

**FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
4 PM ON 11 MAY 2021
By Microsoft Teams video conference**

PRESENT: Cllr R. Woof, Chair. Cllr R. Cundy, Vice Chair (part).
Cllrs E. Biskup; S. Bromley, D. Cornish, S. Gurney, G. Jukes OBE, S. McDonald (part),
G. Veitch & S. Weeks.

Mrs K. Dagnall, Clerk.

179/2021 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr May.

180/2021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Weeks declared a non -pecuniary interest in relation to the Berkshire MS Therapy Centre.

181/2021 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2021 were agreed as a true record. These will be signed retrospectively as soon as circumstances allow.

182/2021 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES / OTHER MATTERS

134/2021 Assets

Images are still to be added to the Asset Management software.

The 2020 asset inspections were completed and the Clerk will collate the outcomes and details of required works. No major issues were identified.

137/2021 Annual Report 2020/21

The distribution of the Annual Report to households and businesses in the Parish has been completed. A local company undertook the main part of the distribution. Cllr Cornish coordinated the distribution of the Report to the remaining areas and Councillors were thanked for their assistance with this.

135/2021 Financial position / alternative accounts.

Cllr Weeks will make enquiries within Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) regarding alternative deposit or investment accounts.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public were present.

183/2021 FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL

Reports showing the position on 31 March 2021 were circulated.

The draft accounts for 2020/21 have been completed and no issues were raised. The draft accounts and other documents are now with the internal auditor. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return will be presented to the Council at its June meeting and subject to approval will then be submitted to the external auditor.

Unity Trust Bank current account

The current balance is £95,686 as 50% of the precept has now been received from Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) along with a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipt.

CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

£714,225 is currently held in the Fund. The yield on 11 May 2021 was 0.0199%.

It was agreed that £50,000 should be transferred from the Unity Trust account to the CCLA Deposit Fund.

CCLA Property Fund

£25,000 was invested in the Fund in August 2017. The investment continues to be reviewed regularly.

184/2021 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDS

The current balance is £683,101 which includes £12,907 received in April 2021.

The CIL Regulation 62A Monitoring Report for 2020/21 was circulated and reviewed. This will be forwarded to Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) and published on the Parish Council's website in accordance with the Regulations.

185/2021 GRANT APPLICATION FROM THE BERKSHIRE MS THERAPY CENTRE

A grant application and supporting information from the Berkshire MS Therapy Centre was circulated.

It was agreed that subject to approval by the Council a grant of £1000 should be awarded.

186/2021 PROJECT LIST

A report from Cllr Woof was circulated covering the approach to the use of CIL funds and means of progressing CIL funded projects.

In the report Cllr Woof stressed the importance of using Community Infrastructure (CIL) funds wisely, but at the same time the need to maximise the use of CIL funds rather than Council reserves where possible.

It was suggested that a sum could be allocated to cover smaller short term projects, as well as ring fencing funds for larger projects.

Opportunities to work in partnership with others, including the Borough Council and neighbouring parishes will continue to be explored, as will opportunities to engage consultants to progress certain projects.

Cllr Cornish and the Clerk will update the Project List and this will be circulated as soon as possible for fuller discussion at the next meeting of the Committee.

- The Wellingtonia Avenue tree surveys were completed in April and the Consultant is now working on the survey reports.
- The Working Group formed to consider the Cemex UK Ltd. owned nature reserves and other projects relating to Cemex UK Ltd. property has had an initial meeting.
- A Working Group has been formed to progress the War Memorial Project and will be meeting on 25 May.
- The California Crossroads improvement project was due to commence in July 2021, but WBC has advised this may be deferred due to the long-term closure of the B3348 The Ridges and the impact on traffic movements around the Parish.

187/2021 COUNCIL MANAGEMENT MATTERS AND WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES

Council policies and procedures

Training and Development Policy: Further to amendments considered at the previous meeting the Policy has now been updated to reflect the Council's decision to join the Berkshire and National Associations of Local Councils.

The Policy was approved by the Committee.

Financial Regulations:

The annual review of the Regulations is due. Few if any changes are expected to be needed although references to European Union contract regulations will require changing when guidance comes forward from the sector advisory bodies. Cllrs Woof and Jukes agreed to review the Regulations.

Risk Management Policy:

The annual review of the Policy is due and will be undertaken by Cllrs Jukes, McDonald, and Woof.

IT support

There have been some discussions on how the Council can use the new systems to best meet its needs in terms of document storage and collaboration on documents and a structure is now being put in place.

Microsoft Teams meetings will be phased in to replace the Zoom meetings.

Training on the above will be arranged for all Councillors as required.

The Clerk had circulated a reminder about the use of the standard disclosure as part of the email signature on Parish Council emails, in accordance with the adopted IT and Communications Policy. Cllr Woof asked Councillors to check their signatures and update them, seeking advice from ASAP Computers if required.

Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

Cllr Cornish advised that a report on the responses to the Regulation 14 public consultation has been prepared.

Discussions have taken place with the WBC Planning Policy Officers and with the Planning Consultant, and the Steering Group will be considering the next stages.

A full report will be provided to the Council at its May or June meeting.

It was noted that additional funds above the agreed budget may be required to progress the Plan to completion. Cllr Woof confirmed the Council's support for the Plan and that additional financial support will be discussed when the requirements are known.

Human Resources Sub Committee

Interviews for the post of Planning Committee Clerk will take place on 18 May.

It was noted that when all 3 posts are filled changes to the office furniture will be required which will incur costs. However, IT costs will be minimal as the Council has a third laptop.

188/2021 FORUM

No matters were raised.

189/2021 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 7 July 2021.

These minutes are subject to final approval at the next meeting of the Committee.

FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 11 MAY 2021

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
182/2021	Add images to asset management software	Clerk
182/2021	Collate asset inspections, arrange required works	Clerk
182/2021	WBC re banking / investment advice	SW
183/2021	Complete AGAR for June Main Council	Clerk
183/2020	Transfer funds from Unity Trust to CCLA Deposit	Clerk

184/2021	CIL monitoring report – forward to WBC and publish	Clerk
185/2021	MS Therapy Grant to May Council for approval	Clerk
186/2021	Project List – update and circulate	DC / RW/ Clerk
187/2021	Training Policy – circulate approved version to all Cllrs	Clerk
	Financial Regulations review – update to June Council	RW/GJ/Clerk
	Risk Management Policy review – update to June Council	RW/GJ/SM
	Policies – GDPR compliance esp subject access requests	Clerk
	Check disclosure statement on email signatures	ALL
187/2021	NDP – progress report to May or June Council	DC
187/2021	Progress IT roll out and training	