box for The Village	Clerk
41/2020	Update Climate emergency report	Clerk
41/2020	Invite participants for Working Group	Clerk
44/2020	Arrange California Crossroads tidy up 26/4/20 Contact businesses asap about tidy up and the litter pick	AP/ Clerk Clerk
45/2020	Community Litter Pick 29 March	SM/Clerk
45/2020	Schools re Litter Pick and Eco Schools	Clerk/SM
47/2020	Source replacement plaques for commemorative trees at Burnmoor Meadow	Clerk
47/2020	Wellingtonia Avenue project	GV/Clerk
47/2020	Woodland Management project	Clerk / GV
47/2020	Street tree planting / Arborfield Green and Finchwood Park new planting / Adopt a tree	Clerk / GV
48/2020	Community Payback	Clerk